

Old Testament Introductions and Analytical Outlines

by

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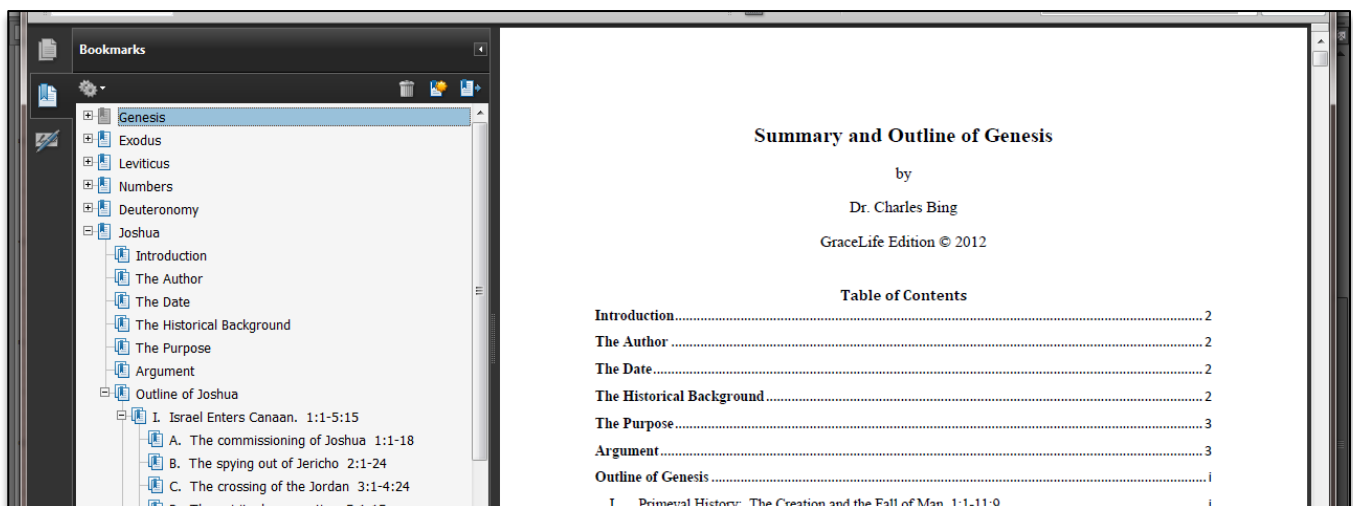
The introductions and outlines of the Old and New Testaments were written by Charles C. Bing who earned his Th.M. and Ph.D. from Dallas Theological Seminary. He founded Burleson Bible Church in Texas which he pastored for 19 years before transitioning to GraceLife Ministries full-time in 2005. He has served as Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies for LeTourneau University and other theological schools. Dr. Bing helped found the Free Grace Alliance in 2004 and has served as its president. He is active as a speaker for churches and conferences in the United States and abroad and has published a number of books and articles on the gospel, salvation, evangelism, and discipleship.

This work represents a portion of the requirements for Dr. Bing's doctoral studies in the Bible Exposition department of Dallas Theological Seminary. We hope you find them useful for your studies as others already have. The Introductions give the basic background for each Bible book as a foundation for further study, teaching, or preaching. The Outlines convey the content of the book with great detail and full thoughts so that one sees clearly how the biblical text both flows and divides.

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Hyperlink Bookmarks

Genesis	Song of Solomon
Exodus	Isaiah
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Numbers	Lamentations
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Joshua	Daniel
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Ruth	Joel
1 & 2 Samuel	Amos
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Nehemiah	Nahum
Esther	Habakkuk
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Proverbs	Zechariah
Ecclesiastes	Malachi

Summary and Outline of Genesis

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

The question of the authorship of Genesis should be discussed along with the authorship of the rest of the Pentateuch. The traditional view of the Jews and the early church held to Moses as the author of all of the Pentateuch, but this has come under attack in recent centuries.

The challenge to Mosaic authorship taken most seriously is known as the "documentary hypothesis". Though the hypothesis takes a number of forms, its basic assertion is that there is evidence in the Pentateuch of multiple authors. Proponents cite different literary styles and different propensities for the use of the names of God, Elohim (E) and Yahweh (J). To this has been added a Priestly Code (P) and a Deuteronomic author (D). Julius Wellhausen is credited with the classic organization of JEDP. According to Wellhausen, the Yahwist wrote about 950 B.C., the Elohist about 850 B.C., the Deuteronomist about 650 B.C., and the Priestly Code was composed about 525 B.C.

Besides the important testimony of the tradition of the Jews and the early church, there are other reasons to reject the documentary theory and reaffirm Moses as the author of the Pentateuch. First, the Pentateuch itself affirms Moses as its author (Ex. 17:14; 24:4,7; 34:27; Num. 33:1-2; Deut. 31:9). The rest of the Old Testament agrees with this verdict (Josh. 1:7-8; 8:32,34; 22:5; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 21:8; Ezra 6:18; Dan 9:11-13; Mal. 4:4), as well as the New Testament (Matt. 19:8; Mark 12:26; John 5:46-47; 7:19; Rom. 10:5,19). Also, the unity of content and style in the Pentateuch indicates a single author. Furthermore, this author describes details as an eyewitness, such as would not be true of an editor centuries later (Ex. 15:27; Num. 2:1-31; 11:7-8). The author is also familiar with ancient Egyptian names, words, customs, and geography (Gen. 13:10; 16:1-3; 33:18; 41:43) which would be unexpected from a later editor in Canaan, but consistent with Moses' training (cf. Acts 7:22). Modern archeological evidence substantiates that literary activity pre-dated Moses. Thus, Moses was not only able to write the Pentateuch, but was able to draw on other ancient documents in his process of writing. It is difficult to imagine who else in all of ancient Israel would have been as qualified and able to compose these five books as Moses.

The Date

Genesis was certainly written in the last third of Moses' lifetime, after the burning bush incident. The date would then fall between about 1450 B.C. to 1410 B.C., but most likely in the latter half of this period.

The Historical Background

The title "Genesis" is the Greek word meaning "origin, source, generation, and beginning." The first eleven chapters record history's beginning's through many monumental events: the creation of the world, the creation of man, the fall of man, and the judgments of the Flood and of Babel. Throughout the early chapters, a godly line is followed until one man, Abraham, is chosen to begin a special nation for God. Chapter 12 focuses on Abraham and the

covenant God made with Him and his chosen descendants. The last chapters of the book (37-50) record how God preserved His special people from adversity.

Discussion of the historical setting for Genesis is difficult because this book covers more history than all the other books of the Bible together. The first eleven chapters form a distinct unit and stretch from the creation (c. 4000 B.C. or earlier) to the death of Terah (c. 2090 B.C.). The geographical background for chapters 1-11 is the Fertile Crescent. A second distinguishable unit of history is covered by chapters 12-36. This period of 193 years extends from the death of Terah to Joseph's arrival in Egypt (c. 1897 B.C.) and unfolds in the territory of Canaan. A third historical unit covers the ninety-three years of Joseph in Egypt (c. 1897-1804). By its account of origins, Genesis lays the historical, geographical, and religious foundations for every other book in the Bible.

The Purpose

Genesis is designed to show that God is the sovereign Creator of the universe who created man to rule the world, but because of man's sin this dominion was lost until the promises of restored rule could be realized through God's special chosen race. Therefore, Genesis introduces the beginning of creation, man, man's fall, judgment, and the beginning of redemption through a promise (3:15). Abraham and his family are chosen as those who will mediate this promise to the world (12:2-3). Genesis pursues the history of Abraham and his descendants to show the persistence of God's promise of redemption through the preservation of a special people.

The narrative and genealogies, especially as they are arranged around the eleven key structural headings "Now these are the generations of . . ." (Hebrew toledot; 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2), present history redemptively. God's preservation of a godly line of blessing is traced and contrasted to other ungodly lines in a narrowing fashion so as to show His promised redemption enduring in the early history of man.

Argument

A simple outline of Genesis begins with the great creative and original events of primeval history (1:1-11:9) and advances to the events and characters of the patriarchal history (11:10-50:26). The redemptive promise of God progresses through the tracing of a godly line as God preserves this special people for Himself.

A book of "beginnings" rightly begins in the primeval period with the creation of the universe in six days (1:1-2:3). Creation is an indisputable mark of ownership and the right to sovereign rule. The creation was perfect and thus pronounced "good". Crowning God's creative work was the creation of man and woman, emphasized in more detail by a second account of their beginning (2:4-25). Man was also created perfect, and was designed to represent God's rule over creation in the perfect paradise (1:26-28; 2:8-20).

Adversity enters the story with the temptation, seduction, and fall of man (3:1-5:32). Readers are introduced to the enemy of God, Satan, as the serpent. Man's fall depicts the freedom God ordained for His human creations and shows that rebellion against God's Word is the most perverse use of that will. It also establishes Satan as the challenger to God's rule on earth. Man's most critical judgment is death, or separation from the life of the sovereign God.

Yet in pronouncing judgment (on the serpent), God declares the protoevangelium in the promise of a Seed from the woman who will restore the rule of God by destruction of Satan (3:15). The expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden and from the presence of God demonstrates how crucial the need for a restoration between man and God actually is.

The fall of man and the promise of a Seed of blessing result in a focus on the family line through which the blessing will come (4:1-5:32). The two family lines are contrasted, first in the conflict between Cain and Able, then in the tracing of their respective family lines. The godly line of Seth is emphasized in the narrative by its detailed record from Adam to Noah (4:25-5:32).

The sin of man grows to intolerable proportions and brings the judgment of God through the flood and the confusion of languages (6:1-11:9). The flood incident conveys the severity of sin and its consequences (6:1-9:29). It also conveys the mercy of God in preserving the righteous for Himself and for His purpose of blessing the world. Noah and his family are preserved through the judgment of the flood and given the promise of God affirming His right and His concern for His creation. Sin, however, shows that it will plague the purposes of God as it corrupts Noah and his progeny (9:18-29). The nations descended from Noah are traced (10:1-32) with the result that the essence of sin, the pride of man, is memorialized in the tower of Babel which brings God's judgment of the confusion of languages and the scattering of the nations (11:1-9).

Primeval history gives way to the historical period of the patriarchs, which occupies the rest of the material of the book (11:10-50:26). Within the narratives of the patriarchal figures, the promise of God is elucidated and preserved. God moves from dealing with all nations to dealing with a special chosen race of which Abraham is the head.

Thus the life of Abraham (11:10-25:18) is designed to demonstrate the election of God of a people for Himself. God makes a covenant with Abraham that amplifies the earlier promise of the Seed (12:1-15:21). This Seed will come through the nation which Abraham begins and will bless all the families of the earth through him (12:2-3). Abraham's separation from Lot and the pagan kings emphasizes the separation involved in God's covenant with His special family (13:1-14:24). Abraham is promised an heir, numerous descendants, and a land as the covenant is ratified with a ritual that demonstrates its unconditional nature so that it is clear the promise comes by grace and not works (15:1-21). Thus, the basis of Abraham's righteousness before God is faith alone (15:6).

The covenant is confirmed as God remains faithful to His promise in spite of adversity (16:1-22:19). The birth of Ishmael tests the covenant with one born not of the promise of God (16:1-16). On the contrary, the son of promise is to be a result of God's blessing and will be called Isaac (17:15-22). The sign of circumcision formally institutes God's eternal covenant with Abraham and his descendants (17:1-27). Further tests of faith in God's promise come through various trials (18:1-20:18). The trial of Sarah's faith, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the trial with Abimelech show the failures of man's faith against the persistent faithfulness of God. The consummation of the promise of an heir for Abraham is finally realized in the birth of Isaac (21:1-22:19). Abraham's faith in God's promise, which was manifested in 15:6, is confirmed by his offering up Isaac in obedience to God. On this occasion, God also reaffirms His promise of descendants, blessing, and a Seed (22:16-18).

In the transition of the covenant, Isaac rises to prominence in the narrative as Abraham's life draws to a close (22:20-25:11). The death of Sarah and Abraham is bridged by the marriage of Isaac to Rebekah. Thus the focus shifts to the life of Isaac and the covenant of God renewed with him (25:12-26:35).

The families of Ishmael and Isaac are traced in such a way that the interest is clearly on Isaac, heir of the promise (25:12-34). As Rebekah gives birth to Esau and Jacob, God's election is again demonstrated in that He declares "the older shall serve the younger" (25:23). The realization of this is suggested in the incident of Esau's selling of his birthright (25:29-34). As with Abraham, the covenant is confirmed with Isaac in spite of his failed faith before Abimelech in Gerar (26:1-33). The contrast of Esau's waywardness (26:34-35) further emphasizes the selection of Jacob to be the heir of the promise thus far confirmed with Abraham and Isaac.

The life of Jacob is thus the real focus of the rest of the book. It can be argued that the narrative about Joseph (37:1-50:26) is subservient to God's intention of showing how Jacob is preserved as heir of the covenant.

Jacob's life which precedes the narrative on Joseph describes the establishment, testing, and confirmation of God's covenant with him (27:1-36:43). The passing of the blessing to Jacob instead of Esau is once more a failure to obtain the blessing of God through human means instead of by sovereign election and grace (27:1-28:9). Still, God establishes His covenant with Jacob at Bethel (28:10-22), particularly emphasizing the Seed and the inheritance of the land (28:13-15). Jacob's faith is also tested by his sojourn and marriages in Haran (29:1-31:55), and by his reunion with Esau upon his return to Canaan (32:1-33:20). Jacob's faith in God's ability to preserve him for the sake of the covenant is evidenced in his prayer and wrestling match with God. The elusive blessing of God on Jacob is thus finally obtained through faith (32:29).

The covenant is further confirmed with Jacob (34:1-35:29) despite the fear of annihilation at the hands of the Canaanites and Perizzites (34:30) after Dinah's defilement is avenged (34:1-31). The reaffirmation of the covenant takes place again at Bethel (35:1-15). There, God's promise to Jacob includes an explanation of His design to make from Jacob, renamed "Israel", a special nation through which the promise will be effected. The end of Isaac's life (35:16-29) forms a transition in the narrative to the account of God's preservation of Jacob through Joseph. Chapter 36, devoted to the family lines proceeding from Esau, describes the fate of the ungodly line in contrast to the blessing traced in Jacob's line.

The life of Joseph (37:1-50:26) is a testimony to God's preservation of the godly line in Jacob and his descendants, who will form a chosen nation. The blessing must persist amidst the sin of Jacob's family (37:1-38:30). First, there is the betrayal of Joseph by his brothers (37:1-36). Then the narrative interrupts the story of Joseph with the account of Judah's immorality with Tamar (38:1-30). Both stories emphasize that the blessing of God is not because of human merit, but in spite of human unfaithfulness.

When the narrative returns to Joseph, God's providence is the keynote in Joseph's exaltation in Egypt (39:1-41:57) and the eventual salvation of his family (42:1-47:26). Joseph's prosperity is directly attributed to God in the text, both in Potiphar's house (39:2-5) and in prison

(39:21-23). Joseph's ability to accurately interpret dreams also is credited to God (40:8; 41:16). Thus his promotion to a position through which blessing can be dispensed is due to God's blessing and Joseph's faithfulness (41:38-39, 52).

Joseph's exaltation in Egypt and the famine are God's prearrangement for the salvation of Jacob's family, Israel (42:1-47:26). The famine forces the brothers to a reunion with their betrayed brother and puts them at his mercy. Their corruption is met in the end with Joseph's forgiveness and his very crucial insight that God had sent him before them "to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance" (45:7). Joseph is thus the preserver and the provider (45:11) for Israel's family. Jacob travels to Egypt where he and the entire family enjoy the benefits of Joseph's deliverance and influence. This section of the narrative is clearly designed to show that God has called a special people to Himself, and that He will preserve them for the sake of the promise made to Abraham and Isaac. The detailed and in-depth focus on Joseph as the instrument of deliverance may serve to characterize the nature of the salvation through the Seed which was promised (cf. 50:20).

The book of Genesis closes with the assurance that the covenant blessing will continue beyond the patriarch Jacob (47:27-50:26). Jacob pronounces a blessing on Joseph's sons (48:1-22) and proceeds to address each of his own sons (49:1-28). The nature of his pronouncements on his sons reveals that the twelve pillars of Israel will be certainly tainted with sin. Still, the promise will remain with them, more specifically in Judah, from whom "the scepter shall not depart . . . until Shiloh comes" (49:10). This is a clear reaffirmation of the promise of a Seed who shall be a blessing to all through the progeny of Israel. In this way, Genesis represents a record of the history of the promise, seen as early as 3:15, as it is preserved in a special people of God. God in His sovereignty is preparing a people through whom He will be able to dispense blessing and salvation in order to reassert His rule over creation.

The demise of Jacob and Joseph at the close of the book (49:29-50:14; 50:15-26) leave the family of Israel in a potentially precarious position in a foreign land, since it was Joseph who promised to provide for their welfare (50:21). The final words of Joseph hint of the impending bondage by assuring of God's visitation and deliverance from Egypt to return to the promised land (50:24-25). Joseph's confidence that his bones, as Jacob's, will rest in Canaan continues the theme of the faithfulness of God to His covenant and covenant people.

Genesis is the account of the beginnings of all things, but in particular it is an account of how God's rule in creation was lost and how it will be returned. The loss of His rule exercised through man came because of man's fall. The restoration of His rule comes also through man in the form of a Seed from the family of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and finally, Judah. The covenant of God preserved in His chosen race is a covenant of salvation for His people, but also of restoration of His rule in the world.

Outline of Genesis

- I. Primeval History: The Creation and the Fall of Man 1:1-11:9
 - A. The creation 1:1-2:3
 1. The beginning of creation 1:1-2
 2. The days of creation 1:3-2:3
 - a. First day: light 1:3-5
 - b. Second day: atmosphere 1:6-8
 - c. Third day: earth and vegetation 1:9-13
 - d. Fourth day: Sun, moon, and stars 1:14-19
 - e. Fifth day: sea creatures and birds 1:20-23
 - f. Sixth day: land animals and man 1:24-31
 - g. The creation of land animals 1:24-25
 - 1) The creation of man 1:26-31
 - 2) Seventh day: rest 2:1-3
 - B. The beginnings of man and woman 2:4-25
 1. The creation of man 2:4-7
 2. The life of man in Eden 2:8-17
 3. The creation of woman 2:18-25
 - C. The fall of man 3:1-5:32
 1. The temptation and fall 3:1-24
 - a. The temptation by the serpent 3:1-5
 - b. The sin of Adam and Eve 3:6-8
 - c. The guilt of Adam and Eve 3:9-13
 - d. The sentencing by God 3:14-19
 - 1) Of the serpent 3:14-15
 - 2) Of the woman 3:16
 - 3) Of Adam 3:17-19
 - e. The expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden 3:20-24
 2. The conflict of family lines 4:1-5:32
 - a. The conflict between Cain and Able 4:1-15
 - 1) The births of Cain and Able 4:1-2
 - 2) The murder of Able 4:3-8
 - 3) The punishment of Cain 4:9-15
 - b. The ungodly line of Cain 4:16-24
 - c. The godly line of Seth 4:25-5:32
 - 1) The birth of Seth 4:25-26
 - 2) The genealogy of Adam through Noah 5:1-32
 - D. The judgment of man 6:1-11:9
 1. The judgment of the flood 6:1-9:29

- a. The conditions before the flood 6:1-22
 - 1) The wickedness of man 6:1-7
 - 2) The righteousness of Noah 6:8-13
 - 3) preparation of the ark 6:14-22
- b. The flood 7:1-8:19
 - 1) The judgment of the flood 7:1-24
 - a) God's instructions to enter the ark 7:1-5
 - b) Noah's obedience in entering the ark 7:6-12
 - c) God's sealing of the ark 7:13-16
 - d) The flood's destruction of all life 7:17-24
 - 2) The deliverance through the flood 8:1-19
 - a) The abatement of flood waters 8:1-5
 - b) The test for dry ground 8:6-14
 - c) The exit from the ark 8:15-19
- c. The covenant after the flood 8:20-9:17
 - 1) God's promise concerning creation 8:20-22
 - 2) God's promise concerning man and creation 9:1-8
 - 3) God's promise signified by the rainbow 9:9-17
- d. The sin after the flood 9:18-29
 - 1) Noah's three sons 9:18-19
 - 2) The sin of Ham 9:20-23
 - 3) The curse on Canaan 9:24-27
 - 4) The death of Noah 9:28-29
- 2. The judgment on the nations 10:1-11:9
 - a. The table of nations from Noah 10:1-32
 - 1) The family of Japheth 10:1-5
 - 2) The family of Ham 10:6-14
 - 3) The family of Canaan 10:15-20
 - 4) The family of Shem 10:21-32
 - b. The scattering of the nations 11:1-9
 - 1) The construction of the tower at Babel 11:1-4
 - 2) The confusion of the languages at Babel 11:5-9
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 - A. The life of Abraham 11:10-25:18
 - 1. The introduction of Abraham 11:10-32
 - a. His ancestry from Shem 11:10-26
 - b. His life with Terah 11:27-32
 - 2. The covenant of God with Abraham 12:1-25:11
 - a. The establishment of the covenant 12:1-15:21
 - 1) The initiation of the covenant 12:1-20

- a) The promise of God 12:1-3
 - b) The arrival in Canaan 12:4-9
 - c) The sojourn in Egypt 12:10-20
- 2) The separation to the covenant 13:1-14:24
 - a) Abraham's separation from Lot 13:1-13
 - b) God's promise to Abraham 13:14-18
 - c) Abraham's rescue of Lot 14:1-17
 - d) Abraham's encounter with the kings 14:18-24
- 3) The ratification of the covenant 15:1-21
 - a) The promise of an heir 15:1-6
 - b) The preparation for ratification 15:7-11
 - c) The prediction of captivity 15:12-16
 - d) The enactment of the ratification 15:17-21
- b. The confirmation of the covenant 16:1-22:19
 - 1) The covenant tested with Ishmael 16:1-16
 - a) Hagar's conception 16:1-6
 - b) Hagar's reassurance from God 16:7-14
 - c) The birth of Ishmael 16:15-16
 - 2) The covenant instituted with circumcision 17:1-27
 - a) The rehearsal of God's promises 17:1-8
 - b) The command of circumcision 17:9-14
 - c) The promise of Isaac 17:15-22
 - d) The performance of circumcision 17:23-27
 - 3) The covenant tested by trials of faith 18:1-20:18
 - a) The trial of Sarah's faith 18:1-15
 - b) Abraham's intercession for Sodom 18:16-33
 - c) The sin of Sodom 19:1-11
 - d) The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah 19:12-29
 - e) The sin of Lot 19:30-38
 - f) The trial with Abimelech 20:1-18
 - 4) The covenant consummated with Isaac 21:1-22:19
 - a) The birth of Isaac 21:1-7
 - b) The departure of Hagar and Ishmael 21:8-21
 - c) The covenant with Abimelech 21:22-34
 - d) The offering of Isaac 22:1-19
- c. The transition of the covenant 22:20-25:11
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 - 2) The death and burial of Sarah 23:1-20
 - a) The death of Sarah 23:1-2
 - b) The purchase of a burial place 23:3-16

- c) The burial of Sarah 23:17-20
 - 3) The marriage of Isaac 24:1-67
 - a) The servant's search for a bride 24:1-14
 - b) The servant's encounter with Rebekah 24:15-28
 - c) The servant's explanation to Laban 24:29-49
 - d) The servant's departure with Rebekah 24:50-61
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 - 4) The end of Abraham's life 25:1-11
 - a) The inheritance given to Isaac 25:1-6
 - b) The death and burial of Abraham 25:7-11
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 - 1. The family of Ishmael 25:12-18
 - 2. The family of Isaac 25:19-34
 - a. The birth of Esau and Jacob 25:19-28
 - b. The selling of Esau's birthright 25:29-34
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 - b. The trial of Isaac with Abimelech 26:6-11
 - c. The trial of Isaac with the Philistines 26:12-22
 - d. The reassurance of God 26:23-25
 - e. The covenant with Abimelech 26:26-33
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- C. The life of Jacob 27:1-36:43
 - 1. The deception of Isaac for Esau's blessing 27:1-28:9
 - a. The plot to deceive Isaac 27:1-17
 - b. The deception of Isaac 27:18-29
 - c. The displeasure of Esau 27:30-41
 - d. The departure of Jacob 27:42-28:5
 - e. The rebellious marriage of Esau 28:6-9
 - 2. The covenant established with Jacob 28:10-22
 - a. Jacob's dream 28:10-17
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 - 3. The covenant tested by trials of faith 29:1-33:20
 - a. The testing in Haran 29:1-31:55
 - 1) Through his marriages to Leah and Rachel 29:1-30
 - a) Jacob meets Rachel. 29:1-14
 - b) Jacob marries Leah and Rachel. 29:15-30
 - 2) Through his children 29:31-30:24
 - a) The children of Leah 29:31-35
 - b) The children of Bilhah 30:1-8

- c) The children of Zilpah 30:9-13
 - d) Additional children of Leah 30:14-21
 - e) Joseph born to Rachel 30:22-24
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 - b) The flight from Laban 31:1-21
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 - b. The testing on the return to Canaan 32:1-33:20
 - 1) In his wrestling with God 32:1-32
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 - b) The prayer for God's protection 32:9-12
 - c) The gift sent to Esau 32:13-21
 - d) The wrestling with God 32:22-32
 - 2) In his reunion with Esau 33:1-20
 - a) The welcome by Esau 33:1-11
 - b) The proposal by Esau 33:12-17
 - c) The arrival in Canaan 33:18-20
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 - 1) Shechem's sin with Dinah 34:1-7
 - 2) Shechem's request for Dinah 34:8-12
 - 3) The proposal of circumcision 34:13-17
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 - 5) The revenge of Simeon and Levi 34:25-31
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- d. The kings of Edom 36:31-39
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Summary and Outline of Exodus

by

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Introduction

The Author

No credible argument is found denying that Moses authored the book of Exodus. The author was an eyewitness of the events surrounding the departure from Egypt and there would be no better witness than Moses. Moses names himself as the author in 17:14; 24:4; 25:9; 34:27-28; and 36:1. His authorship is affirmed in other passages in the Old Testament (Deut. 31:9,24; 1 Kings 2:3; Neh. 8:1; 13:1) as well as by Christ's attributions (Mark 7:10; 12:26). The close connection and unity of Exodus with the rest of the Pentateuch confirm that Moses was the author of all five books.

The Date

Two views prevail for the date of writing which depends on the date at which the exodus from Egypt is placed: c. 1445 B.C. during the reign of Amenhotep II (1450-1425 B.C.), or c. 1290 during the reign of Rameses II (1299-1232 B.C.). The late date supposes that Rameses II built the Delta cities of Pithom and Ramses mentioned in 1:11. This view also holds that the region of south Transjordan was largely unoccupied in the late fifteenth century in contrast to the reports of settlements there (cf. Num. 20:14-21). Furthermore, it is argued, archeological evidence shows there was widespread destruction in Canaan in the thirteenth but not fifteenth century.

But these arguments can be answered. Ramses was a popular name derived from the Egyptian sun god "Ra", so the city of 1:11 needn't be named for Rameses II. Besides, Moses was eighty years old by the time he confronted Pharaoh (7:7). Rameses II ruled from 1299 to 1232 B.C., thus if the exodus was about 1290, and since the city was built before Moses' birth, there is no room for Moses' eighty years between 1299 and

1290 B.C. In answer to the second argument, some archeological evidence suggests south Transjordan was indeed inhabited. Besides, the reports of inhabitants could refer to military control of these regions by Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, and not a developed urban life. As for evidence of destruction in the thirteenth century, there are other possibilities such as raiders from Egypt under Nerneptah in 1230 B.C. In the fifteenth century, Israel didn't thoroughly destroy cities, except Jericho, Ai, and Hazor (cf. Josh. 11:13), and according to Scripture, Hazor fell in the time of Joshua (Josh. 11:10-11) and in the time of Deborah and Barak (Judg. 4:2,23-24).

The early date for the exodus is preferred for a number of reasons. 1 Kings 6:1 places the exodus 480 years before Solomon began to build the temple, which was in 967 B.C. Also, Judges 11:26 shows that by the time of Jephthah (c. 1100 B.C.) Israel had been in the land for 300 years. Add to this the forty years in the wilderness, and the exodus is placed in the middle of the fifteenth century. Another witness is Acts 13:17-20 which approximates the time from the exodus to Samuel at 450 years. Samuel died about 1020 B.C. There is also archeological evidence which supports the earlier date, such as that which dates the destruction of Jericho, Ai, and Hazor about 1400 B.C., and other evidence from Egypt which supports the facts of Exodus.

Assuming the early date of 1445 B.C. for the exodus and considering the three month journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai (19:1-2), it would seem Moses wrote the book of Exodus shortly after the events which occurred at Mount Sinai, or about 1445 or 1444 B.C.

The Historical Background

Exodus covers the events from before the birth of Moses in 1526 B.C. to the events surrounding Mount Sinai and the building of the tabernacle in 1445 B.C. The book covers the first two forty year periods of Moses' life rather briefly while focusing on the last forty year period when Moses was Israel's leader.

Egypt plays an important role in the book. Egypt consisted of Lower Egypt with its wide delta region and Upper Egypt with its narrow strip of land (c. 12 miles wide) along the Nile river 600 miles south. Egypt prospered as the "bread basket" of the Middle East due to the fertility of the Nile valley.

Egyptian history had its high points of military and cultural progress, as well as its low points, before it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. Joseph's sojourn in Egypt occurred during a golden age under Senusert II (1894-1878 B.C.) and Senusert III (1878-1871 B.C.), but this period was followed by the rule of the foreign Hyksos dynasties (c. 1750-1570 B.C.). The New Empire period began under Ahmose I of Thebes (1580-1558 B.C.) who drove out the Hyksos. Israel's oppression may have begun under the Hyksos and was continued by later Pharaohs fearing foreign rule. Thutmose I (1539-1514 B.C.) probably issued the order to slay all male Hebrew babies at the time of Moses' birth (c. 1526 B.C.; cf. 1:15-16) as a way to stem their growth. His daughter, Hatshepsut, may be the princess who found and raised the baby Moses (2:5-10). She ruled after Thutmose II (1512-1504 B.C.) until 1482 B.C. Moses was reared under her prosperous reign until Thutmose III (1504-1450 B.C.) began his rule. He tried to eradicate Hatshepsut's memory from the land--circumstances which may have figured in Moses' flight to Midian. The Pharaoh of the exodus was Amenhotep II (1450-1425 B.C.), who succeeded his father. The next Pharaoh was not his heir apparent, but a later son, which suggests the first had died as the Passover narrative testifies (12:29).

The Egyptians were polytheistic and believed their deities were present in the objects of nature, which led to the worship of animals such as the cat, bull, cow, and crocodile. The plagues of the exodus are often seen as YHWH's mockery of the Egyptian gods. More important deities had large temples built in their honor with powerful priests who influenced the people and politics of Egypt. Egyptians had a firm belief in life after death which caused elaborate preparations for death and burial, especially among the rich and rulers. Israel had evidently adopted Egyptian idolatry (cf. Eze. 20:6-10) which may explain their severe oppression in Egypt as God's chastisement.

The Purpose

The English title "Exodus" comes from the LXX title meaning "departure", which is the central event of the book. The Hebrew title comes from the first phrase in the book, "Now these are the names" and shows the natural connection and continuation of the narrative from Genesis. The book is designed to show how the special people of God chosen in Genesis through Abraham is prepared to become a theocratic nation by divine redemption from Egypt

and the giving of the covenant of law through Moses (19:6). After the redemption of the exodus, God gives Israel the law in order to separate His people to Himself and establish His presence among them in the tabernacle.

Argument

As God separates and prepares a people for Himself, two major events emerge in Exodus. The first is their redemption from Egypt (1:1-18:27), and the second is their separation to God by the giving of the covenant of law (19:1-31:18). The last third of Exodus shows how the people respond to the covenant of law (32:1-40:38).

The account of Israel's separation to God through redemption describes the deliverance from Egyptian bondage (1:1-18:27). The narrative continues the history of Israel in Egypt after the death of Joseph by relating the circumstances that led to bondage (1:1-22). From these adverse conditions, Moses is introduced to the story (2:1-4:31). His early life (2:1-25) gives evidence of God's providence in his deliverance from death, his upbringing in Pharaoh's court, his relations to his fellow Jews, and his flight into Midian. This is confirmed by his encounter with God on the mountain at Horeb (3:1-4:17) where God reveals His preparation of Moses as the leader of Israel with a divine call. God reveals himself to Moses at the burning bush and identifies Himself as "I AM", the God who is always sufficient for any need at any time. This name denotes a covenant faithfulness of God to His people in need. Moses returns to Egypt with the divine commission and finds initial acceptance among his people (4:18-31).

The actual deliverance of Israel from Egypt's rule (5:1-15:21) is depicted as a challenge to the rule of Pharaoh. Moses' first challenge to Pharaoh's rule is rejected (5:1-11:10). When his first encounter with Pharaoh meets with rejection (5:1-7:7), God reassures him of success on the basis of His covenant promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The exodus is thus interpreted in the context of God's faithfulness to His promises to bless Abraham and his descendants. Moses meets continued rejection in spite of authenticating miracles (7:8-13) and a series of divine plagues (7:14-11:10). The plagues, pictured as a polemic against Egyptian gods, serve to intensify the struggle for the rightful rule over Israel. God eventually wins by asserting His unchallengeable sovereignty over life and death in the tenth plague (11:1-10; cf. 12:12).

The actual redemption of Israel from Egyptian rule (12:1-15:21) comes through the institution of the first Passover (12:1-13:16). Israel's redemption from bondage is possible only through the shedding of the blood of a spotless lamb. In this way God establishes and memorializes a pattern of redemption by blood for Israel. The events of the physical redemption from Egypt are a manifestation of God's great power (13:17-15:21). This power is manifested in the wilderness way by the direction of the pillars of cloud and fire. The grand display of God's power and the final usurpation of Pharaoh's rule is demonstrated at the Red sea crossing. Here, God distinguishes Himself as Israel's God, YHWH (14:17-18,31). This is also the theme of the Moses's song (15:1-19) which asks, "Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?" (15:11), and which declares the prerogative of God to restore His rule eternally: "The LORD shall reign forever and ever" (15:18).

The preservation of Israel in the wilderness after the exodus is also a display of God's power and faithfulness toward His people (15:22-18:27). His care for them is proved in the provision for their physical needs of water, food, and military victory (15:22-17:16). God is

faithful to His people in spite of their complaining and unbelief which affirms that the Abrahamic covenant promise is unconditional. Israel's initial organization in the wilderness is seen by the delegation of Moses' judicial authority to able men in the congregation (18:1-27). The full organization and separation of Israel to their God is confirmed and legislated in the subsequent giving of the law.

The separation of Israel to God by the covenant of law takes place in the wilderness at Sinai (19:1-31:18). God declares that the purpose of the covenant with Israel is to make them "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (19:6). Thus the law is given to consecrate Israel to God's purpose and plan of bringing to fruition his covenant promises. The giving of the covenant of law (19:1-24:11) begins with this explanation and the sanctification of the people (19:1-25). The revelation of the law (20:1-23:33) is introduced with ten basic commandments governing an individual's responsibilities to God and his responsibilities to other men (20:1-17). God also includes the initial instructions for sacrifice by which the Israelites may approach God (20:18-26). The specific judgments of the law (21:1-23:33) encompass the Israelites' social obligations (21:1-22:15), moral obligations (22:16-23:9), religious obligations (23:10-19), and obligations pertaining to the conquest of Canaan (23:20-33). This covenant of law is then ratified by the affirmation of the people and the sprinkling of blood, after which God's special presence with Israel is revealed to Moses and other leaders (24:1-11).

The instructions for worship under the covenant of law (24:12-29:46) continue to legislate Israel's separation to God and prepare her for the habitation of God with them in the tabernacle. The instructions concerning the building of the tabernacle are given to Moses on Mount Sinai (24:12-27:21). The design of the tabernacle and its furnishings (25:10-27:19) pictures the redemption, cleansing, and provision of God for His people. Likewise, this is pictured in the instructions for the clothing and consecration of the priests (28:1-29:46). Israel must approach their God on His terms which includes the shedding of blood and the mediation of priests.

The final instructions of this section concern the institution of the covenant of law (30:1-31:18). God conveys instructions for the careful use of the tabernacle (30:1-38) and the careful construction of the tabernacle (31:12-18). The Sabbath is given as a sign of the covenant of God with His people so that "you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you" (31:13).

The last third of Exodus describes Israel's response to the covenant of law (32:1-40:38). The first response is one of disobedience (32:1-33:23), manifested through worship of the golden calf (32:1-35). In this incident, God's wrath is assuaged by Moses' reminder of the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to multiply their descendants and give them a land (32:13-14). The promises of God to His people is also the basis of the promise of God's presence with them as an assurance that the nation is His (33:1-23). At the giving of the second set of tablets to Moses, God renews His covenant with Israel (34:1-35) which displays His mercy and grace to a nation which is exceedingly sinful (34:6-9).

With the covenant renewed, Israel is now ready to obey its requirements (35:1-40:38). Obedience begins with an offering for the tabernacle (35:4-36:7) and continues with the actual construction of it, its furnishings, and the necessary priestly clothes (36:8-40:33). The final habitation of God in the tabernacle confirms His special relationship to Israel as His chosen people (40:34-38). Thus Exodus describes how Israel was redeemed from bondage by the power

of God and was established in a new relationship to Him by separation through the the covenant of law as God continues His redemptive program for man.

Outline of Exodus

- I. Israel is Separated to God by Deliverance from Egypt. 1:1-18:27
 - A. The bondage of Israel under Egypt's rule 1:1-22
 1. The growth of Israel in Egypt after Joseph 1:1-7
 2. The affliction of Israel under a new pharaoh 1:8-14
 3. The plot to kill Israel's male children 1:15-22
 - B. The preparation of Moses to lead Israel 2:1-4:31
 1. His preparation in early life 2:1-25
 - a. He is saved from murder. 2:1-10
 - b. He tries to save by murder. 2:11-15
 - c. He helps the Priest of Midian's daughters. 2:16-22
 - d. Israel calls out to God. 2:23-25
 2. His preparation in the call of God 3:1-4:17
 - a. God appears in the burning bush. 3:1-6
 - b. God calls Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt. 3:7-10
 - c. God answers Moses' objections. 3:11-4:17
 - 1) "Who am I?" 3:11-12
 - 2) "What is His name?" 3:13-22
 - 3) "They will not believe me." 4:1-9
 - 4) "I am not eloquent." 4:10-17
 3. His preparation in the journey to Egypt 4:18-31
 - a. Moses returns to Egypt. 4:18-23
 - b. Moses escapes God's wrath. 4:24-26
 - c. Moses is accepted by Israel. 4:27-31
 - C. The deliverance of Israel from Egypt's rule 5:1-15:21
 1. Moses' challenge to Egyptian rule is rejected. 5:1-11:10
 - a. His words rejected 5:1-7:7
 - 1) The rejection of Moses 5:1-23
 - a) The rejection by Pharaoh 5:1-14
 - b) The rejection by Israel 5:15-21
 - c) The question by Moses 5:22-23
 - 2) The reassurance of Moses 6:1-9
 - 3) The recommissioning of Moses 6:10-7:7
 - a) The instruction to return to Pharaoh 6:10-13
 - b) The family of Moses and Aaron 6:14-27
 - c) The answer to Moses' objection 6:28-7:7
 - b. His miracles rejected 7:8-13
 - c. His plagues rejected 7:14-11:10
 - 1) First plague: waters become blood 7:14-25

- 2) Second plague: frogs 8:1-15
 - 3) Third plague: lice 8:16-19
 - 4) Fourth plague: flies 8:20-32
 - 5) Fifth plague: livestock diseased 9:1-7
 - 6) Sixth plague: boils on man and beast 9:8-12
 - 7) Seventh plague: hail 9:13-35
 - 8) Eighth plague: locusts 10:1-20
 - 9) Ninth plague: darkness 10:21-29
 - 10) Tenth plague: death announced 11:1-10
2. Israel is redeemed from Egyptian rule. 12:1-15:21
 - a. Redemption through the Passover 12:1-13:16
 - 1) Instructions for the Passover 12:1-20
 - 2) Participation in the Passover 12:21-30
 - 3) Freedom through the Passover 12:31-42
 - 4) Regulations from the Passover 12:43-13:16
 - a) For the Passover feast 12:43-51
 - b) For the Feast of Unleavened Bread 13:1-10
 - c) For the consecration of the firstborn 13:11-16
 - b. Redemption through the power of God 13:17-15:21
 - 1) His power in the wilderness way 13:17-22
 - 2) His power at the Red Sea 14:1-31
 - a) Egypt's pursuit 14:1-9
 - b) Israel's rebellion 14:10-14
 - c) The Red Sea parted 14:15-31
 - 3) His power praised in song 15:1-21
 - a) The song of Moses 15:1-19
 - b) The song of Miriam 15:20-21
- D. The preservation of Israel in the wilderness 15:22-18:27
 1. Preservation by provision 15:22-17:16
 - a. Provision of water at Marah 15:22-27
 - b. Provision of food 16:1-36
 - 1) Israel's complaint 16:1-3
 - 2) God's promise 16:4-12
 - 3) God's provision 16:13-31
 - 4) God's memorial 16:32-36
 - c. Provision of water in Rephidim 17:1-7
 - d. Provision of victory against Amalek 17:8-16
 2. Preservation by organization 18:1-27
 - a. Jethro's journey to see Moses 18:1-6
 - b. Jethro's meeting with Moses 18:7-12

- c. Jethro's advice to Moses 18:13-27
- II. Israel is Separated to God by a Covenant of Law. 19:1-31:18
 - A. The giving of the covenant of law 19:1-24:11
 - 1. The preparation of the people to receive the law 19:1-25
 - a. The explanation of the law's purpose 19:1-9
 - b. The sanctification of the people 19:10-15
 - c. The approach to Mount Sinai 19:16-25
 - 2. The revelation of the law 20:1-23:33
 - a. The ten commandments of the law 20:1-17
 - 1) Commandments relating to God 20:1-11
 - 2) Commandments relating to men 20:12-17
 - b. The provision for approaching God 20:18-26
 - 1) The fear of the people 20:18-21
 - 2) The law of the altar 20:22-26
 - c. The judgments of the law 21:1-23:33
 - 1) Social regulations 21:1-22:15
 - a) Personal rights 21:1-32
 - b) Property rights 21:33-22:15
 - 2) Moral regulations 22:16-23:9
 - a) Moral conduct 22:16-31
 - b) Just conduct 23:1-9
 - 3) Religious regulations 23:10-19
 - a) The law of sabbaths 23:10-13
 - b) The three annual feasts 23:14-19
 - 4) Conquest regulations 23:20-33
 - 3. The ratification of the law 24:1-11
 - a. The ratification through blood 24:1-8
 - b. The revelation of God 24:9-11
 - B. The instructions for worship under the covenant of law 24:12-29:46
 - 1. The instructions about the tabernacle 24:12-27:21
 - a. The revelation given on Mount Sinai 24:12-18
 - b. The collection of building materials 25:1-9
 - c. The design of the tabernacle 25:10-27:19
 - 1) The ark of the covenant 25:10-22
 - 2) The table of showbread 25:23-30
 - 3) The golden lampstand 25:31-40
 - 4) The tabernacle itself 26:1-37
 - a) The curtains of linens 26:1-14
 - b) The boards and sockets 26:15-30
 - c) The inner veil 26:31-35

- d) The outer screen 26:36-37
 - 5) The altar of burnt offerings 27:1-8
 - 6) The court of the tabernacle 27:9-19
 - d. The maintenance of the lampstand 27:20-21
 - 2. The instructions about the priests 28:1-29:46
 - a. The clothing of the priests 28:1-43
 - 1) The command to make clothing 28:1-4
 - 2) The design of the clothing 28:5-43
 - a) The ephod 28:5-14
 - b) The breastplate 28:15-30
 - c) The robe of the ephod 28:31-35
 - d) The turban 28:36-38
 - e) The tunic 28:39-41
 - f) The trousers 28:42-43
 - b. The consecration of the priests 29:1-46
 - 1) The preparation for the offerings 29:1-9
 - 2) The procedure for the offerings 29:10-34
 - 3) The perpetuation of the offerings 29:35-46
 - C. The instructions for institution of the covenant of law 30:1-31:18
 - 1. The instructions for using the tabernacle 30:1-38
 - a. The altar of incense 30:1-10
 - b. The ransom money 30:11-16
 - c. The bronze laver 30:17-21
 - d. The anointing oil 30:22-33
 - e. The incense 30:34-38
 - 2. The artisans for building the tabernacle 31:1-11
 - 3. The sign of the covenant: The Sabbath 31:12-18
- III. Israel responds to the Covenant of Law. 32:1-40:38
 - A. The disobedience of Israel to the covenant of law 32:1-33:23
 - 1. Israel's sin with the golden calf 32:1-35
 - a. The idolatry of the people 32:1-6
 - b. The anger of God 32:7-10
 - c. The response of Moses 32:11-35
 - 1) His intercession for the people 32:11-14
 - 2) His anger with the people 32:15-24
 - 3) His discipline of the people 32:25-29
 - 4) His atonement for the people 32:30-35
 - 2. God's presence with Israel assured 33:1-23
 - a. God removes Himself from Israel's midst. 33:1-11
 - 1) God rebukes Israel. 33:1-6

- 2) Moses meets with God outside the camp. 33:7-11
 - b. God assures Moses of His presence with Israel. 33:12-23
 - 1) Moses receives assurance. 33:12-16
 - 2) Moses will see God's glory. 33:17-23
- B. The renewal of the covenant of the law 34:1-35
 - 1. The making of two new tablets 34:1-4
 - 2. The presence of God with Moses 34:5-9
 - 3. The renewal of the covenant 34:10-28
 - a. Instructions about the possession of Canaan 34:10-17
 - b. Instructions about ceremonial worship 34:18-26
 - c. Instructions about recording these words 34:27-28
 - 4. The return of Moses 34:29-35
- C. The obedience of Israel to the covenant of law 35:1-40:38
 - 1. Israel brings offerings for the tabernacle. 35:1-36:7
 - a. The announcement of Sabbath regulations 35:1-3
 - b. The appeal of Moses 35:4-19
 - 1) For building materials 35:4-9
 - 2) For skilled workmen 35:10-19
 - c. The response of the people 35:20-36:7
 - 1) The generous offering collected 35:20-29
 - 2) The skilled workmen selected 35:30-36:1
 - 3) The overwhelming offering limited 36:2-7
 - 2. Israel builds the tabernacle. 36:8-40:33
 - a. The construction of the tabernacle 36:8-38:20
 - 1) The curtains 36:8-19
 - 2) The boards 36:20-34
 - 3) The veils 36:35-38
 - 4) The ark of the covenant 37:1-9
 - 5) The table of showbread 37:10-16
 - 6) The gold lampstand 37:17-24
 - 7) The altar of incense 37:25-29
 - 8) The altar of burnt offerings 38:1-7
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Summary and Outline of Leviticus

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

Besides the uniform tradition of the Jews and early church, Leviticus has the strongest internal attestation to authorship of any Old Testament book. Moses is mentioned as the obvious author 56 times by the phrase "The LORD spoke to Moses." Jesus also confirmed the book was written by Moses (Matt. 8:4 and Lev. 14:1-4; Luke 2:22). Finally, the opening phrase of Leviticus, "Now the LORD called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting...", shows this is a sequel to Exodus where the tabernacle was completed (Ex. 40).

The Date

According to Exodus 40:17, the tabernacle was finished one year after the first Passover, the date which marked the beginning of the Jews' calendar year (Ex. 12:2). Numbers 1:1 takes up the narrative from the second month of the second year. Therefore, Leviticus covers the first month of the second year and was probably written largely during this month. The date for writing thus falls between about 1444 B.C. and the death of Moses about 1405 B.C., but is more likely concentrated around the earlier time at Mount Sinai when the law was received and the tabernacle built.

The Historical Background

Historically, Leviticus fits between the completion of the tabernacle (Ex. 40) and the numbering of the Israelites at Mount Sinai (Num. 1-4). There is no geographical movement in the book, but a further revelation of the law as it was given at Mount Sinai. In this way, Leviticus is the sequel to Exodus. The Israelites, who received the law and the tabernacle as part of God's plan for separating them to Himself, now need instructions in how to relate to God in this new relationship. Leviticus comprises those instructions for worship and fellowship with God and a holy walk before Him as His special people.

The Purpose

The English title comes from the Vulgate which is from the LXX title which notes the emphasis on the Levitical priesthood. The worship, sacrifices, and regulations of the Levitical priesthood form the substance of Leviticus and indicate its purpose. The redemption of the exodus needed to be expressed properly by the newly formed people of God. Leviticus instructs Israel in how they are to approach God and walk before Him as a priestly and holy nation. The key to a relationship with God is found in the recurring word "holy" (93 times) and in the main idea expressed in 19:2: "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy." Holiness is obtained by following the Levitical regulations given for cleansing and sacrifice. The words "atonement" (51 times) and "blood" (93 times) indicate the means by which the Israelites can be ritualistically set apart to God, but the book also provides the people with regulations for personal holiness. Thus, Leviticus was written to bring about the cleansing and consecration of Israel in their new relationship to God.

Argument

The book can be divided into two major parts. The first half consists mainly of the laws of ritual necessary for approaching God. The second half contains mostly laws regulating personal holiness and has less of the ritualistic aspect.

The laws for approaching God through ritual (1:1-17:38) concern the levitical sacrificial system and the priesthood, for the most part. The detailed and pedantic laws of offering (1:1-7:38) are given to bring Israelites into fellowship and worship with the Lord. The first three offerings are worship offerings (1:1-3:17). The burnt offering was a blood sacrifice that signified the dedication of the worshiper's person to God (1:1-17). The grain offering was also a ritual of dedication as more of a gift or tribute to God (2:1-16). The peace or fellowship offering expressed the worshiper's desire for communion with God, or his thankfulness, or his commitment to a vow through a blood sacrifice (3:1-17).

The remaining two offerings can be called restoration offerings (4:1-6:7) because they restored the person who sins against God. The first of these, the sin offering, provided atonement and forgiveness for specific unintentional sins when no restitution was involved (4:1-5:13). The second, the trespass offering, removed guilt for sin against others and was accompanied by restitution to the wronged party (5:14-6:7). These two offerings also involved sacrificial blood, and along with the burnt and peace offerings, demonstrated to Israel that fellowship with God and forgiveness for sin comes only through the shedding of blood. Following the five offerings, there are additional regulations given in respect to each (6:8-7:36) and a summary statement signifying an end to the section on the offerings (7:37-38).

The next section gives laws for the priesthood (8:1-10:20). To perform their levitical duties and administer the sacrifices the priests must first be consecrated to their responsibilities (8:1-36). This took place through washing with water, anointing with oil, and sprinkling with blood. After Moses carried out the instructions on Aaron and his sons, the priestly ministry began with offerings for the priest himself and then the people (9:1-24). The scrutiny given to proper procedure and the consequences for deviating from it (10:1-21) emphasize the absolute holiness of God and the necessity of approaching Him in the divinely prescribed fashion. As mediators between God and man, the priests were held to the highest standards of conduct.

The consecration of God's people is further accomplished through specific laws of purity (11:1-15:33). These laws serve to separate Israel from that which is naturally and ceremonially unclean or profane. Laws dictate that which is clean and unclean food (11:1-47). The mother's purity at childbirth is also legislated (12:1-8). Natural causes of uncleanness, particularly leprosy in its various forms, were regulated with detailed laws concerning its detection and cleansing (13:1-14:57). In addition, the procedure for determining defilement from discharges and the procedure for cleansing is given (15:1-33).

Israel's collective purity was provided for by the laws of national atonement, that is, the Day of Atonement (16:1-34). The high priest and the sacrifices were carefully prepared. The offerings included one for the priest, one for the holy place, and a scape-goat for the people. The sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat and the release of the goat bearing Israel's sins into the wilderness picture the cleansing from sin that is both necessary and possible because of God's presence. Again, the atonement or covering for sin is the blood of the sacrificial animal. The

sanctity of blood is emphasized by additional laws of sacrifice (17:1-16). It must be applied only at the tabernacle, and it must never be eaten.

The laws of the second half of Leviticus are laws which provide for approaching God through personal holiness (18:1-27:34). These laws allow the individual Israelite to enjoy fellowship with the holy God. They are designed to bring about personal conduct distinct from the surrounding Canaanite society (18:1-5). Laws are given concerning sexual conduct (18:6-30), practical conduct (19:1-37), and various heinous offenses (20:1-21). The purpose for these laws is explicitly stated in 20:22-27, especially verse 26: "And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine."

There are also laws concerning the holiness of the priesthood (21:1-22:33). As the mediators between God and man, the priests were prohibited from many practices which would bring defilement to the sacred office. Their purity was a crucial influence on the nation and a testimony to the holiness of Israel's God (22:31-33).

Consecration to God is also obtained through laws of holiness in worship (23:1-24:23). Here, God gives instructions for the observance of the weekly Sabbath (23:1-3) and the annual feasts (23:4-44). The procedure of the seven feasts is the focus of the law, not so much the meaning. But the feasts each denote something relevant to Israel's present situation as well as serving to foreshadow God's future program for Israel. Other laws for holiness in worship include laws concerning the holy elements (24:1-9) and laws concerning the use of the holy name of God (24:10-23).

In anticipation of their eventual occupation of Canaan, God also instructs the Israelites in laws of holiness for the promised land (25:1-27:34). The first of these laws concern the observance of special years and the provisions which are to be made for these years (25:1-55). The holiness of God and His grace are to be expressed in the everyday business of handling property, the poor, and slaves. This will further insure that Israel is set apart to God from the surrounding nations, but perhaps more importantly, these laws will remind Israel that they are God's servants by virtue of His redemption of the nation from Egypt (25:38,42,55).

A section of blessings and curses for obedience and disobedience will motivate the Israelites in their conduct in Canaan (26:1-46). The basic requirement of the law is the fear of God and the abhorrence of idols (26:1-2) which will separate Israel from the other nations. This stipulation is followed by blessings for obedience to the covenant of law (26:3-13) and cursings for disobedience (26:14-39). In anticipation of Israel's disobedience, the provision for their restoration is explained (26:40-46). God grounds His assurance of restoration in His previous promises made to the patriarchs (26:42). The unconditional nature of the Abrahamic covenant assures an unbroken covenant though Israel may disobey (26:44). The covenant and the laws of Leviticus are for the purpose of separating and establishing a people of God's own (26:45).

The final chapter concerns things vowed to God (27:1-33) and has the appearance of an addendum made after the concluding tone of 26:46. Laws are given governing the consecration of various things (27:1-25), exclusions (27:26-33), and the relative payment of tithes. By such laws in even the most mundane matters, the purpose of Leviticus is maintained as the revelation of a covenant of law that sets Israel apart to God and provides for her cleansing, worship of, and fellowship with God in their new relationship to Him as His covenant people.

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Summary and Outline of Numbers

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Introduction

The Author

Jewish and Christian tradition has maintained that Moses wrote Numbers. Jesus and the apostles also related Moses to the writing and events of the book (John 3:14; 5:46; Acts 7; 1 Cor. 10:1-11; Heb. 3-4). The book itself claims "The LORD spoke to Moses" over eighty times and explicitly mentions his writing activity in 33:2 and 36:13. Numbers fits inextricably in the Pentateuch between Leviticus and Deuteronomy and is similarly understood as the work of Moses.

The Date

Numbers records Israel's history from Mount Sinai to the time of the encampment at Moab. Since the exodus was dated about 1445 B.C., and about one year was spent journeying to and remaining at Sinai, Numbers would cover the 39 years up to 1405 B.C. when Israel camped at Moab. It was written sometime in 1405 B.C., shortly before the death of Moses that same year.

The Historical Background

According to the censuses taken in Numbers (chs. 1-3; 26) Israel had grown to a nation of over 2.5 million people. Having been redeemed and given the covenant of law as God's holy nation, Israel needed to be prepared to enter the promised land. Numbers covers two generations of Israel because the first generation fell under God's wrath and must therefore pass away so the new one can enter Canaan. The first generation had not only sinned at Sinai by worshiping the golden calf, but they later sinned at Kadesh Barnea by refusing to enter the land through unbelief (ch. 14). Numbers is the narrative of the sin of the first generation and the emergence of the new. There is a definite transition to the new generation marked by the death of Aaron and the appointment of Eleazar in his place as High Priest (20:22-29), and also by the appointment of Joshua to succeed Moses (27:12-23).

The Purpose

The title "Numbers", from the LXX title simply refers to Israel's two censuses in the wilderness. The Hebrew title is taken from the first word translated "Now [he] said", but the book was often referred to by the Jews according to the fifth word translated "in the wilderness." This aptly describes the contents of Numbers. The book is a historical record of Israel's wandering in the wilderness, from Mount Sinai to Moab.

Theologically, however, the book is designed to show how God prepared His people to enter the land through the bestowal of His mercy in testings. Israel's many failures are highlighted in Numbers so that God's discipline, grace, and mercy can also be demonstrated. God preserves His people and bestowed mercy on them for the sake of the covenant made with their forefathers. Thus God is faithful to His promises in spite of the sinfulness of His chosen people.

Argument

The history of Israel's preparation under God's discipline and mercy is recorded in Numbers in three major parts. The first part covers the preparation of the old generation to enter the land (1:1-10:10). The second records their failure to enter the land (10:11-25:18), and the third then turns to the preparation of the new generation (26:1-36:13). God's discipline and mercy follow Israel through their trials for the sake of the covenant blessing and final readiness to possess the promised land.

The focus of the first section is the preparation of the old generation of the exodus to enter the promised land (1:1-10:10). The first step of preparation is the organization of the nation (1:1-4:49). The people were organized through the taking of a census by tribe (1:1-54) and the tribes were then arranged to camp around the tabernacle (2:1-34). The Levitical priests were also organized (3:1-4:49) by separation (3:1-13), census (3:14-39), and dedication (3:40-51) to insure their ministerial duties would be performed (4:1-49).

After the initial organization of the nation, God gives instructions for the sanctification of the camp (5:1-9:14). The first regulations concern sanctification through separation from the sins involving defilement, restitution, and marital infidelity (5:1-31). Further sanctification could be pursued through the taking of a Nazarite vow (6:1-21). The pronouncement of the priestly blessing was to also direct Israel into a sanctified relationship to God (6:22-27).

The expression of the dedication and consecration of the nation comes through gestures of worship (7:1-9:14). The leaders of the people make generous offerings at the dedication of the altar (7:1-89). Also, the Levites are consecrated to their tabernacle ministry (8:5-26). Furthermore, Israel faithfully keeps the Passover celebration, their second (9:1-14).

God provides every need for His people in the wilderness, including guidance (9:15-10:10). His own special presence guides them in the pillar of cloud and fire (9:15-23). Other directions are provided by two silver trumpets to be blown by the priests (10:1-10). Such thoughtful instructions and regulations were to prepare the exodus generation for conquest and settlement in the land, but in spite of God's gracious provisions, that generation soon failed Him.

The second major division of the book records the failure of the old generation of Israelites to enter the land (10:11-25:18). Evidence of their unbelief surfaces en route to Kadesh Barnea from Sinai (10:11-25:18). The departure from Mount Sinai is orderly (10:11-36), but the people soon begin to complain (11:1-35). Though God destroys some for complaining at Taberah (11:1-3), the people nevertheless continue to murmur about the lack of meat (11:4-35). Once more God mercifully provides meat, but also displays His wrath by striking many with a plague. The surprising dissension of Miriam and Aaron emphasizes the pervasiveness of unbelief in the camp (12:1-16).

The major failure of the old generation of Israel occurs at Kadesh Barnea (13:1-19:22). The unbelief of the nation is displayed at the occasion of the spies' report upon their return from Canaan (13:1-14:45). Israel's failure to trust God by entering the land (14:1-10) is a blatant disregard for the covenant God had made with Israel which promised them the land, and as such, is an affront to God's character.

Moses intercedes for Israel on the basis of God's character and reputation reminding Him that disinheriting the people would make the fulfillment of His promises to the nation impossible (14:11-19). God does not disinherit them, but sentences them to wander and die in the wilderness, kills the unfaithful spies, and allows them to suffer defeat in battle (14:20-45). God's judgment seals the fate of the old generation. Israel would come into their promised land, but not through them.

To further prepare the faithful Israelites who will enter the land, God reviews the laws for various offerings, laws for intentional sins, and laws concerning the priests' garments (15:1-41). At this point in the narrative, these instructions prove God's plan to fulfill His promises to Israel and show that it will not be thwarted by unbelief.

The degree of Israel's corruption is demonstrated by the rebellion of even the Levites led by Korah (16:1-50). The essence of their rebellion is that "these men have rejected the LORD" (16:30). God's judgment of opening the earth to swallow the rebels is to "show who is His and who is holy" (16:5). God further judges the unbelief of all the congregation on the next day by a plague that takes another 14,700 lives (16:41-50).

The confirmation of the ministry of the priesthood (17:1-19:22) again reaffirms God's desire to have a holy nation in the midst of rampant unbelief and His desire to have the priests lead them into holiness. Aaron's priesthood is confirmed by a miracle as a rebuke and message to the people (17:1-13). God then instructs Aaron and Moses in the duties of the priests and Levites, their remuneration, and their purification (18:1-19:22).

Israel's sin continues, however, as seen in their failure on the way to Moab (20:1-21:35). The failure of Moses and Aaron in the Wilderness of Zin (20:1-21) proves the sinfulness of Israel at every level while also demonstrating the strict holiness of their God. The death of Aaron at Mount Hor and the appointment of his son Eleazar in his place (20:22-29) is an important transition in God's dealings with a new generation. The rest of Israel's journey to Moab presents a mixture of failure and success for the nation.

The last great failure of the old generation takes place at Moab and is wrapped in the story of Balaam and Balak which emphasizes God's blessing for Israel instead of their sin (22:1-25:18). The prophet Balaam is urged by the king of the Moabites, Balak, to curse Israel (22:1-40). However, by divine intervention and inspiration Balaam can only pronounce blessings over them (22:41-24:25). His blessings are an affirmation of the Abrahamic covenant and assure its fulfillment in the face of adversity. Further, the Balaam oracles give an amazing revelation of a future King of Israel (23:21; 24:7,17-19). Israel's blessing is expressed in its ultimate fulfillment through this coming King. This revelation comes before the account of Israel's harlotry with the Moabite women (25:1-18) and thus suggests that God's covenant blessings will be realized in spite of Israel's persistent sin.

At this point the narrative moves to the preparation of the new generation to enter the land (26:1-36:13). Israel is organized again (26:1-27:23) by another census (26:1-51). Instructions are also given for dividing the land (26:52-27:11), and it is noted here that the old generation had passed on except Caleb and Joshua (26:64-65). Another important transition is the appointment of Joshua to succeed Moses as Israel's leader (27:12-23).

The new generation is also carefully instructed in the regulations for proper worship and procedure in their relationship to God. Moses conveys to them the regulations for offerings (28:1-29:40) and the regulations for vows (30:1-16) which are to be observed in Canaan.

Israel's conquest and division of Canaan (31:1-36:13) actually begins with a preparatory victory over Midian which was a punitive action of God (31:1-54). Israel fails to recognize that God's design in destroying the Midianites is to punish them for their part in corrupting Israel through harlotry (31:12-16). Thus they keep alive the Midianite women and Moses must command them to kill the women and be ceremonially purified (3:12-24).

The division of the land east of the Jordan runs into immediate conflict (32:1-42). Reuben and Gad want to settle there and not have to cross the Jordan to conquer new territory. This draws a rebuke from Moses about the persistence of sin in the new generation and a compromise is reached which calls for the two tribes to help in the conquest and then return to settle in Transjordan (32:16-32).

The anticipation of Israel's entrance into the promised land grows in the narrative as a summary of their journey from Egypt to Moab is given (33:1-49). In the same vein, instructions are given for the division of the land west of the Jordan (33:50-34:29). These include instructions for the complete conquest of the Canaanites and a warning that failure to do so will trouble Israel in the future (33:55). New tribal leaders are appointed to divide the land (34:16-29).

It is clear the gracious provision of God will follow His people into Canaan as instructions are given to establish special cities there (35:1-34). The Levites are to be given forty-eight cities from the inheritance of the other tribes (35:1-8). Also, God commands and regulates the establishment of six cities as a place of refuge for those who take the life of another in certain situations (35:9-34). The book ends with the question and solution about a family's inheritance lost to another tribe through intermarriage (36:1-13).

Numbers concludes with Israel perched at the Jordan ready to possess their promised land. God has faithfully prepared them in the wilderness through discipline and mercy for such a step of faith.

Outline of Numbers

- I. The Preparation of the Old Generation to Enter the Land 1:1-10:10
 - A. The organization of Israel 1:1-4:49
 1. The organization of the people 1:1-2:34
 - a. The first census of Israel 1:1-54
 - 1) The command for a census 1:1-4
 - 2) The numbering of the tribes 1:5-43
 - 3) The summary of the census 1:44-46
 - 4) The special position of the Levites 1:47-54
 - b. The arrangement of the camp 2:1-34
 - 1) On the east 2:1-9
 - 2) On the south 2:10-16
 - 3) In the middle 2:17
 - 4) On the west 2:18-24
 - 5) On the north 2:25-31
 - 6) The summary of the arrangement 2:32-34
 2. The organization of the priests 3:1-4:49
 - a. The separation of Levites 3:1-13
 - 1) The sons of Aaron 3:1-4
 - 2) The presentation of the Levites to Aaron 3:5-13
 - b. The census of Levites 3:14-39
 - 1) The command for a census 3:14-20
 - 2) The numbering of the sons of Levi 3:21-37
 - 3) The summary of the census 3:38-39
 - c. The substitution of Levites for the firstborn 3:40-51
 - 1) The numbering of the firstborn 3:40-43
 - 2) The collection of redemption money 3:44-51
 - d. The ministry of Levites 4:1-49
 - 1) The duties of the working Levites 4:1-33
 - a) The sons of Kohath 4:1-20
 - b) The sons of Gershon 4:21-28
 - c) The sons of Merari 4:29-33
 - 2) The census of the working Levites 4:34-49
 - a) The sons of Kohath 4:34-37
 - b) The sons of Gershon 4:38-41
 - c) The sons of Merari 4:42-45
 - d) The summary of the census 4:46-49
 - B. The sanctification of Israel 5:1-9:14
 1. Sanctification through separation from sin 5:1-31

- a. Separation of unclean persons 5:1-4
 - b. Separation by restitution 5:5-10
 - c. Separation from suspected infidelity 5:11-31
 - 1) The suspicion of infidelity 5:11-15
 - 2) The test for infidelity 5:16-28
 - 3) The summary of the law concerning infidelity 5:29-31
 - 2. Sanctification through the Nazarite vow 6:1-21
 - a. The requirements of the vow 6:1-8
 - b. The defilement under the vow 6:9-12
 - c. The fulfillment of the vow 6:13-21
 - 3. Sanctification through the priestly blessing 6:22-27
 - 4. Sanctification through worship 7:1-9:14
 - a. The offerings of the leaders 7:1-89
 - 1) Preparation for the offerings 7:1-11
 - 2) Presentation of the offerings 7:12-83
 - 3) Summary of the offerings 7:84-89
 - b. The arrangement of the lamps 8:1-4
 - c. The consecration of the Levites 8:5-26
 - 1) The instructions for their consecration 8:5-15
 - 2) The reason for their consecration 8:16-19
 - 3) The performance of their consecration 8:20-22
 - 4) The duration of their consecration 8:23-26
 - d. The celebration of the Passover 9:1-14
 - 1) Israel's celebration of the Passover 9:1-5
 - 2) The question about celebrating the Passover 9:6-8
 - 3) Regulations about celebrating the Passover 9:9-14
 - C. The guidance of Israel 9:15-10:10
 - 1. Guidance by the cloud and fire 9:15-23
 - 2. Guidance by two silver trumpets 10:1-10
- II. The Failure of the Old Generation to Enter the Land 10:11-25:18
 - A. Israel's failure en route to Kadesh Barnea 10:11-12:16
 - 1. The departure from Mount Sinai 10:11-36
 - a. The beginning of the journey 10:11-13
 - b. The order of the armies 10:14-28
 - c. The invitation to Hobab 10:29-32
 - d. The progress of the journey 10:33-36
 - 2. The complaining of the people 11:1-35
 - a. The complaining at Taberah 11:1-3
 - b. The complaining about food 11:4-35
 - 1) The complaint of the people 11:4-9

- 2) The response of Moses 11:10-15
 - 3) The response of God 11:16-30
 - 4) The provision of God 11:31-35
 - 3. The dissension of Miriam and Aaron 12:1-16
 - a. The complaint of Miriam and Aaron 12:1-3
 - b. The defense of Moses by God 12:4-8
 - c. The leprosy of Miriam 12:9-16
- B. Israel's failure at Kadesh Barnea 13:1-19:22
 - 1. The faithlessness at the spies' report 13:1-14:45
 - a. The investigation of the promised land 13:1-33
 - 1) The selection of the spies 13:1-16
 - 2) The work of the spies 13:17-25
 - 3) The report of the spies 13:26-33
 - b. The faithless rebellion of the people 14:1-10
 - c. The intercession of Moses 14:11-19
 - d. The judgment of God 14:20-45
 - 1) Israel sentenced to wander and die 14:20-35
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 - 3) Israel suffers defeat by enemies 14:39-45
 - 2. The review of offerings 15:1-41
 - a. Laws for grain and drink offerings 15:1-21
 - b. Laws for offerings for unintentional sins 15:22-29
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 - d. Laws for making tassels on garments 15:37-41
 - 3. The rebellions against Moses and Aaron 16:1-50
 - a. The rebellion of Korah 16:1-40
 - 1) Korah rebels against Moses and Aaron. 16:1-3
 - 2) Moses confronts the rebels. 16:4-19
 - 3) God judges the rebels. 16:20-35
 - 4) God establishes a reminder. 16:36-40
 - b. The rebellion of all the people 16:41-50
 - 1) The people rebel against Moses and Aaron. 16:41-45
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 - 4. The ministry of the priesthood 17:1-19:22
 - a. The confirmation of Aaron's priesthood 17:1-13
 - b. The duties of the priests and Levites 18:1-7
 - c. The remuneration of the priests 18:8-24
 - d. The tithe of the Levites 18:25-32
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 - 1) The purification of the red heifer 19:1-10

- 2) The purification of the unclean 19:11-22
 - C. Israel's failure en route to Moab 20:1-21:35
 - 1. Failure in the Wilderness of Zin 20:1-21
 - a. The failure of Moses and Aaron 20:1-13
 - 1) The complaint of the people 20:1-6
 - 2) The sin of Moses and Aaron 20:7-13
 - b. The refusal of passage through Edom 20:14-21
 - 2. Failure at Mount Hor 20:22-21:9
 - a. The death of Aaron 20:22-29
 - b. The defeat of the Canaanites 21:1-3
 - c. The judgment of the serpents 21:4-9
 - 3. The journey from Mount Hor to Moab 21:10-21:35
 - a. The account of Israel's travels 21:11-20
 - b. The victory of Israel over the Amorites 21:21-32
 - c. The victory of Israel over Bashan 21:33-35
 - D. Israel's failure at Moab 22:1-25:18
 - 1. Balaam is sought by Balak. 22:1-40
 - a. The first appeal to Balaam 22:1-14
 - b. The second appeal to Balaam 22:15-21
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 - d. The encounter with Balak 22:36-40
 - 2. Balaam blesses Israel. 22:41-24:25
 - a. His first oracle 22:41-23:12
 - b. His second oracle 23:13-26
 - c. His third oracle 23:27-24:13
 - d. His fourth oracle 24:14-25
 - 3. The sin of Israel with the Moabites 25:1-18
 - a. Israel commits harlotry 25:1-5
 - b. Phineas stops the plague 25:6-15
 - c. Israel is commanded to destroy Moab 25:16-18
- III. The Preparation of the New Generation to Enter the Land 26:1-36:13
 - A. The reorganization of Israel 26:1-27:23
 - 1. The second census of Israel 26:1-51
 - a. The command for the census 26:1-4
 - b. The numbering of the tribes 26:5-51
 - 2. The regulations for dividing the land 26:52-27:11
 - a. The procedure for dividing the land 26:52-56
 - b. The exceptions for dividing the land 26:57-27:11
 - 1) No inheritance for the Levites 26:57-62
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- 3) Inheritance for the nearest relative 27:1-11
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- B. The regulations of offerings and vows 28:1-30:16
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 - d. The yearly offerings 28:16-29:40
 - 1) Passover 28:16
 - 2) Unleavened bread 28:17-25
 - 3) Firstfruits 28:26-31
 - 4) Trumpets 29:1-6
 - 5) Atonement 29:7-11
 - 6) Tabernacle 29:12-40
 2. The regulations of vows 30:1-16
- C. The conquest and division of the land 31:1-36:13
 1. The victory over Midian 31:1-54
 - a. The destruction of the Midianites 31:1-11
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 - a. The instructions for the conquest of Canaan 33:50-56
 - b. The boundaries of Canaan 34:1-15
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 - 1) The command to establish the cities 35:9-15
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Summary and Outline of Deuteronomy

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy has only seriously been questioned by documentary critics in the past. They argued that the book is a fraud written in Moses' name and planted in the temple during Josiah's reign in the seventh century to spark a reform (2 Kings 22). They also argued that Moses' obituary in chapter 34 was proof he did not write the book. This theory has largely been deserted, in part because of the following evidence. Externally, the Old Testament consistently attributes Deuteronomy and the rest of the Pentateuch to Moses (Josh. 1:7; Judg. 3:4; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; Ezra 3:2; Neh. 1:7; Dan. 9:11; Mal. 4:4). Most of these references speak of the law in a codified form, which argues against a later recording of an oral tradition. Christ also quotes and speaks of Deuteronomy as the work of Moses (Matt. 19:7-8; Mark 7:10; 10:3-4; John 5:45-47). Furthermore, other New Testament books support Mosaic authorship (Acts 3:22; Rom. 10:5,19; 1 Cor. 9:8). Not surprisingly, Jewish, Samaritan, and church tradition fully assumes Moses was the author.

Internally, there are forty references that state or imply Moses was the author (cf. 1:1-5; 4:44-46; 29:1; 31:9,24-26). Also, the book is clearly written from the time of Moses because: Canaan is viewed from the outside; Canaanite religion is viewed as a future threat; the assumption is made that the readers remember the exodus; Israel is living in tents; and there is no evidence of a divided kingdom. Besides, most scholars agree that Deuteronomy follows a basic pattern of treaties used in the 14th and 15th centuries B.C. Finally, Moses probably did not write the last chapter, but it was added by either Joshua or Eleazar.

The Date

Deuteronomy was written by Moses at the end of the 40 years of wandering and before the crossing of the Jordan into Canaan, thus the date is placed at 1405 B.C. It was written as Israel waited on the plains of Moab east of Jericho (1:1; 29:1) and has no historical progression.

The Historical Background

The Israelites who assembled on the plains of Moab waiting to cross into Canaan were a new generation. The old exodus generation who had received the law died in the wilderness. The new generation needed a reminder of what God had done and would do in relationship to His promises and purpose for Israel. There are almost 200 references to the "land" in the book showing that God's promised inheritance lay ahead, but only after a review and renewal of the covenant of law God had made with the previous generation.

The Purpose

Neither the Hebrew title, meaning "These are the words" (from 1:1), nor the English title, from the LXX meaning "Second Law", accurately expresses the purpose of Deuteronomy. This is not actually a second giving of the law, but a renewal or review of it in which Moses expounds and applies its tenets. The renewal theme finds support from the apparent similarity in structure to ancient suzerainty treaties. These treaties had a common pattern: 1) a preamble (cf. 1:1-5); 2) an historical prologue (cf. 1:6-4:43); 3) stipulations (cf. 4:44-26:19); 4) ratification,

which included curses and blessings (cf. 27:1-30:20); and 5) provisions for continuity of the covenant (cf. 31:1-34:12). Deuteronomy was thus written to renew the covenant of the law with the new generation of Israelites in preparation for their life in Canaan as God's chosen people. The renewal calls for a response of obedience and love from Israel as they experience God's provision and mercy in the new land.

Argument

Following the basic pattern advanced by ancient treaties, Deuteronomy renews the covenant of law with the new generation of Israelites. These sections also appear as four sermons, or addresses, by Moses. The renewal begins with the typical historical setting (1:1-5) reviewing the history, place, and time of writing. Israel is in Moab directly across the Jordan from Jericho when Moses begins to explain the law (1:5).

After this introduction, Moses' first address comprises the historical prologue to the covenant (1:6-4:43). He reviews Israel's history in the wilderness from Mount Sinai where leaders were appointed (1:6-18), through the rebellion at Kadesh Barnea (1:19-46), to the plains of Moab (2:1-3:29). Israel's prohibitions from association with pagans, conquests of pagans, division of the land, and transition to leadership under Joshua are highlighted in this brief history. Moses' historical recitation concludes with an exhortation to obey the law and a warning against idolatry in the new land, all based on the motivation of God's gracious covenant with their forefathers (4:37). A brief narrative describes how Moses establishes three of the prescribed cities of refuge in Transjordan (4:41-43).

The second address of Moses is the actual rehearsal of the stipulations of the covenant (4:44-26:19). In this section the original revelation of the law is repeated and elaborated for the sake of the new generation. After an introduction to the law (4:44-49) the ten basic commandments are rehearsed (5:1-5:33).

Moses' exposition continues as he elaborates the great commands of the law (6:1-11:32). First, he explains the command to fear the Lord (6:1-25) which includes the admonition to love God and to perpetuate the precepts of the law by teaching them to one's children. Another part of the exposition concerns the command to destroy the Canaanites (7:1-26). Here Moses explains that the reason and basis for the command is that Israel was chosen by God to be a special and holy people "above all the peoples on the face of the earth" because God set His love on them and is faithful to His promise to bless them (7:6-9).

The command to remember the Lord (8:1-20) is Moses' exhortation and warning so that the new generation not become presumptuous and fall into sin. He then commands Israel to remember their former unrighteousness as he reviews their history of unbelief (9:1-10:11). He makes clear that their possession of the land is not due to their own righteousness, but because of the intolerable wickedness of the Canaanites and God's faithfulness to His promises to the patriarchs (9:5). Moses ends this exposition of the great commands of the law with a call to commitment that explains the blessings which come from obedience and the curses for disobedience (10:12-11:32). Israel's temporal enjoyment of the benefits of the Abrahamic covenant depends on their adherence to the covenant of law.

Moses' second message also expounds the more specific commands of the law (12:1-26:19). Ceremonial laws are explained (12:1-16:17) covering regulations for worship (12:1-28), the practice of idolatry (12:29-13:18), mourning (14:1-2), food (14:3-21), the use of possessions and money (14:22-15:23), and the feasts (16:1-17). The stated reason for these commands is Israel's election to a special position before God (14:2,21). By obeying the law, God is able to bestow the blessings of His covenant upon His people (13:17; 14:29; 15:4-6,18; 16:10,15).

The next specific commands expounded are the civil laws (16:18-20:20). These laws concern governing officials (16:18-18:22), criminal justice (19:1-21), and holy war (20:1-20). In this section Moses predicts the appearance of a new Prophet in Israel's history who will speak God's word and should be followed (18:15-19). This shows that the purpose of the law was to prepare Israel for God's blessings, the ultimate of which would come through acceptance of the future Prophet.

Moses' rehearsal of specific laws continues with an exposition of the social laws (21:1-26:15). These laws cover various aspects of social life: an unsolved murder (21:1-9), family relationships (21:10-21), miscellaneous matters (21:22-22:12), sexual immorality (22:13-30), exclusion from the congregation (23:1-14), the treatment of various peoples (23:15-25:19), and the offerings of firstfruits and tithes (26:1-15). The conclusion to Moses' second sermon calls the nation to commitment to the commands (26:16-19); a commitment which is once again based on the fact that they are God's special people who are set apart in holiness through the law to be above all nations.

The third address of Moses instructs the ratification of the covenant with the new generation (27:1-28:68). He instructs them to prepare for the ratification of the covenant by erecting an altar and pronouncing curses upon lawbreakers (27:1-26). Then follows a section of blessings and curses for obedience and disobedience, a feature typical of ancient treaties (28:1-68). The lengthier list of curses for disobedience and the predictive language used seems to anticipate Israel's apostasy in Canaan (28:15-68).

The fourth and final sermon is the actual renewal of the covenant between the Israelites and God (29:1-30:20). Moses reviews the background of the covenant (29:1-9) and specifies its recipients (29:10-15). He also reviews the consequences of the covenant (29:16-30:10) which include the scattering of the nation and provisions for her restoration and the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises. Moses ends his last sermon with a charge to obey the covenant and thus enjoy a full life in the land as promised to the forefathers (30:11-20).

Deuteronomy concludes with a description of the transition of the covenant from Moses to Joshua (31:1-34:12). In preparation for the transition (31:1-29), Moses commissions Joshua as Israel's new leader and commands that the law be read regularly to all the people. God also commands Moses to write a song which will testify against the nation when they apostasize in Canaan. The song reviews God's faithfulness to His people, their unfaithfulness, God's punishment, and His compassion. The final event of the book consists of Moses' last days in which he views the land, blesses the tribes, and dies on Mount Nebo (32:48-34:12). Having rehearsed and renewed the covenant of law with the new generation, Moses has prepared them for entrance into the land and for life as the holy nation of God through which He will continue to fulfill His promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Outline of Deuteronomy

- I. Introduction: The Historical Setting of the Covenant 1:1-5
- II. First Address: The Historical Prologue of the Covenant 1:6-4:43
 - A. Israel appointed leaders at Mount Sinai. 1:6-18
 - B. Israel rebelled at Kadesh Barnea. 1:19-46
 - 1. Israel's refusal to enter the land 1:19-33
 - 2. Israel's punishment for rebelling 1:34-46
 - C. Israel journeyed from Kadesh Barnea to Moab. 2:1-3:29
 - 1. Israel's prohibition from pagan peoples 2:1-23
 - a. The prohibition against those of Seir 2:1-8
 - b. The prohibition against those of Moab 2:9-15
 - c. The prohibition against those of Ammon 2:16-23
 - 2. Israel's conquest of pagan peoples 2:24-3:11
 - a. The conquest of King Sihon of Heshbon 2:24-37
 - b. The conquest of King Og of Bashan 3:1-11
 - 3. Israel's division of the land east of Jordan 3:12-20
 - 4. Israel's transition from Moses to Joshua 3:21-29
 - D. Israel is exhorted to obey the law. 4:1-40
 - 1. The exhortation to obedience 4:1-14
 - 2. The warning against idolatry 4:15-31
 - 3. The motivation of privileged position 4:32-40
 - E. Israel is given cities of refuge east of the Jordan. 4:41-43
- III. Second Address: The Rehearsal of the Covenant 4:44-26:19
 - A. The introduction to the law 4:44-49
 - B. The rehearsal of the ten commandments 5:1-5:33
 - 1. The setting of the ten commandments 5:1-5
 - 2. The ten commandments 5:6-21
 - 3. The response to the giving of the ten commandments 5:22-33
 - C. The exposition of the great commands 6:1-11:32
 - 1. The command to fear the Lord 6:1-25
 - a. Love the Lord. 6:1-5
 - b. Teach your children. 6:6-9
 - c. Do not forget the Lord. 6:10-15
 - d. Do not tempt the Lord. 6:16-19
 - e. Remind your sons. 6:20-25
 - 2. The command to destroy the Canaanites 7:1-26
 - a. The instructions for destroying the Canaanites 7:1-5
 - b. The reasons for destroying the Canaanites 7:6-11
 - c. The blessings for destroying the Canaanites 7:12-16

- d. The confidence for destroying the Canaanites 7:17-26
- 3. The command to remember the Lord 8:1-20
 - a. The reasons for remembering the Lord 8:1-10
 - b. The danger of forgetting the Lord 8:11-20
- 4. The command to remember Israel's unrighteousness 9:1-10:11
 - a. The rejection of Israel's self-righteousness 9:1-6
 - b. The review of Israel's rebellion 9:7-24
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Summary and Outline of Joshua

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

Because Joshua is anonymous, liberal critics espousing the documentary theory have assumed Joshua is a composite of documents edited much the same as they say the Pentateuch was. A host of arguments refutes this assumption. There is uniform Jewish tradition that holds Joshua wrote the book. Indeed, Joshua is mentioned as one who was responsible for writing God's revelation at various times (8:32; 24:26). He would have been the best qualified to do so as Israel's leader and an eyewitness of the events of the book. Thus he naturally fits into the first person pronoun used in 5:1 and 5:6. Also, it is obvious the book was written shortly after the events occurred because, for example, Rahab was still living (6:25), the Jebusites still inhabited Jerusalem (15:63), and Canaanite cities are called by their ancient names (15:9,13). Furthermore, the narrative demonstrates a unity of style and organization. Only three portions were obviously added after Joshua's death by probably Eleazar or his son, Phinehas: 15:13-19 (cf. Judg. 1:1,10-15,20); 19:47 (cf. Judg. 17-18); and 24:29-33.

Joshua was born a slave in Egypt. He rose to leadership in the nation as a military leader after the exodus (Ex. 17:8-16) and as a faithful spy at Kadesh Barnea (Num. 13-14). He was finally chosen to succeed Moses as Israel's leader and to take them into the promised land (Num. 27:15-23). The character traits that are evident in his life include faith, obedience, courage, and commitment to God and His Word.

The Date

Assuming the beginning of the conquest was about 1405 B.C. (see arguments for dating the exodus in the introduction to Exodus), and figuring the actual conquest took about 7 years (14:7,10), a date of 1399 is reached for the end of the events in Joshua. This means the book was written soon after 1399 B.C. or shortly before Joshua's death.

The Historical Background

The book of Joshua resumes the narrative history of Israel from the plains of Moab as seen at the end of Numbers. There are three geographical settings for the book: chapters 1-5 at the Jordan river, 6:1-13:7 in Canaan, and 13:8-24:33 which concerns the division of the land on both sides of the Jordan.

The general designation "Canaan" referred to the western side of Jordan from Sidon in the north to Gaza and Sodom in the south. The population of this land was composed of mixed racial groups who evidently descended from Canaan, the son of Ham the son of Noah (Gen. 10:15-20). Egypt had controlled the territory of Canaan from about 1468 to 1400 B.C., when their power finally weakened. Canaanite religion was blatantly idolatrous and involved such corrupt and brutal practices as prostitution and infant sacrifice. The Canaanites worshiped a pantheon of gods including El, Baal, Anath, Ashtoreth, Asherah, Molech, and Milcom.

The Purpose

The name and title "Joshua" means "YHWH is salvation" and accurately describes what God used Joshua to do in the book by conquering the Canaanites and possessing the land.

Theologically, this was in direct fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12:2-3; 13:15; 15:18-21; 17:19-21). Joshua shows how Israel possessed the land through obedient faith, the way to enjoyment of the covenant blessings.

Argument

The narrative of the book follows four major stages in Israel's possession of the land: the entry into Canaan, the conquest of Canaan, the division of Canaan, and the continuation in Canaan. The book continues the history of Israel from the plains of Moab where Moses had renewed the covenant with Israel.

The first section describes the events surrounding Israel's entry of Canaan (1:1-5:15). As Joshua is commissioned to be Israel's leader in place of Moses (1:1-18), God makes it clear that success depends upon obedience to His covenant of law (1:7-8). Two spies are sent ahead into Jericho where they find faith in Rahab and return with a report of faith (2:1-24). The event of the crossing of the Jordan (3:1-4:24) establishes Joshua's leadership over Israel (3:7; 4:14) and is memorialized to remind Israel to fear God (4:24). After the crossing, the nation is prepared spiritually for the conquest of the land by the circumcision of the new generation, the observance of the Passover, and an encounter with the Commander of the Lord's army which serves as an assurance of victory (5:1-15).

In the second major part of the book, Israel conquers Canaan using a "divide and conquer" strategy (6:1-12:24). The first campaign brings the conquest of central Canaan (6:1-8:35). The destruction of Jericho is an illustration of the victory of faith (6:1-27) while the subsequent battle with Ai (7:1-8:29) pictures the failure caused by sin (Achan's) and the victory after its confession and cleansing. Joshua's renewal of the covenant at this point is a reaffirmation that the curses and blessings of the law were recognized by Israel (8:30-35).

The account of the invasion continues with a description of the conquest of southern Canaan (9:1-10:43) and the conquest of northern Canaan (11:1-15). In the deception posed by the Gibeonites (9:1-27), the certainty of God's promise of victory is reaffirmed in their expression of fear (9:24). The following victory over the Amorite coalition (10:1-27) is depicted as an example of God's miraculous power (10:12-14) working together with human obedience and is another assurance of success in the conquest (10:25). The theme of divine blessing and human obedience continues in the record of Joshua's victories over the southern kings (10:28-43) and the northern kings (11:1-15). These victories are alternately described by such phrases as "the LORD delivered" and "Joshua conquered." Joshua's obedience was complete, as indicated by the summary statements, "He left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses" (11:15) and "Joshua took the whole land" (11:23). The section of conquest closes with summaries of conquered territories and kings (11:16-12:24).

The division of the territories of Canaan occupies a significant portion of the book and forms a third section (13:1-21:45). Vestiges of land remain to be conquered when God orders the division of Canaan (13:1-7), which indicates that Israel's obedience would be tested in the future. The division of the land (13:8-19:51) begins with territories east of the Jordan distributed to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh (13:15-33). The division of the territory west of the Jordan (14:1-19:51) takes place in two stages. First, at Gilgal, land is distributed to Judah, including faithful Caleb, and to the tribes of Joseph: Ephraim and the half-

tribe of Manasseh (14:1-17:18). The second division takes place at Shiloh and distributes the "inheritance" to the remaining tribes and to Joshua (18:1-19:51). Finally, special cities are designated as cities of refuge and Levitical cities (20:1-21:42). The use of the term "inheritance" (18:28; 19:1,9,10,16, etc.) describes the division of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant, the fulfillment of which is noted in the summary statement (21:43-45).

The final section describes the settlement and continuation of Israel in the land (22:1-24:33). The return of the eastern tribes and their construction of an altar at the Jordan provokes an angry response from the western tribes (22:1-34). The misunderstanding highlights Israel's determination to keep the covenant God made with them (22:16,29,31) and concludes the narrative of Israel's possession of Canaan without a blemish of disobedience.

The book closes with a description of the last days of Joshua (23:1-24:33). In his farewell address to the rulers, Joshua exhorts them to obedience and reminds of the consequences of both obedience and disobedience (23:1-16). Then, in his farewell address to the people, he reviews their blessings under God's covenant and leads them in a renewal of their commitment to the covenant (24:1-28). The death of Joshua (24:29-33) is eulogized by the notation that "Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua" (24:31), thus ending the book on a victorious note. In such a way, Joshua is the record of Israel's obedience to God and their consequent enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant in military dominance, inheritance of the promised land, peace, and prosperity.

Outline of Joshua

- I. Israel Enters Canaan. 1:1-5:15
 - A. The commissioning of Joshua 1:1-18
 - 1. Joshua is commissioned by God 1:1-9
 - 2. Joshua prepares the people to cross the Jordan. 1:10-15
 - a. The command to the tribes west of the Jordan 1:10-11
 - b. The command to the tribes east of the Jordan 1:12-15
 - 3. Joshua is accepted by Israel. 1:16-18
 - B. The spying out of Jericho 2:1-24
 - 1. The spies are rescued by Rahab. 2:1-7
 - 2. The spies promise to spare Rahab. 2:8-14
 - 3. The spies are sent away by Rahab. 2:15-21
 - 4. The spies return to Joshua. 2:22-24
 - C. The crossing of the Jordan 3:1-4:24
 - 1. The miracle of the crossing 3:1-17
 - a. The instructions for the crossing 3:1-13
 - 1) The commands of the officers 3:1-4
 - 2) The commands of Joshua 3:5-6
 - 3) The commands of God through Joshua 3:7-13
 - b. The completion of the crossing 3:14-17
 - 2. The memorial of the crossing 4:1-24
 - a. The erection of the memorial 4:1-9
 - b. The exit from the river 4:10-18
 - c. The explanation for the memorial 4:19-24
 - D. The spiritual preparation 5:1-15
 - 1. The circumcision of the new generation 5:1-9
 - 2. The observance of the Passover 5:10-12
 - 3. The appearance of the Commander of the Lord's army 5:13-15
- II. Israel Conquers Canaan. 6:1-12:24
 - A. The conquest of central Canaan 6:1-8:35
 - 1. The destruction of Jericho 6:1-27
 - a. The instructions to march 6:1-7
 - b. The six days of marching 6:8-14
 - c. The seventh day of victory 6:15-21
 - d. The rescue of Rahab 6:22-27
 - 2. The battle with Ai 7:1-8:29
 - a. The defeat at Ai 7:1-9
 - b. The sin of Achan 7:10-26
 - 1) The Lord's instructions about the sin 7:10-15

- 2) Achan's confession of the sin 7:16-21
 - 3) Achan's execution for the sin 7:22-26
 - c. The victory over Ai 8:1-29
 - 1) The instructions for the ambush 8:1-8
 - 2) The execution of the ambush 8:9-23
 - 3) The conclusion of the battle 8:24-29
 - 3. The renewal of the covenant 8:30-35
 - B. The conquest of southern Canaan 9:1-10:43
 - 1. The deception of the Gibeonites 9:1-27
 - a. The practice of the deception 9:1-15
 - b. The discovery of the deception 9:16-21
 - c. The punishment for the deception 9:22-27
 - 2. The victory over the Amorite coalition 10:1-27
 - a. The forming of the coalition against Gibeon 10:1-5
 - b. The defense of Gibeon by Israel 10:6-11
 - c. The commemoration of the sun standing still 10:12-15
 - d. The execution of the enemy kings 10:16-27
 - 3. The victories over southern kings 10:28-43
 - a. The record of Joshua's victories 10:28-39
 - b. The summary of Joshua's southern victories 10:40-43
 - C. The conquest of northern Canaan 11:1-15
 - 1. The forming of the coalition against Israel 11:1-5
 - 2. The defeat of the coalition against Israel 11:6-9
 - 3. The summary of Joshua's northern victories 11:10-15
 - D. The summary of Israel's conquests 11:16-12:24
 - 1. The summary of conquered territories 11:16-23
 - 2. The summary of conquered kings 12:1-24
 - a. The kings conquered by Moses 12:1-6
 - b. The kings conquered by Joshua 12:7-24
- III. Israel Divides Canaan. 13:1-21:45
 - A. The instructions to divide Canaan 13:1-7
 - B. The division of the land 13:8-19:51
 - 1. The land east of the Jordan 13:8-33
 - a. The boundaries of the divided land 13:8-14
 - b. The tribal boundaries of the division 13:15-33
 - 1) The boundaries of Reuben 13:15-23
 - 2) The boundaries of Gad 13:24-28
 - 3) The boundaries of half-tribe of Manasseh 13:29-33
 - 2. The land west of the Jordan 14:1-19:51
 - a. The first division of land at Gilgal 14:1-17:18

- 1) The explanation of the division 14:1-5
- 2) The boundaries of Judah 14:6-15:63
 - a) Boundaries of Caleb 14:6-15
 - b) Boundaries of the rest of Judah 15:1-12
 - c) Occupation by Caleb 15:13-19
 - d) Territories of Judah 15:20-63
- 3) The boundaries of the tribes of Joseph 16:1-17:18
 - a) Boundaries of Joseph's children 16:1-4
 - b) Boundaries of Ephraim 16:5-10
 - c) Boundaries of half-tribe of Manasseh 17:1-13
 - d) Additional land for Joseph's children 17:14-18
- b. The second division of land at Shiloh 18:1-19:51
 - 1) The survey of the land 18:1-10
 - 2) The boundaries of the tribes 18:11-19:48
 - a) Boundaries of Benjamin 18:11-28
 - b) Boundaries of Simeon 19:1-9
 - c) Boundaries of Zebulun 19:10-16
 - d) Boundaries of Issachar 19:17-23
 - e) Boundaries of Asher 19:24-31
 - f) Boundaries of Naphtali 19:32-39
 - g) Boundaries of Dan 19:40-48
 - 3) The Boundaries of Joshua 19:49-51
- C. The designation of special cities 20:1-21:42
 1. The cities of refuge 20:1-9
 2. The Levitical cities 21:1-42
 - a. The families to be assigned cities 21:1-8
 - b. The assignment of cities 21:9-42
 - 1) The cities of the Kohathites 21:9-26
 - 2) The cities of the Gershonites 21:27-33
 - 3) The cities of the Merarites 21:34-42
- D. The settlement in the land 21:43-45
- IV. Israel Continues in Canaan. 22:1-24:33
 - A. The return of the eastern tribes to their lands 22:1-9
 - B. The conflict over the altar of witness 22:10-34
 1. The anger of the western tribes 22:10-12
 2. The message of Phinehas 22:13-20
 3. The explanation of the eastern tribes 22:21-29
 4. The appeasement of the western tribes 22:30-34
 - C. The last days of Joshua 23:1-24:33
 1. Joshua's farewell address to the rulers 23:1-16

2. Joshua's farewell address to the people 24:1-28
 - a. The review of their blessings 24:1-13
 - b. The call to covenant commitment 24:14-25
 - c. The reminder of covenant commitment 24:26-28
3. Joshua and Eleazar's death 24:29-33

Summary and Outline of Judges

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Introduction

The Author

The book is anonymous, but the Jewish Talmud attributes its writing to Samuel. There is much evidence showing either Samuel or a contemporary was the author. First, it was written after the ark was removed from Shiloh (18:31; 20:27; 1 Sam. 4:3-11) and after the beginning of Saul's reign, but before the divided kingdom (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25) and before David dispossessed the Jebusites from Jerusalem in 1004 B.C (1:21; 2 Sam. 5:5-9). Thus it was written during the lifetime of Samuel. The consistent style and structure suggest a single author, and since Samuel was a writer and educator (1 Sam. 10:25), he is the most logical choice.

The Date

If Samuel is assumed as the author, the date of writing can be placed somewhere between 1043 B.C. (the beginning of Saul's reign) and 1004 B.C. (David's capture of Jerusalem).

The Historical Background

Judges is linked to the book of Joshua by the repetition of the account of Joshua's death (2:5-9; Josh. 24:29-31) and is thus seen as its sequel. Joshua had secured the general area of Canaan, but had left large areas unpossessed (1:2-36; Josh. 13:1). Judges is the thematic history of the struggle of Israel to finally fulfill God's command to possess all the land. It represents the transitional period between the mediatorial role of Moses and Joshua and that of the monarchs. During this period there was no national ruler, but God raised up local deliverers or "judges" who represented God's rule.

The book covers a period of some 300 years from about 1390-1350 B.C. (near the death of Joshua) to about 1050 B.C (the beginning of Saul's monarchy). It is generally agreed that the periods of oppressions and judgeships overlapped since they were geographically limited. Judges describes these cycles of apostasy, oppression, and deliverance by geographical region: the southern region (3:7-31); the northern region (4:1-5:31); the central region (6:1-10:5); the eastern region (10:6-12:15); and the western region (13:1-16:31). Apostasy had pervaded the whole land of Israel.

The Purpose

Besides the historical purpose of documenting the period of Israel's apostasy in the time between Joshua's death and the monarchy, Judges has the theological purpose of validating the consequences of disobedience under the covenant of law. Israel is shown failing the test of obedience posed by the remaining nations (3:1-6). Judges also illustrates Israel's disobedience to YHWH's kingship mediated through local leaders, or "judges" (17:6; 21:25), and emphasizes the need for a centralized hereditary kingship as the means through which YHWH could continue to rule Israel (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25).

Argument

The history of Israel's failure is recorded in three segments. The first segment is an introduction which shows the causes that led to failure (1:1-3:6). The main body of the book

records the various cycles of oppression and deliverance (3:7-16:31). The book then concludes with two climactic examples of Israel's depravity (17:1-21:25).

The causes behind Israel's failure form a background for the rest of the book (1:1-3:6). Their failure to conquer all the land (1:1-2:10) is pictured as blatant disobedience to God's command to do so (2:1-3). Israel also failed to keep the covenant by their adoption of religious idolatry (2:11-3:6). God's retribution for their rebellion is according to the stipulations of the covenant (2:15,20-21). Here the cycle of sin, servitude, and salvation is introduced as a pattern for the rest of the book (2:11-19). God left the pagan nations as a way to test Israel's fidelity to the covenant (2:20-3:6).

The main text of Judges is a record of the cycles of Israel's persistent unfaithfulness and God's faithful deliverance through the medium of judges (3:7-16:31). The first cycle describes the judgeship of Othniel and deliverance from Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia (3:7-11). Next, Ehud delivers from the Moabites (3:12-30) and Shamgar from the Philistines (3:31). The fourth judgeship and the deliverance from the Canaanites (4:1-5:31) may serve to highlight the depraved condition of Israel since it was necessary for both a woman to judge (Deborah) and to defeat the enemy (Jael).

The account of Gideon's deliverance from the Midianites is given considerable treatment (6:1-8:35), perhaps because it illustrates that God will save His people against all odds if there is only minimal faith and obedience (6:10,15,36-40; 7:7). The story also reminds that God is the rightful Ruler over Israel (8:23) and demonstrates their need for a theocratic monarchy (8:33). The desperation and misguidance of the Israelites in their desire for a ruler next invites the corrupt rule of Abimelech, Gideon's son by a concubine (9:1-57).

Mention is barely made of the judgeships of Tola and Jair (10:1-5) before Jephthah becomes the focus of a lengthy narrative (10:6-12:7). This harlot's son delivers the Israelites from Ammonite oppression (11:1-40) after Israel once more confesses their rebellion against God (10:6-18). The downward spiral of Israel's sin is evidenced under Jephthah in his rash vow (11:29-40) and the civil war with the Ephraimites (12:1-7). Three judgeships merit brief mention after Jephthah's: that of Ibzan, of Elon, and of Abdon (12:8-15).

The last judgeship, Samson's, occupies a major portion of the narrative on the cycles of sin and deliverance (13:1-16:31). His miraculous birth shows God's special hand in electing him and consecrating him as a Nazarite (13:1-25). Still, sin is so pervasive in Israel that Samson is snared by immoral and licentious living that results in a sinful marriage (14:1-20), betrayal by the tribe of Judah (15:1-20), and his fatal association with the harlot Delilah (16:1-31). God is faithful to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines even though His chosen mediator was himself corrupt.

The final segment of Judges serves as a climax to Israel's record of failure (17:1-21:25). The totality of Israel's idolatry is seen in the story of Micah's idolatry and his adoption of a Levite to be a priest of idolatry (17:1-13). But further, the whole tribe of Dan is given to idolatry as they search for a dwelling place and appropriate Micah's idol for themselves (18:1-31). The final focus of the text is on the tragic depravity of the Benjamites and their subsequent war with Israel (19:1-21:25). Their sin in Gibeah is shockingly heinous (19:1-30) and their war with Israel is a national disgrace (20:1-48) which leads to a national embarrassment when the

Benjamites are left without wives (21:1-25). That Judges concludes with such an opprobrium emphasizes the failure of God's people and the need for a theocratic ruler.

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 - 3) Judah's failure with the Canaanites 1:19-20
 - b. Benjamin fails against the Jebusites. 1:21
 - c. Joseph's house partially conquers central Canaan. 1:22-29
 - 1) The success of Joseph's house 1:22-26
 - 2) The failure of Joseph's house 1:27-29
 - d. Israelite tribes fail in northern Canaan. 1:30-33
 - e. Dan fails against the Amorites. 1:34-36
 - 2. The announcement of judgment because of the failure 2:1-6
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 - 2. The deliverance of the Israelites by Ehud 3:15-30
 - C. The judgeship of Shamgar and Philistine oppression 3:31
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 - 1. The distress of the Israelites under the Canaanites 4:1-3
 - 2. The deliverance of the Israelites by Deborah and Barak 4:4-24
 - a. The alliance of Deborah and Barak 4:4-10
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 - c. The song of Deborah and Barak 5:1-31
 - 1) The need for deliverance 5:1-11
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 - a. The call of Gideon 6:11-18
 - b. The first confirmation of his call 6:19-24
 - c. The destruction of the altar of Baal 6:25-32
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 - 2) The assurance of victory 7:9-14
 - 3) The instructions for battle 7:15-18
 - b. The victory over the Midianites 7:19-8:21
 - 1) The initial rout of the Midianites 7:19-25
 - 2) The anger of Ephraim 8:1-3
 - 3) The pursuit of Zebah and Zalmunna 8:4-17
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 - b. The instruction of the Angel of the Lord 13:8-14
 - c. The burnt offering to the Lord 13:15-23
 - d. The birth and growth of Samson 13:24-25
 - 2. The sinful marriage of Samson 14:1-20
 - a. The courtship of the woman 14:1-9
 - b. The riddle at the wedding feast 14:10-20
 - 3. The conquests of Samson 15:1-20
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 - 2) The lodging in Gibeah 19:10-21
 - b. The death of the concubine 19:22-30
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Summary and Outline of Ruth

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

Talmudic tradition names Samuel as the author of Ruth, which is possible but will remain uncertain. It is only clear that it was written early in David's reign since Solomon's name would have been listed in the genealogy (4:22) had it been written later.

The Date

Ruth was probably written shortly after David's reign began in about 1010 B.C.

The Historical Background

The background of this beautiful story is the apostasy and depravity of the period of the judges (1:1). It provides a glimpse of the rare faithful remnant still true to God. The last half of the 12th century B.C. is often assigned to the events, which makes Boaz David's great-grandfather. However, some scholars assume gaps in the genealogy of chapter 4 and date them in the last half of the 14th century B.C.

The story begins in Moab, a region northeast of the Dead Sea. The Moabites were descendants of the incestuous encounter between Lot and his daughters (Gen. 19:30-38) and later became enemies of Israel (Num. 25:1ff; Judg. 3:12-30; 1 Sam. 14:47). The story moves to and concludes in the territory around the village of Bethlehem in Israel.

The Purpose

Ruth illustrates God's faithfulness to those of faith, which includes Gentiles, and shows how He blesses them with His provision and care, which in this book includes the "redemption" of Ruth (2:12,20; 4:10-12). Ruth may also serve to show the divine origin of the Davidic dynasty and justify David's claim to the throne (4:18-22).

Argument

The narrative proceeds in simple fashion after a brief introduction to the circumstances of the story (1:1-5). Ruth's choice to remain with her mother-in-law after the deaths of those who could have supported her portrays Ruth's righteousness and faith (1:6-18). She also adopts the God of Israel as her own (1:16).

God's providential provision for Ruth and Naomi comes through the person of Boaz. Ruth gleanes grain from his fields (2:1-23) and finds protection (2:8-9) and favor in his sight (2:10-11). Boaz recognizes her righteousness and trust in the God of Israel (2:12) and provides for her without knowing that he is a near kinsman (2:20-23).

After Naomi realizes Boaz is a near kinsman who can redeem her husband's property (now inherited by Ruth), she instructs Ruth to seek redemption by Boaz (3:1-18). In response to Ruth's request, Boaz commends her virtue and agrees to redeem her and the property after a nearer kinsman is informed (3:10-12).

The redemption of Ruth and her property (4:1-22) takes place after Boaz' proposal to the near kinsman is refused (4:1-6). Boaz pledges the redemption before the elders of the city and receives the blessing of the people (4:7-12). The narrative closes with the account of how the redemption is rewarded with a son to Boaz and Ruth which assures the family inheritance for Naomi (4:13-17). A genealogy at the end shows how this son, Obed, is the grandfather of King David (4:18-22), and gives a final picture of the blessing God bestowed on Ruth's faith.

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- I. Ruth's Decision to Remain with Naomi 1:1-22
 - A. The need to remain with Naomi 1:1-5
 - 1. The death of Naomi's husband 1:1-3
 - 2. The death of Naomi's sons 1:4-5
 - B. The choice to remain with Naomi 1:6-18
 - 1. The decision of Naomi to return to Bethlehem 1:6-7
 - 2. The decision of the daughters 1:8-14
 - a. The desire of the daughters 1:8-10
 - b. The discouragement of Naomi 1:11-13
 - c. The decision of the daughters 1:14
 - 3. The devotion of Ruth 1:15-17
 - C. The return of Naomi and Ruth to Bethlehem 1:19-22
- II. Ruth's Work of Gleaning under Boaz 2:1-23
 - A. Ruth is noticed by Boaz. 2:1-7
 - 1. Ruth gleans in the field of Boaz. 2:1-3
 - 2. Boaz inquires about Ruth. 2:4-7
 - B. Ruth is protected by Boaz. 2:8-13
 - 1. Boaz assures Ruth of protection. 2:8-9
 - 2. Boaz explains why Ruth is favored. 2:10-13
 - C. Ruth is provided for by Boaz. 2:14-23
 - 1. Boaz provides a surplus. 2:14-16
 - 2. Ruth brings Naomi the surplus. 2:17-19
 - 3. Naomi rejoices in Boaz' provision. 2:20-23
- III. Ruth's Request for Redemption by Boaz 3:1-18
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 - 1. Her reason for Ruth's redemption 3:1-2
 - 2. Her recommendation for Ruth's appeal 3:3-5
 - B. Ruth's obedience for redemption 3:6-9
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 - 1. His commendation of Ruth's character 3:10
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 - 1. Boaz sends Ruth off. 3:14-15
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- B. Her redemption supplied by Boaz 4:7-12
 - 1. The procedure of redemption 4:7-8
 - 2. The pledge of redemption 4:9-10
 - 3. The blessing of the people 4:11-12
- C. Her redemption rewarded with a son 4:13-22
 - 1. The birth of Obed 4:13-17
 - 2. The lineage of Obed 4:18-22

Summary and Outline of 1 & 2 Samuel

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

The two books of "Samuel", originally one in the Hebrew Bible, were artificially divided in the LXX under the title "Books of the Kingdoms", which included 1 and 2 Kings. Anonymous, the books of Samuel were attributed to Samuel, Nathan, and Gad by the Hebrew Talmud according to the words of 1 Chronicles 29:29. Samuel is the most likely author of 1 Samuel 1-24 (cf. 10:25), but since his death is recorded in 25:1, others wrote the rest of the material.

Samuel was the judge over Israel after Samson. He was born about 1105 B.C. and, assuming he was thirty years old at the start of his ministry, served from about 1075 B.C. to 1015 B.C., the time of his death. He was used of God to lead Israel and appoint the first two kings, Saul and David.

The Date

1 Samuel 1-24 was clearly written before Samuel's death in about 1015 B.C. 2 Samuel ends in the last days of David so it and the last part of 1 Samuel were compiled after about 970 B.C., the time of David's death. Further, 1 Samuel 27:6 indicates the kingdom was divided at the time of writing which dates the origination after Solomon's death in about 931 B.C. Silence about the Assyrian captivity in 722 B.C. indicates the latest possible date of writing.

The Historical Background

The books of Samuel cover about 135 years from the birth of Samuel in about 1105 B.C. to near the death of David in about 970 B.C. Of this, 94 years, or the period ending with the death of Saul (c. 1011), are covered by 1 Samuel.

These books serve as a link to the times of the judges. The last judge, Samson, had failed to completely relieve Israel from the oppression of the Philistines, the chief enemy seen in 1 and 2 Samuel, and thus they become a burden Samuel assumes. The Philistines inhabited the coastal plains and the hill country of Palestine. Like the times of the judges, 1 Samuel begins with no central leadership for Israel, but the books record the beginning of the monarchy and the reigns of Saul and David. Under the reigns of these kings the nation resolves its internal problems and its external oppression.

Religiously, Israel was idolatrous and immoral (1 Sam. 7:3). As priest, Eli reflected this moral laxity in his failure to discipline his sons who corrupted the priesthood (2:22-34). As an act of divine discipline, the ark was stolen by the Philistines at Eli's death and not returned until David's reign, a period of about 75 years.

The Purpose

The books of Samuel are first a history of the development of Israel from anarchy to a theocratic monarchy. Theologically, however, the purpose is to show how God sovereignly rules in the monarchy. God had promised Israel a king as part of His redemptive plan (Gen. 49:10;

Num. 24:17; Deut. 17:14-20), but the people impatiently insisted on an immediate king. In granting their desire, God establishes the Davidic dynasty through which He rules Israel and will rule Israel in the eternal kingdom of a promised Davidic "son" (2 Sam. 7:12-16). Thus the books show how God continues to bring about His sovereign rule through man, specifically the Davidic dynasty and the Heir it will produce.

Argument of 1 Samuel

This book is most easily divided by its movement through the lives of the three main characters: Samuel, Saul, and David. Samuel represents the last judge of Israel, Saul, the first king, and David, the good king who is juxtaposed to Saul's wicked reign.

The rise and rule of Samuel, the last judge, (1:1-8:22) is depicted as a hopeful period against the dark era of the judges. The appearance of Samuel pictures a transition from the moral laxity of the priesthood of Eli and his sons, Hophni and Phinehas (1:1-3:21). Samuel's birth is marked by the direct intervention of God in answer to the prayers of Hannah, his mother (1:1-2:10). Hannah's dedication of Samuel and her prayer of praise recognize God's rule over and through men (cf. 2:10). Later, Samuel's godly childhood ministry is a stark contrast in the narrative to the sins of Eli's priesthood (2:11-36). The full transition of leadership to Samuel is finally assured by a divine commission (3:1-21).

The rule of Samuel over Israel is pictured as a success (4:1-7:17). It begins with the successful return of the ark to Israel (4:1-7:2) after God's punishment for Eli's sins brings the capture of the ark, the death of Eli, and the departure of the divine glory from Israel (4:1-22). After causing the Philistines much trouble (5:1-12), the ark is safely returned to Israeli territory (6:1-7:2). This event strengthens Samuel's rule and leads to a successful restoration of Israel religiously, militarily, and politically (7:3-17). The chief disappointment of Samuel's rule comes in the occasion of his sons' failure as judges and the consequent demand of the people for a king (8:1-22). The warning by Samuel and eventual concession to their demand prepares the reader for the appointment of Saul as the first king and his subsequent failure.

At this point the narrative shifts to the second major personage of the book and relates the rise and rule of Saul, the first king of Israel (9:1-15:35). The introduction of Saul in the narrative creates a transition from Samuel to Saul (9:1-12:25). The choosing of Saul (9:1-27) and his proclamation as king (10:1-27) are narrated with almost comical circumstances. This conveys the displeasure of God at the rejection of His divine rule (10:19) and may also suggest that there was hardly a man in Israel qualified to be king. Saul's first act as king, the rescue of Jabesh Gilead from the Ammonites, assures his acceptance by the nation (11:1-15) and shows that God can use a seemingly incompetent human king to mediate blessing, if the king is faithful (11:13). This appears to be the message of Samuel's sermon that confirms Saul's kingship (12:1-25). Though the people have failed God in their demand for a king, God is faithful to Israel because He has chosen them to be His special people (12:19-22).

The rule of Saul after his victory over the Ammonites is a record of failure (13:1-15:35). The first failure is the presumption of Saul in making a sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel (13:1-23). Samuel's rebuke for this sin clarifies that God intends to use the monarchy to rule His people and signals the rejection of Saul as the ruler in any enduring respect (13:13-14). The weakness of Saul's character is also demonstrated in his making a rash oath that almost costs

the life of his son, Jonathan, and risks the rebellion of the people (14:1-52). The final and climactic failure of Saul's rule is his failure to fully obey God by totally destroying the Amalekites and their livestock (15:1-35). Because of this, Samuel declares the end of Saul's rule over Israel and its transfer to another (15:28). The narrative thus sets the stage for the rise of king David.

The rise of the good king David is juxtaposed with the wicked rule of Saul by a series of conflicts between the two (16:1-31:13). David rises to prominence by God's sovereign direction and blessing (16:1-17:58). He is chosen to be king because of his inner character (16:7), and that character is validated by his confrontation with Goliath which defends the honor of God and His people (17:26,36,45-47). In the narrative, this is a strong contrast to Saul who failed because he had no notion of God's honor.

The differences between the characters of David and Saul lead to inevitable conflict (18:1-27:12). As David serves in Saul's court (18:1-20:42), Saul's jealousy grows to the point where he tries to kill David (18:10-19:24). In contrast, Jonathan recognizes David's virtue and the two form a covenant of loyalty to one another (20:1-42). Though David flees the presence of Saul, the conflict continues in his exile (21:1-27:12). The account of his escapes from Saul (21:1-23:29) also describes David's growing power and influence (22:1-5; 23:1-13) while portraying the evil of Saul by his murder of the eighty-five priests in Nob (22:6-23). The contrast of David's righteousness (24:17) and Saul's wickedness (26:21) is amplified further by the two accounts of David sparing Saul's life in the wilderness (24:1-26:25). In addition, the record of these events demonstrates David's high regard for the position of the monarch under God (24:6; 26:9). The death of Samuel in this section (25:1) serves to mark the transition of Israel into the monarchy under David, who is depicted as morally qualified in contrast to the immoral Saul.

The conflict between Saul and David continues through the final decline of Saul (28:1-31:13). That Saul has utterly forsaken God is proved by his consultation of a medium (28:1-25) and is punished by the consequent prediction of his death (28:19). Meanwhile, David's dismissal by the Philistines providentially positions him to assume the kingship and keeps him from the precarious dilemma of having to oppose Israel in battle (29:1-11). The text further contrasts Saul and David by recounting David's trust in God for the defeat of the Amalekites (30:1-31), while the account of Saul's trust in a medium for military advice is fresh in mind (28:1-25). While David enjoyed victory, Saul suffered defeat and death (31:1-13).

The transition to the monarchy recorded in 1 Samuel leaves David poised to assume God's role as king of Israel. It is demonstrated by the leadership of Samuel, the failure of Saul, and the success of David, that the monarchy is intended to be an extension of God's rule and a means of blessing as a reward for faith.

Argument of 2 Samuel

The second book of Samuel is a record of David's reign. The first major section records the triumphs and glory of his reign, then follows a section describing his transgression, and after that, a section on the troubles which his sin caused during his reign. The book ends with a commentary on his reign.

The book continues 1 Samuel in that it begins with the death of Saul (1:1-27), an event which represents the beginning of the consolidation of David's political power (1:1-5:25). David is first anointed king over Judah (2:1-7), but after the civil war with the house of Saul (2:8-4:12) he is anointed king over all Israel (5:1-5) giving him full control. The transfer of power is viewed as a fulfillment of the promise God made to David concerning the kingship (3:9-10). With full control, David is able to rule from Jerusalem (5:6-25) after taking the city from the Jebusites. The construction of his house, growth of his family, and the defeat of the Philistines cement his rule and assure him of God's establishment of his kingdom (5:11-25).

The consolidation of David's religious power comes through two events (6:1-7:29). First the ark is triumphantly brought into Jerusalem to centralize Israel's worship with the political power (6:1-23). Second, God institutes the Davidic covenant (7:1-29). In response to David's proposal to build God a house, God promises to establish David's house forever. The key promises of the covenant involve this house, or royal dynasty, the reign of David's seed, and the establishment of the seed's throne forever (7:11-16). The promise speaks of his son, Solomon, but also a distant descendant who would fulfill the covenant promises to the patriarchs (Gen. 17:6,16; 35:11; 49:10).

The consolidation of David's power is completed with a sweep of military victories which expand and secure the borders of Israel (8:1-10:19). The account of the victories over Israel's enemies portray a reign of peace and prosperity under the blessing of God (cf. 8:15). David has reached his pinnacle of power, but the narrative abruptly dampens the climactic effect of these triumphs.

The second major section focuses on the one tragic occasion of David's transgression which introduces failure and defeat to the story (11:1-12:31). The account of David's sin of adultery and murder is related in detail to give the full force of its atrociousness (11:1-27). The immediate consequences of his sin is the first tragedy of David's reign (12:1-25). The death of his son does not prevent the fulfillment of God's promise because Solomon is born soon afterward. God is faithful to His covenant with David, in spite of sin.

The third section of the book describes the decline of David's success as king which results from his sin (13:1-20:26; cf. 12:10-11). The troubles illustrate the fact that the enjoyment of God's blessings come through obedience. The first tragedy is the incident of incest with Amnon and Tamar (13:1-22) and Amnon's subsequent murder by Absalom (13:23-39). The grievous separation of Absalom from David is another dark blot on David's record (14:1-33). David's political troubles climax with the rebellion of Absalom and the temporary loss of his kingdom (15:1-18:33). This leads to David's greatest personal tragedy which is the death of his son, Absalom (18:1-33).

The restoration of David as king also pictures his troubles, because it does not happen smoothly (19:1-20:26). He experiences a rebuke from Joab (19:1-8), hesitation from the elders of Judah to restore him (19:9-15), and a dispute between Judah and Israel (19:40-43). Moreover, Sheba the Benjamite incites Israel to desert David until Sheba is killed (20:1-22). The ledger of David's chief officials indicates that the kingdom was finally restored to him (20:23-26), though not without trouble.

The final section of 2 Samuel comprises a mixed narrative commentary on David's reign (21:1-24:25). His latter reign is also troublesome. To avert a famine sent by God, David must see the death of more of Saul's family to avenge the Gibeonites (21:1-14). There is also a war with Philistia (21:15-22). Two songs of David represent a positive break in the narrative. The first song praises God for deliverance from enemies (22:1-51) and the second praises God for His eternal covenant with David (23:1-7). These last words of David declare the necessity for God's ruler to be "just, ruling in the fear of God" (23:3-4), an apt theological summary for both books of Samuel.

After this, there is a long list of David's "mighty men" who were responsible for notable military exploits and courageous deeds (23:8-39). They find their way into the record because of their faithfulness and loyalty to the theocratic ruler, David. The book concludes with the sin of David in ordering a census (24:1-25). Reasons are not stated for God's anger with Israel (24:1) or why the order to take a census was wrong. Perhaps David, in a moment of weakness, wanted to gloat in his power or ascertain his military strength at the expense of full trust in God. In any case, the sin is punished by a destructive plague that is finally withdrawn when David builds an altar and offers offerings. This account depicts a less than glorious finish to the rule of David.

The reign of David described in 2 Samuel illustrates the importance of faith and righteousness in God's earthly kings. The book also proves that God will use the monarchy, particularly the Davidic dynasty, to bring about His blessings in spite of the imperfections of the human king.

Outline of 1 Samuel

- I. The Rise and Rule of Samuel, the Last Judge 1:1-8:22
 - A. The transition from Eli to Samuel 1:1-3:21
 1. The birth of Samuel 1:1-2:10
 - a. Hannah's barrenness 1:1-18
 - 1) Her sorrow over barrenness 1:1-7
 - 2) Her supplication for a son 1:8-18
 - b. Samuel's birth and dedication 1:19-28
 - 1) His birth 1:19-23
 - 2) His dedication 1:24-28
 - c. Hannah's prayer of praise 2:1-10
 2. The sins of Eli's priesthood 2:11-36
 - a. The sins of Eli's sons 2:11-17
 - b. The contrast of Samuel's childhood ministry 2:18-21
 - c. The rebuke of Eli's sons 2:22-26
 - d. The prophecy against Eli's household 2:27-36
 3. The prophecy of Samuel 3:1-21
 - a. Samuel is called by God 3:1-9
 - b. Samuel is given the word of God 3:10-18
 - c. Samuel is recognized as a prophet 3:19-21
 - B. The rule of Samuel 4:1-7:17
 1. Samuel's success in restoring the ark 4:1-7:2
 - a. The capture of the ark by the Philistines 4:1-22
 - 1) The Philistines conquer Israel. 4:1-10
 - 2) Eli dies. 4:11-18
 - 3) Ichabod: the glory departs. 4:19-22
 - b. The curse of the ark on the Philistines 5:1-12
 - 1) The curse on Dagon 5:1-5
 - 2) The curse of tumors 5:6-9
 - 3) The rejection of the ark 5:10-12
 - c. The return of the ark by the Philistines 6:1-7:2
 - 1) The advice to return the ark 6:1-9
 - 2) The return of the ark 6:10-19
 - 3) The residence of the ark at Kirjath Jearim 6:20-7:2
 2. Samuel's success in restoring Israel 7:3-17
 - a. The revival of Israel's devotion to God 7:3-6
 - b. The victory over the Philistines 7:7-12
 - c. The maintenance of peace in Israel 7:13-17
 - C. The rejection of Samuel 8:1-22

1. The rejection of Samuel and his sons 8:1-9
 2. The warning concerning a king 8:10-18
 3. The concession concerning a king 8:19-22
- II. The Rise and Rule of Saul, the First King 9:1-15:35
- A. The transition from Samuel to Saul 9:1-12:25
 1. The choosing of Saul as king 9:1-27
 - a. Saul's search for the donkeys 9:1-14
 - b. Saul's meeting with Samuel 9:15-27
 2. The proclamation of Saul as king 10:1-27
 - a. Samuel's instructions at Saul's anointing 10:1-8
 - b. Saul's prophesying 10:9-16
 - c. Samuel's proclamation of Saul as king 10:17-27
 3. The acceptance of Saul as king 11:1-15
 - a. The threat to Jabesh Gilead by the Ammonites 11:1-3
 - b. The rescue of Jabesh Gilead by Saul 11:4-11
 - c. The acceptance of Saul by the people 11:12-15
 4. The confirmation of Saul as king 12:1-25
 - a. Samuel's assertion of his innocence 12:1-5
 - b. Samuel's reminder of Israel's disobedience 12:6-18
 - c. Samuel's assurance of God's faithfulness 12:19-25
 - B. The rule of Saul 13:1-15:35
 1. The failure of Saul in making an unlawful sacrifice 13:1-23
 - a. The threat of war with the Philistines 13:1-7
 - b. The rebuke by Samuel for an unlawful sacrifice 13:8-15
 - c. The absence of weapons for the Israelite army 13:16-23
 2. The failure of Saul in making a rash oath 14:1-52
 - a. Jonathan's attack on the Philistines 14:1-14
 - b. Saul's attack on the Philistines 14:15-23
 - c. Saul's rash oath 14:24-46
 - 1) Jonathan breaks Saul's oath. 14:24-30
 - 2) The people sin by eating blood. 14:31-35
 - 3) Jonathan is spared from execution. 14:36-46
 - d. Saul's continuing war with enemies 14:47-52
 3. The failure of Saul in partial obedience 15:1-35
 - a. Saul's disobedience by incomplete destruction 15:1-9
 - b. Saul's rejection as king by the Lord 15:10-23
 - c. Saul's sorrow and sentencing 15:24-35
- III. The Rise of David and Conflict with Saul 16:1-31:13
- A. The rise of David 16:1-17:58
 1. The anointing of David by Samuel 16:1-13

2. The distressing spirit upon Saul 16:14-23
3. The defeat of Goliath by David 17:1-58
 - a. The challenge by Goliath 17:1-11
 - b. The curiosity of David 17:12-27
 - c. The confidence of David 17:28-39
 - d. The victory of David 17:40-54
 - e. The inquiry of Saul 17:55-58
- B. The conflict between David and Saul 18:1-27:12
 1. The conflict in Saul's court 18:1-20:42
 - a. Jonathan's love for David 18:1-4
 - b. Saul's jealousy of David 18:5-9
 - c. Saul's persecution of David 18:10-19:24
 - 1) The murder attempt with a spear 18:10-16
 - 2) The plot in David's marriage to Michal 18:17-30
 - 3) The pledge to spare David 19:1-7
 - 4) The murder attempt at David's house 19:8-17
 - 5) The arrest attempt at Nairoth 19:18-24
 - d. Jonathan's loyalty to David 20:1-42
 - 1) The plan to determine Saul's anger 20:1-11
 - 2) The covenant between Jonathan and David 20:12-23
 - 3) The manifestation of Saul's anger 20:24-34
 - 4) The departure of David 20:35-42
 2. The conflict in David's exile 21:1-27:12
 - a. David's escapes from Saul 21:1-23:29
 - 1) The help from Ahimelech the priest 21:1-9
 - 2) The flight to Achish, king of Gath 21:10-15
 - 3) The army of four hundred and refuge in Moab 22:1-5
 - 4) Saul's murder of the priests 22:6-23
 - 5) The rescue of Keilah and subsequent escape 23:1-13
 - 6) The evasion in wilderness strongholds 23:14-29
 - b. David's sparing of Saul 24:1-26:25
 - 1) David spares Saul's life. 24:1-22
 - a) David cuts Saul's robe. 24:1-7
 - b) David addresses Saul. 24:8-15
 - c) Saul admits David's right to rule. 24:16-22
 - 2) Samuel dies. 25:1
 - 3) David marries Abigail. 25:2-44
 - a) The wickedness of Nabal 25:2-13
 - b) The intercession of Abigail 25:14-35
 - c) The death of Nabal 25:36-38

- d) The marriage of David and Abigail 25:39-44
 - 4) David spares Saul's life again. 26:1-25
 - a) David takes Saul's spear and jug. 26:1-12
 - b) David addresses Abner. 26:13-16
 - c) David addresses Saul. 26:17-20
 - d) Saul expresses remorse. 26:21-25
 - c. David's refuge from Saul in Philistia 27:1-12
 - 1) David allies with the Philistines. 27:1-7
 - 2) David conducts secret raids. 27:8-12
- C. The final decline of Saul 28:1-31:13
 - 1. Saul consults a medium. 28:1-25
 - a. The Philistines gather for battle. 28:1-6
 - b. Saul seeks a medium. 28:7-14
 - c. Samuel addresses Saul. 28:15-19
 - d. The medium strengthens Saul. 28:20-25
 - 2. David is dismissed by the Philistines. 29:1-11
 - a. The suspicion of the Philistine princes 29:1-5
 - b. The departure of David 29:6-11
 - 3. David defeats the Amalekites. 30:1-31
 - a. The Amalekites invade Ziklag. 30:1-6
 - b. David consults the Lord. 30:7-10
 - c. David finds the Egyptian servant. 30:11-15
 - d. David defeats the Amalekites. 30:16-20
 - e. David divides the spoil. 30:21-31
 - 1) Among the two hundred men 30:21-25
 - 2) Among the elders of Judah 30:26-31
 - 4. Saul and his sons die in battle. 31:1-13
 - a. The death of Saul and his sons 31:1-10
 - b. The burial of Saul and his sons 31:11-13

Outline of 2 Samuel

- I. The Triumphs of David's Reign 1:1-10:19
 - A. David's consolidation of political power 1:1-5:25
 - 1. The rule over Judah in Hebron 1:1-5:5
 - a. The death of Saul 1:1-27
 - 1) The report of Saul's death 1:1-10
 - 2) The execution of the messenger 1:11-16
 - 3) The song of lament by David 1:17-27
 - b. The anointing of David as king over Judah 2:1-7
 - 1) The anointing in Hebron 2:1-4
 - 2) The message to Jabesh Gilead 2:5-7
 - c. The conflict with the house of Saul 2:8-4:12
 - 1) Ishbosheth made king of Israel 2:8-11
 - 2) The civil war between Israel and Judah 2:12-4:12
 - a) The battle between Joab and Abner 2:12-32
 - b) The growth of David's house 3:1-5
 - c) The defection of Abner 3:6-21
 - d) The murder of Abner 3:6-39
 - e) The murder of Ishbosheth 4:1-12
 - d. The anointing of David as king over Israel 5:1-5
 - 2. The rule over Israel from Jerusalem 5:6-25
 - a. The conquest of Jerusalem 5:6-10
 - b. The prosperity in Jerusalem 5:11-16
 - c. The conquest of the Philistines 5:17-25
 - 1) The first battle with the Philistines 5:17-21
 - 2) The second battle with the Philistines 5:22-25
 - B. David's consolidation of religious power 6:1-7:2
 - 1. The return of the ark to Jerusalem 6:1-23
 - a. The trip to the house of Obed-Edom 6:1-11
 - b. The trip to Jerusalem 6:12-19
 - c. The criticism of Michal 6:20-23
 - 2. The institution of the Davidic Covenant 7:1-29
 - a. David's proposal to build God a house 7:1-3
 - b. God's promise to establish David's house 7:4-17
 - c. David's praise to God 7:18-29
 - C. David's consolidation of military power 8:1-10:19
 - 1. His conquests over enemies 8:1-14
 - a. The defeat of Philistia, Moab, Zobah, and Syria 8:1-8
 - b. The dedication of spoils from the nations 8:9-14

2. His administration of justice over Israel 8:15-18
 3. His kindness to Mephibosheth 9:1-13
 - a. The promise to Mephibosheth 9:1-8
 - b. The instructions to Ziba 9:9-13
 4. His conquest of Ammon and Syria 10:1-19
 - a. The defiance of Ammon 10:1-8
 - b. The defeat of Ammon 10:9-14
 - c. The defeat of Syria 10:15-19
- II. The Transgression of David's Reign 11:1-12:31
- A. The account of David's sin 11:1-27
 1. His sin of adultery with Bathsheba 11:1-5
 2. His sin of murder with Uriah 11:6-27
 - a. Uriah's refusal to sleep with Bathsheba 11:6-13
 - b. David's planned murder of Uriah 11:14-25
 - c. David's marriage to Bathsheba 11:26-27
 - B. The immediate consequences of David's sin 12:1-25
 1. The confrontation by Nathan 12:1-14
 - a. Nathan's parable 12:1-6
 - b. Nathan's prophecy 12:7-14
 2. The death of David's son 12:15-23
 3. The birth of Solomon 12:24-25
 - C. The capture of Rabbah by Joab 12:26-31
- III. The Troubles of David's Reign 13:1-20:26
- A. The incest of Amnon with Tamar 13:1-39
 1. The rape of Tamar by Amnon 13:1-22
 - a. The planning of the rape 13:1-6
 - b. The rape 13:7-14
 - c. The reactions to the rape 13:15-22
 2. The murder of Amnon by Absalom 13:23-39
 - a. The planning of the murder 13:23-27
 - b. The murder 13:28-29
 - c. The reactions to the murder 13:30-33
 - d. The flight of Absalom 13:34-39
 - B. The restoration of Absalom 14:1-33
 - a. The story of the woman of Tekoa 14:1-11
 - b. The appeal of the woman of Tekoa 14:12-17
 - c. The decision of David 14:18-24
 - d. The forgiveness by David 14:25-33
 - C. The rebellion of Absalom 15:1-18:33
 1. The conspiracy of Absalom 15:1-12

- a. The subversion through passing judgment 15:1-6
 - b. The subversion through recruitment 15:7-12
 - 2. The flight of David 15:13-16:14
 - a. The escape from Jerusalem 15:13-16:4
 - 1) The loyalty of David's men 15:13-29
 - 2) The disloyalty of Ahithophel 15:30-31
 - 3) The assignment of Hushai the Archite 15:32-37
 - 4) The deception of Ziba 16:1-4
 - b. The curses of Shimei in Bahurim 16:5-14
 - 3. The counsel of Ahithophel and Hushai 16:15-17:23
 - a. The return of Hushai to Absalom 16:15-19
 - b. The counsel of Ahithophel to Absalom 6:20-17:4
 - c. The counsel of Hushai to Absalom 17:5-14
 - d. The warning of Hushai to David 17:15-23
 - 4. The refreshment of David in Mahanaim 17:24-29
 - 5. The final defeat of Absalom 18:1-33
 - a. The defeat of Absalom's forces 18:1-8
 - b. The death of Absalom 18:9-18
 - c. The message of Absalom's death 18:19-33
 - D. The restoration of David as king 19:1-20:26
 - 1. The rebuke by Joab 19:1-8
 - 2. The return to Jerusalem 19:9-43
 - a. The message to Judah 19:9-15
 - b. The mercy to Shimei 19:16-23
 - c. The explanation of Mephibosheth 19:24-30
 - d. The kindness to Barzillai 19:31-39
 - e. The quarrel between Judah and Israel 19:40-43
 - 3. The rebellion of Sheba 20:1-22
 - a. The desertion of Israel under Sheba 20:1-7
 - b. The murder of Amasa by Joab 20:8-13
 - c. The defeat and death of Sheba 20:14-22
 - 4. The restoration of David's officials 20:23-26
- IV. The Commentary on David's Reign 21:1-24:25
 - A. The avenging of the Gibeonites 21:1-14
 - 1. The request of the Gibeonites 21:1-6
 - 2. The execution of Saul's sons 21:7-9
 - 3. The burial of Saul's and Jonathan's bones 21:10-14
 - B. The war with the Philistines 21:15-22
 - 1. David's near death by a Philistine 21:15-17
 - 2. The defeat of the Philistine giants 21:18-22

- C. The songs of David 22:1-23:7
 - 1. The song of praise for deliverance from enemies 22:1-51
 - a. The deliverance of the Lord 22:1-20
 - b. The justice of the Lord 22:21-28
 - c. The confidence in the Lord 22:29-46
 - d. The praise to the Lord 22:47-51
 - 2. The song of David's last words 23:1-7
- D. The deeds of David's mighty men 23:8-39
 - 1. The deeds of the first three men 23:8-12
 - 2. The deeds of three of the thirty chief men 23:13-23
 - 3. The names of the thirty chief men 23:24-39
- E. The sinful census and the plague 24:1-25
 - 1. The sin of the census 24:1-9
 - 2. The judgment of the plague 24:10-17
 - 3. The withdrawal of the plague 24:18-25

Summary and Outline of 1 and 2 Kings

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

These two books (originally one) are anonymous, but Talmudic tradition identifies the prophet Jeremiah as the author. Some evidence supports this. The books take a prophet's view of history with emphases on apostasy, judgment, idolatry, immorality, and the mention of prophets ministering to Israel and Judah. Also, some scholars see a style similar to Jeremiah's. In any case, the author would have written most of the books during the lifetime of Jeremiah. The phrase "to this day" (1 Kings 8:8; 12:19) indicates a time prior to the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C. Only the last two chapters were obviously written after the captivity, perhaps by an exile. Other traditions have suggested Ezra or Ezekiel as authors. The authors had access to a number of documents which could have been used to compile 1 and 2 Kings (1 Kings 11:41; 14:19,29; 15:7; 2 Kings 18:18; and chs. 18-20 with Isa. 36-39).

The Date

The books were written before the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C. with the exception of 2 Kings 24 and 25 which were written after the captivity. Since no mention is made of the Jews' return to Jerusalem in 538 B.C., the books were compiled in their final form before then.

The Historical Background

These books cover a period of over 400 years beginning with the inauguration of Solomon (c. 970 B.C.) and ending with the release of Jehoiachin from Babylon (c. 560 B.C.). Of this, 1 Kings covers a period of 120 years from Solomon to the end of Ahaziah's reign (c. 851 B.C.). Three major periods of Israel's history are included: the united kingdom (c. 1043-931 B.C.), the divided kingdom (c. 931-722 B.C.), and the surviving kingdom (c. 722-586 B.C.).

Politically, during the times of the kings Israel reached a peak of influence under Solomon. This declined, however, especially after the fall of the northern kingdom (722 B.C.). The surviving southern kingdom enjoyed only sporadic greatness until its fall in 586 B.C. Outside Israel, the New Assyrian empire dominated the region until just before the fall of Israel in the north. Egypt's power during this time was present but fluctuated. Assyria's power was eventually supplanted fully by Babylon about a century after the fall of northern Israel.

Israel's religious and moral condition paralleled the political. Solomon's construction of the temple was a high point for Judaism and devotion to God, but his lapse into idolatry led the nation into apostasy. After Solomon, Jeroboam began calf worship in northern Israel at Bethel and Dan. Later, Ahab and Jezebel promoted Baal worship, which was also propagated in the southern kingdom by their daughter Athaliah. Apostasy continued until the end of the northern and southern kingdoms in spite of the ministries of many prophets who called the nation to repentance. The prophets ministering in Israel included Elijah, Elisha, Amos, and Hosea. The prophets of Judah were Obadiah, Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Habakkuk. The religious condition of either kingdom was determined and reflected in the reigning king. The record of Kings shows that all nineteen of Israel's kings were evil and of the nineteen in Judah, only eight were designated "good".

The Purpose

The historical purpose of Kings is to complete the history of the Davidic dynasty begun in the books of Samuel. The LXX recognized this when the books were artificially divided and labeled "3 and 4 Kingdoms," the book of Samuel being "1 and 2 Kingdoms." Theologically, Kings teaches the lessons of history by evaluating the monarchy according to the standards of the Mosaic law. Kings shows that the welfare of Israel under the monarchs depended on the covenant faithfulness of the people and their king. It thus portrays the reasons for the demise of the monarchy in terms of the covenant's stipulations of blessing for obedience and cursing for disobedience.

Argument of 1 Kings

The book of 1 Kings traces the history of Israel's monarchy from the time of the united kingdom under Solomon to the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah after the division. The account of the division (ch 12) divides the book into its two parts.

The first half of the book records the history of the kingdom still united under Solomon (1:1-11:43). It begins with an account of David's final days in order to show how Solomon was established as king (1:1-2:46). His appointment as king (1:1-53), in spite of Adonijah's intrigue, conveys the approval of God through the blessing of David, Zadok the priest, and the prophet Nathan (1:34,47-48). This blessing allows Solomon to solidify his rule immediately after David's death (2:1-46). David's last words, a charge to Solomon, illustrate a crucial theme of Kings: Obedience to the Mosaic covenant brings the blessing of God upon the monarchy (2:3-4).

Solomon soon rises to great power and influence (3:1-8:66). In spite of his pagan marriage and participation in idolatry, he is given extraordinary wisdom by God for his royal responsibilities (3:1-28). The evidence for this is seen in his administration which is characterized by organization, peace, prosperity, and reputable wisdom (4:1-34).

The greatest accomplishment of Solomon is his construction of the temple (5:1-8:66) which is presented as an act of obedience to bring God's blessing (6:11-13; 8:19-20,23). The great detail of the record of construction of the temple and its furnishings (5:1-7:51) emphasizes the glory of the temple. Its completion consolidates religious and political power for Solomon and is a great impetus for the devotion of Israel to the Mosaic covenant. Solomon clearly understands the covenant's stipulations for blessing and restoration as seen in his sermon, prayer, and benediction at the temple's dedication (8:1-66).

A good part of the record is devoted to touting Solomon's achievements as king (9:1-10:29). His success is cast against the reassuring repetition of God's covenant with David to Solomon (9:1-9). Solomon's success is evident in the nation with the enslavement of the Canaanites (9:15-25), but extends also to the surrounding nations (9:10-14; 26-28; 10:1-29).

Solomon's downfall is presented in terms which show clearly that it is a consequence of disobedience to the covenant (11:1-43). This is seen in the Lord's rebuke of his immorality and idolatry (11:9-13) and the record of divine chastisement through various adversaries (11:14-40). The rebuke also foretells the division of the kingdom under his son (11:11-12). Thus the death of Solomon (11:41-43) signals the transition to the period of the divided kingdom.

The second half of Kings records the history of the divided kingdom under the various kings (12:1-22:53). As God had predicted, the division took place under the rule of Solomon's son, Rehoboam (12:1-14:31). His antagonist, Jeroboam, led the revolt of the northern tribes and became their first king (12:16-24). His reign is very evil (12:25-14:20) and plunges Israel to a new depth of idolatry with the establishment of calf-worship centers in Bethel and Dan (12:25-33). Jeroboam experiences divine chastening (13:1-10) and a prophecy of judgment (14:1-18) before he dies (14:19-20). Rehoboam, who remained king of Judah, is as evil as Jeroboam and also experiences God's judgment at the hand of Shishak of Egypt (14:21-31).

The next two kings of Judah illustrate the fluctuation between good and evil in the southern kingdom (15:1-24). Abijam's reign is evil (15:1-8), but Asa's proves good (15:9-24). Nevertheless, in spite of sin God is able to bestow a gracious blessing upon Abijah for the sake of His covenant with David (15:4-5).

Following this, the record turns to the reign of five kings, all evil, in the north (15:25-16:28). The record of each king is brief: Nadab (15:25-32); Baasha (15:33-16:7); Elah (16:8-14); Zimri (16:15-20); and Omri (16:21-28). Interspersed commentary confirms that the unrest and disasters of these reigns are the curses of the Mosaic covenant due to disobedience.

Wickedness in Israel reaches a new level (16:30) under the reign of Ahab (16:29-22:40). To stop the downward spiral, God raises up the prophet Elijah whose ministry occupies three chapters (17:1-19:21). His bold confrontations with Ahab and his evil wife, Jezebel, condemn idolatry and challenge the nation to choose God over idols (18:1-46). In his escape from Ahab and Jezebel (19:1-18), God encourages Elijah with the information that there is a faithful remnant within Israel (19:18). Two more incidents in the life of Ahab display his wickedness. In his war with Syria (20:1-43) Ahab spares Ben-Hadad against God's design and is condemned for it. Then, he and Jezebel cause the murder of Naboth to satisfy Ahab's desire for his vineyard (21:1-29). This brings the prediction of Jezebel's death and the desolation of Ahab's house. The final episode of Ahab's reign describes his defeat and death in a war with Syria while once more illustrating his chronic rejection of God's prophets (22:1-40).

The end of 1 Kings does not properly serve as a conclusion to the book, since originally it and 2 Kings were one. But the good reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah (22:41-50) and the evil reign of Ahaziah in Israel (22:51-53) typify the contrast seen in the book. It is a contrast of faithfulness to the Mosaic covenant that brings blessing and unfaithfulness which brings judgment to God's people under the kings.

Argument of 2 Kings

2 Kings continues the historical record of 1 Kings. Its two main sections address the later history of the divided kingdom and the history of the surviving kingdom (Judah) after Israel's captivity.

Ahaziah's evil reign (1:1-18) forms the bridge from 1 Kings. His idolatry incurs the wrath of God in the form of premature death as pronounced by Elijah. Elisha, Elijah's successor,

becomes the real focus in the record of the next evil king, Jehoram (or Joram, 2:1-8:15). The transition of the ministry and power from Elijah to Elisha is confirmed by a series of early miracles by Elisha (2:1-25). He also displays his divine authority when he predicts the victory of Jehoram and Jehoshaphat over the Moabites (3:1-27). The extended ministry of Elisha (4:1-8:15) contains a lengthy account of miracles (4:1-6:7) that prove God is still sovereign and working in behalf of those of faith. Likewise, his ministry in the war with Syria (6:8-7:20) displays miracles that show God cares for His people and preserves them in spite of the king's rejection of the prophet. Elisha's ministry extends to the kings of Syria (8:7-15), one of whom (Hazeal) he sees will be a destroyer of Israel (8:12). It is obvious from this account of Joram's reign and the subsequent history that Israel's depravity was so severe even a man of God like Elisha had little influence.

The next two kings recorded are Jehoram (8:16-24) and Ahaziah (8:25-29) of Judah. They are both evil, yet this does not prevent God from remaining faithful to his promises concerning the Davidic dynasty (8:19). In Israel, Jehu is the next notable king (9:1-10:36). Though basically characterized as evil (10:29-31), he is used by God to rid the land of the wicked, including Joram, Ahaziah, Jezebel, Ahab's family, and Baal worshipers (9:1-10:36).

In Judah, Athaliah, the wicked daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, schemes to gain the throne, but her reign is cut short by Jehoida's plot to make Joash king (11:1-16). After Athaliah's execution, Joash reigns as a good king over Judah (11:17-12:21). He leads the people in renewed devotion to the Lord, destroys the Baal temple and chief priest, and restores the dignity of Jewish temple worship.

Two brief accounts of evil kings in Israel, Jehoahaz (13:1-9) and Jehoash (13:10-25), precede the record of another good king in Judah. The basically good reign of Amaziah (14:1-22) had its troubles in a war with Jehoash of Israel and in a conspiracy which took his life. After the brief mention of the evil reign of Jeroboam II in Israel (14:23-29), another basically good king, Azariah, rules in Judah (15:1-7). There next appears brief accounts of five evil kings of Israel: Zechariah (15:8-12); Shallum (15:13-16); Menahem (15:17-22); Pekahiah (15:23-26); and Pekah (15:27-31). The record of wickedness in the north is interrupted by mention of the good reign of Jotham in Judah (15:32-38). He is succeeded by Ahaz, a wicked king (16:1-20), who showed utter disregard for the sanctity of the temple and the worship of YHWH.

The history of the divided kingdom closes with the final king, Hoshea, who proves to be evil also (17:1-41). It is under his rule that Assyria takes Samaria captive (17:5-23) and repopulates Samaria with people from the surrounding nations (17:24). The text makes it clear that the captivity of Israel is the consequence of their unfaithfulness to the covenant and rejection of the prophets who called them to repentance (17:13-18). Israel in captivity continued in their idolatry with foreign nations (17:24-41).

The last part of the book concerns the history of the surviving kingdom of Judah (18:1-25:41). The moral high point of this era was the good reign of Hezekiah (18:1--20:21). He led Judah in rejection of idolatry (18:1-7) and in military success (18:7-20:19). Most notably, an invasion by Sennacherib of Assyria was routed supernaturally under the ministry of Isaiah (18:17-19:37). This illustrates God's willingness to respond to faith in the king (19:8-20) and His faithfulness in preserving His people according to the promises to David (19:30-31,34). Though Hezekiah's life was graciously extended (20:1-11), this only allowed him to sin by

allowing the Babylonians to inspect the treasures of Judah (20:12-19). Consequently, Isaiah pronounces the imminent Babylonian captivity of Judah (20:17-18).

The prediction of captivity as punishment is repeated during the reign of Manasseh who brings Israel to its basest level yet (21:1-18). The next king, Amon, is also evil (21:19-26). The last good king to rule Israel is Josiah (22:1-23:30). His devotion finds favor with God (22:19-20) and the renewal of the covenant and the subsequent reforms he instituted after discovering the "Book of the Law" bring a period of spiritual revival to Judah (22:3-23:24). Still, this is not enough to divert God's plans for Judah's captivity because their wickedness overall is so outrageous (23:25-27).

The wickedness of Judah continues to spiral downward with the last four kings: Jehoahaz (23:31-34); Jehoiakim (23:35-24:7); Jehoiachin (24:8-16); and Zedekiah (24:17-25:7). Their decline as a nation is evident: Jehoahaz is imprisoned in Egypt; Jehoiakim sees the first Babylon invasion of Judah; Jehoiachin is taken captive with some of Judah to Babylon; and Zedekiah's rule brings the final destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Judah. Babylon now completely controls Judah and sets up a governor, Gedaliah (25:8-30). The book ends with the mention of Jehoiachin's release from a Babylonian prison; a possible harbinger of restoration for Judah (25:27-30).

Kings teaches the lessons of Israel's history. As seen in the record of the united, divided, and surviving kingdoms, God blesses the obedience of His people and rulers, but judges disobedience. His faithfulness to honor His covenant with David persists through the end of the monarchy's demise.

Outline of 1 Kings

- I. The United Kingdom Under King Solomon 1:1-11:43
 - A. The establishment of Solomon as King 1:1-2:46
 1. The appointment of Solomon as king 1:1-53
 - a. The decline of David's health 1:1-4
 - b. The plan of Adonijah to be king 1:5-10
 - c. The plan of Nathan to make Solomon king 1:11-27
 - 1) Bathsheba's appeal to David 1:11-21
 - 2) Nathan's appeal to David 1:22-27
 - d. The proclamation of Solomon as king 1:28-53
 - 1) David's plan to make Solomon king 1:28-37
 - 2) Solomon's anointing as king 1:38-40
 - 3) Adonijah's reaction 1:41-53
 2. The solidification of Solomon as king 2:1-46
 - a. David's final charge to Solomon 2:1-9
 - b. David's death 2:10-12
 - c. Solomon's purge of the kingdom 2:13-46
 - 1) The execution of Adonijah 2:13-25
 - 2) The exile of Abiathar 2:26-27
 - 3) The execution of Joab 2:28-35
 - 4) The execution of Shimei 2:36-46
 - B. The rise of Solomon as king 3:1-8:66
 1. The wisdom of Solomon 3:1-28
 - a. His folly in marriage and idolatry 3:1-3
 - b. His request for wisdom 3:4-15
 - c. His display of wisdom with the two harlots 3:16-28
 2. The administration of Solomon 4:1-34
 - a. His eleven officials 4:1-6
 - b. His twelve governors 4:7-19
 - c. His reign of prosperity 4:20-34
 - 1) Solomon's peace and prosperity 4:20-28
 - 2) Solomon's reputation for wisdom 4:29-34
 3. The temple of Solomon 5:1-8:66
 - a. The preparation for the temple 5:1-18
 - 1) The assembly of the materials 5:1-12
 - 2) The assembly of the laborers 5:13-18
 - b. The construction of the temple 6:1-38
 - 1) The dimensions of the temple 6:1-10
 - 2) The Lord's promise of blessing 6:11-13

- 3) The completion of the temple 6:14-38
 - c. The construction of other buildings 7:1-12
 - d. The furnishings of the temple 7:13-51
 - 1) The skilled craftsmanship of Hiram 7:13-14
 - 2) The bronze pillars 7:15-22
 - 3) The sea and the oxen 7:23-26
 - 4) The carts and the lavers 7:27-39
 - 5) The summary of the furnishings 7:40-51
 - e. The dedication of the temple 8:1-66
 - 1) The return of the ark and Shekinah glory 8:1-13
 - 2) Solomon's sermon of dedication 8:14-21
 - 3) Solomon's prayer of dedication 8:22-53
 - 4) Solomon's benediction on the congregation 8:54-61
 - 5) Solomon's offerings and feast 8:62-66
 - C. The accomplishments of Solomon as king 9:1-10:29
 - 1. God's covenant with Solomon as king 9:1-9
 - 2. Solomon's achievements as king 9:10-28
 - a. His gift of Israel's cities to Hiram 9:10-14
 - b. His enslavement of the Canaanites 9:15-25
 - c. His establishment of a navy 9:26-28
 - 3. Solomon's reputation for wisdom and wealth 10:1-29
 - a. The visit by the queen of Sheba 10:1-13
 - b. The accumulations of wealth 10:14-22
 - c. The tributes of surrounding nations 10:23-25
 - d. The equestrian accomplishments 10:26-29
 - D. The downfall of Solomon as king 11:1-43
 - 1. The intermarriage and idolatry of Solomon 11:1-8
 - 2. The Lord's rebuke of Solomon 11:9-13
 - 3. The Lord's chastisement through adversaries 11:14-40
 - a. The adversary Hadad the Edomite 11:14-22
 - b. The adversary Rezon the son of Eliadah 11:23-25
 - c. The rebellion of Jeroboam 11:26-40
 - 4. The death of Solomon 11:41-43
- II. The Divided Kingdom Under Various Kings 12:1-22:53
- A. The division of the kingdom under Jeroboam and Rehoboam 12:1-14:31
 - 1. The division of the kingdom 12:1-24
 - a. The foolish decision of Rehoboam 12:1-15
 - b. The revolt of the northern tribes 12:16-24
 - 2. The evil reign of Jeroboam in Israel 12:25-14:20
 - a. The establishment of idolatry 12:25-33

- b. The episode of the man of God 13:1-34
 - 1) His warning to Jeroboam 13:1-10
 - 2) His sin against God 13:11-19
 - 3) His judgment by God 13:20-32
 - 4) Jeroboam's continuing idolatry 13:33-34
 - c. The judgment on Jeroboam's house 14:1-18
 - d. The death of Jeroboam 14:19-20
 - 3. The evil reign of Rehoboam in Judah 14:21-31
 - a. His sin of idolatry 14:21-24
 - b. His judgment by God 14:25-31
 - B. The reign of two kings in Judah 15:1-24
 - 1. The evil reign of Abijam in Judah 15:1-8
 - 2. The good reign of Asa in Judah 15:9-24
 - a. His good deeds 15:9-15
 - b. His alliance with Syria 15:16-22
 - c. His death 15:23-24
 - C. The reign of five kings in Israel 15:25-16:28
 - 1. The evil reign of Nadab in Israel 15:25-32
 - 2. The evil reign of Baasha in Israel 15:33-16:7
 - 3. The evil reign of Elah in Israel 16:8-14
 - 4. The evil reign of Zimri in Israel 16:15-20
 - 5. The evil reign of Omri in Israel 16:21-28
 - D. The reign of Ahab in Israel 16:29-22:40
 - 1. The wickedness of Ahab 16:29-34
 - 2. The ministry of Elijah 17:1-19:21
 - a. The prophecy of drought against Ahab 17:1-24
 - 1) Elijah proclaims a drought. 17:1-7
 - 2) Elijah provides a widow with food. 17:8-16
 - 3) Elijah revives the widow's son. 17:17-24
 - b. The confrontation with Ahab 18:1-46
 - 1) The challenge to Ahab 18:1-19
 - 2) The victory on Mount Carmel 18:20-40
 - 3) The prediction of rain 18:41-46
 - c. The escape from Ahab and Jezebel 19:1-18
 - 1) Elijah's flight 19:1-8
 - 2) Elijah's encouragement by God 19:9-18
 - d. The call of Elisha 19:19-21
 - 3. The wars of Ahab with Syria 20:1-43
 - a. Ahab's first victory over Syria 20:1-22
 - 1) His defiance of Ben-Hadad 20:1-12

- 2) His assurance of victory 20:13-22
 - b. Ahab's second victory over Syria 20:23-30
 - c. Ahab's sinful treaty with Ben-Hadad 20:31-43
 - 1) Ahab makes a treaty 20:31-34
 - 2) Ahab is condemned by God 20:35-43
- 4. The downfall of Ahab 21:1-22:40
 - a. Jezebel's murder of Naboth 21:1-16
 - b. Elijah's condemnation of Ahab and Jezebel 21:17-29
 - c. Ahab's defeat by Syria 22:1-40
 - 1) The predictions of the false prophets 22:1-12
 - 2) The prediction of Micaiah 22:13-28
 - 3) The defeat and death of Ahab 22:29-40
- E. The reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah 22:41-50
- F. The reign of Ahaziah in Israel 22:51-53

Outline of 2 Kings

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 - 1. The message of Elijah about Ahaziah's death 1:1-8
 - 2. The meeting with Elijah 1:9-16
 - 3. The death of Ahaziah 1:17-18
 - B. The evil reign of Jehoram (Joram) in Israel 2:1-8:15
 - 1. The transition from Elijah to Elisha 2:1-25
 - a. The translation of Elijah 2:1-11
 - b. The recognition of Elijah's spirit on Elisha 2:12-18
 - c. The beginning miracles of Elisha 2:19-25
 - 2. The war of Jehoram against Moab 3:1-27
 - a. The spiritual failure of Jehoram 3:1-3
 - b. The military victory of Jehoram 3:4-27
 - 1) The alliance against Moab 3:4-12
 - 2) Elisha's prophecy of victory over Moab 3:13-19
 - 3) The defeat of Moab 3:20-27
 - 3. The ministry of Elisha 4:1-8:15
 - a. His ministry with various miracles 4:1-6:7
 - 1) The miracle of the widow's oil 4:1-7
 - 2) The miracle of the Shunammite's son 4:8-37
 - a) Elisha predicts a son. 4:8-17
 - b) Elisha raises the son. 4:18-37
 - 3) The miracle of the pot of stew 4:38-41
 - 4) The miracle of the multiplied loaves 4:42-44
 - 5) The miracle of the healing of Naaman 5:1-27
 - a) Naaman's miraculous healing 5:1-19
 - b) Gehazi's deceptive greed 5:20-27
 - 6) The miracle of the floating ax head 6:1-7
 - b. His ministry during war with Syria 6:8-7:20
 - 1) The miracles in the first Syrian attack 6:8-23
 - a) Elisha's warning about Syria's plan 6:8-12
 - b) Elisha's servant's eyes opened 6:13-17
 - c) Elisha's capture of the Syrians 6:18-23
 - 2) The miracles in the second Syrian attack 6:24-7:20
 - a) Samaria's siege and famine 6:24-29
 - b) Elisha's prediction of food 6:30-7:2
 - c) Syria's confusion and flight 7:3-11
 - d) Elisha's prediction fulfilled 7:12-20

- c. His ministry with the Shunammite woman 8:1-6
 - d. His ministry with the king of Syria 8:7-15
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 - d. The execution of Ahab's seventy sons 10:1-11
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 - f. The execution of Ahab's remaining family 10:15-17
 - g. The execution of Baal worshipers 10:18-28
 - 3. The spiritual failure of Jehu 10:29-31
 - 4. The death of Jehu 10:32-36
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 - 1. The deliverance of Joash from Athaliah 11:1-3
 - 2. Jehoida's plot to make Joash king 11:4-12
 - 3. The death of Athaliah 11:13-16
- G. The good reign of Joash in Judah 11:17-12:21
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 - b. Joash's spiritual success 12:1-3
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 - 2. The ransom paid to Syria 12:17-18
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- N. The evil reign of Shallum in Israel 15:13-16
- O. The evil reign of Menahem in Israel 15:17-22
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- R. The good reign of Jotham in Judah 15:32-38
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 - 2. The alliance with Assyria against Syria 16:5-9
 - 3. The construction of a pagan altar 16:10-18
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 - 2. The spiritual renewal under Josiah 22:3-23:27
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- b. The restoration of covenant worship 23:1-24
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 - 3. The death of Josiah 23:28-30
- E. The evil reign of Jehoahaz 23:31-34
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- G. The evil reign of Jehoiachin 24:8-16
- H. The evil reign of Zedekiah 24:17-25:7
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Summary and Outline of 1 and 2 Chronicles

by

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H. The reign of Athaliah 22:10-23:21.....	11
I. The reign of Joash 24:1-27.....	11
J. The reign of Amaziah 25:1-28	11
K. The reign of Uzziah 26:1-23	11
L. The reign of Jotham 27:1-9.....	12
M. The reign of Ahaz 28:1-27	12
N. The reign of Hezekiah 29:1-32:33	12
O. The reign of Manasseh 33:1-20	12
P. The reign of Amon 33:21-25	13
Q. The reign of Josiah 34:1-35:27	13
R. The reign of Jehoahaz 36:1-3.....	13
S. The reign of Jehoiakim 36:4-8	13
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U. The reign of Zedekiah 36:11-21.....	13
V. The decree of Cyrus to return to Jerusalem 36:22-23	13

Introduction

The Author

Hebrew tradition assumes Ezra the priest to be author of the Chronicles. There is evidence which could support this, such as the style, purpose, and priestly viewpoint comparable to the book of Ezra. Also, the last words of 2 Chronicles (36:22-23) are taken up as the first words of Ezra (1:1-3) suggesting a continuation by the same author. The time of writing, obviously after the return of exiles to Jerusalem, favors Ezra as well. If the "chronicler" was not Ezra, than surely he was a contemporary. The uniform style and viewpoint suggest a single author who used many available documents to compile Chronicles (1 Chr. 9:1; 27:24; 29:29; 2 Chr. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 16:11; 20:34; 25:26; 26:22; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 33:18; 35:27; 36:8).

The Date

The books were written after the return from exile in Babylon in 444 B.C. The last person named is Anani (1 Chr. 3:24) who is eight generations from Jehoiachin who was taken captive in 598 B.C. Allowing for generations of at least 25 years, the date can hardly be earlier than 400 B.C. If it had been much later, certainly David's later descendants would have been listed since that is an emphasis in Chronicles.

The Historical Background

rough its genealogies (1 Chr. 1-9:44) Chronicles reaches from Adam to Anani (c. 400 B.C.). The actual history recorded covers the same period and shares the historical background of the book of Kings. The setting for its writing was post-exilic. The exiles taken to Babylon had already returned to Jerusalem in three major movements: one under Zerubbabel (538-515 B.C.); one under Ezra (457 B.C.); and the last under Nehemiah (444 B.C.). The land of Israel has been in the "times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24) since Babylonian domination about 606 B.C. and is now under the domination of Persia. Nehemiah was a recent influential political leader (444-432 B.C.) who brought reconstruction of Jerusalem's walls and organization of the people.

Religiously, the captivity had cured Israel of her idolatry. Temple worship was restored after the repairs by the returning remnant, but the temple lacked the glory of that of Solomon's day (Hag. 2:3). The restored nation suffered disillusionment and stagnation in their religion due to the absence of a Davidic monarch and the unrealized hope of the Davidic Messiah. They needed to be reminded of God's covenant program for His people and be encouraged to continue to honor the terms of the Mosaic covenant through obedience and proper worship.

The Purpose

Chronicles is no mere history, but a selective sacred history of the Davidic dynasty and Judah. From Adam, it traces God's selection of His special people and focuses on the person of David as Israel's king and priestly leader (1 Chr. 15:25-28; 16:2; cf. 2 Sam. 6:12-15) in anticipation of the fulfillment of God's covenant in the Davidic Messiah. Chronicles shows God's sovereign election and His preservation of His people in faithfulness to His covenant. It was written to encourage post-exilic Judah to faithfulness and obedience by showing that though

the throne of David was gone, his lineage remains. As such, it concluded the Hebrew canon with hope for a Davidic Messiah.

Argument of 1 Chronicles

The book of 1 Chronicles consists of two main sections. The first is composed of lengthy genealogy which take the reader to the record of David's reign, the second main section.

The genealogy (1:1-9:44) are given for the purpose of distinguishing the line of David and the priestly lines, both important to Judah's obedience, worship, and hope of the Davidic Messiah. The genealogies of the patriarchs (1:1-2:2) begin with Adam and trace the line of God's chosen people through Abraham to Jacob. The focus is then narrowed to Judah (2:3-55) and David (3:1-24) as those through whom God has chosen to work. All twelve tribes are then included (4:1-7:40) with a notable emphasis on the priestly line of Levi (6:1-81). The tribe of Benjamin is elaborated in more detail (8:1-40) to bring the focus on Saul and the beginning of the monarchy. Also, the priestly genealogies and organization of the remnant is given to establish proper worship in the restored nation (9:1-34). Finally, the genealogy of Saul is briefly noted and serves as an introduction to David's reign (9:35-44).

The reign of King David occupies the rest of 1 Chronicles (10:1-29:30). He rises to power at the death of Saul (10:1-12:40) and the narrative relates in brief manner his anointing (11:1-3) and conquest of Jerusalem (11:4-9). The "mighty men" of David are recorded (11:10-12:40) most probably because of their loyalty to David in his rise to power as king (11:10; 12:1,18,22,38).

The actual account of David's reign (13:1-27:34) focuses on his successes and glory. The sin with Bathsheba and Uriah and the consequent trouble are omitted because they do not serve the author's purpose of encouraging Judah. A large focus of this section is David's centralization of religion through his establishment in Jerusalem (13:1-17:27), an act credited to God (14:2). There David prospers as he lives in obedience to God (14:1-17). The account of the transport of the ark to Jerusalem is a religious climax (15:1-16:43). The details of transportation and worship add to the glory of the joyous occasion. The celebration of the placement of the ark in Jerusalem (16:1-43) includes offerings by the priestly king (16:2) and David's psalm of thanksgiving (16:7-36) which reminds the nation of God's covenant faithfulness (16:14-22) and looks with anticipation to His future salvation (16:31-36). This is also the occasion of God's revelation of the Davidic covenant (17:1-27) which promises David an eternal throne. This specific promise forms the foundation for Judah's hope and is the theme traced by the rest of Chronicles.

Another aspect of the glory of David's reign is his military success (18:1-20:8). His early victories secure or expand the borders of the nation (18:1-13) and the later victories (19:1-20:8) depict his military prowess as God's blessing (19:13). A major failure of David's follows his record of success: the sinful census of Israel (21:1-30). However, the account of this tragedy presents David as repentant (21:8,13,17) and highly reverent (21:13,24,26,28-30).

Another religious climax of David's reign is his organization for building the temple (22:1-27:34). The detail of preparation and organization emphasizes that the worship of YHWH is a central focus in Israel under David and reflects the chronicler's purpose for this sacred

history. In his plans for the temple (22:1-19) David is careful to remind Solomon and Israel's leaders that the temple is a visible symbol of the covenant God made with David (22:8-11) and that to enjoy the temporal blessings of God they must be faithful to the Mosaic covenant (22:12-13). The following section elaborates the organization of the Levitical ministers (23:1-26:32) and the civil leaders (27:1-34). The attention to minute detail might serve to encourage the post-exilic readers to diligence in their restored temple worship.

The final section of the book records David's last days as king (28:1-29:30). Once more he exhorts the leaders of Israel to obey the Mosaic laws that they might enjoy the blessings of the covenant (28:1-10). A keynote of his address is the sovereignty of God in choosing Judah, David, and Solomon as mediators of His promise of an eternal kingdom (28:4-6,10). The final provisions for the temple in plans and offerings (28:11-29:9) display the unity and devotion of the king and Israel's people and anticipate the temple's climactic construction. David's final prayer of thanksgiving recognizes the sovereignty of God over His people and the transmission of the Abrahamic covenant through Solomon (29:10-19). The book ends with the accession of Solomon as king (29:20-25 and the death of David (29:26-30).

This is not a true conclusion because 1 and 2 Chronicles were originally one book. However, the passing of the Davidic era in all its righteousness and glory sets the standard by which the subsequent kings will be evaluated and is thus a major transition.

Argument of 2 Chronicles

Chronicles continues its sacred history with the record of the reigns of Solomon and the Judean kings which follow. The book divides itself between these two periods, one representing the united kingdom, and the other the various kings of the divided and surviving kingdoms. The spiritual evaluation of each king reflects the comparative relation of each to the Davidic kingdom and depicts their success or failure in terms of adherence to the Mosaic covenant.

Solomon's reign (1:1-9:31) is chiefly recognized for the construction and completion of the temple (2:1-7:22). The account of his establishment as king considerably condenses the many details of his rise to power found in 1 Kings 1-4 in order to emphasize his continuation of the Davidic promise and highlight the religious aspect of devotion to the temple (1:1-17). The record of the construction of the temple (2:1-7:22) reflects the same detail and priestly viewpoint found in the record of David's preparations (1 Chr. 22-27). The preparation to build (2:1-18) and the actual construction (3:1-5:1) evidence a desire to please God and glorify His name (2:1). This is explicit in the dedication of the temple (5:2-7:22). After the installation of the ark (5:2-14), Solomon declares in his sermon (6:1-11), "I have built the temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel" (6:10). Here, too, the familiar themes of God's faithfulness, the Davidic covenant, and Israel's responsibilities present themselves in Solomon's prayer of dedication (6:12-42) and in God's confirmatory reply (7:12-22). Another notable emphasis is Solomon's request for (6:22-40) and God's reassurance of (7:12-14) Israel's restoration based on God's faithfulness to His promises.

The rest of Solomon's success as king (8:1-9:28) is presented in the areas of politics (8:1-11), religion (8:12-16), the economy (8:17-18), and his reputation for wisdom and wealth (9:1-28). This record tends to glorify him as an example of God's blessing. The mention of his failures in marriage and idolatry would not help the author's purpose of demonstrating the blessing of God upon the kingdom of Judah.

The passing of Solomon introduces the reigns of the subsequent kings of Judah with only brief glimpses of the kings of Israel (10:1-36:23). This second division of 2 Chronicles begins with an account of the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam (10:12-16). Under him, the kingdom is divided (10:1-19), but the author's focus remains on Judah, not Israel. The consolidation of the southern kingdom is described (11:1-23) as is the conflict with Egypt (12:1-12), the latter being a divine judgment for Rehoboam's departure from God (12:1).

The selective nature of Chronicles is apparent in the account of the reign of Abijah (13:1-22), who followed Rehoboam. Only one event of his reign is described, the defeat of Jeroboam, because it relates his divine deliverance due to trust in God (13:18). Likewise, the events of Asa's reign (14:1-16:14) contrast blessing through faith with judgment from God (15:2). His victory over the Ethiopians (14:9-15) and his religious reforms (15:1-19) came from a posture of faith, but the unbelief behind his treaty with Syria brings ruin and tragedy at the end of his rule (16:1-1,12).

The kingdom under Jehoshaphat occupies a large segment of the narrative (17:1-20:37) because he is one of Judah's better kings (17:1-9). He achieves military success by God's blessing (17:10-19) and later enters into an alliance with Ahab of Israel against Syria (18:1-19:3). The contrast of the godly Jehoshaphat and ungodly Ahab is most pronounced in their fates. Jehoshaphat miraculously escapes the enemy because of his trust in God (18:31), but Ahab, who rejected the prophetic counsel of Micaiah, is killed by a "random" arrow (18:33). Jehoshaphat is also noted for reforms in government and the priestly ministry (19:4-11). Another example of God's blessing upon his administration comes when he is threatened by the Moabites and Ammonites (20:1-30). God delivers him when he petitions God on the basis of the Abrahamic covenant (20:7,11-12). Jehoshaphat ends his rule with only one small sin that brings a failure (20:35-37).

Three evil rulers follow Jehoshaphat in Judah. Jehoram (21:1-20) experiences the judgment of God during his reign, yet God's faithfulness is also noted in that He "would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that He had made with David" (21:7). Ahaziah's (22:1-9) and Athaliah's (22:10-23:21) wicked reigns bring judgment and premature death to both.

Some of Judah's kings are presented as basically good, but with some evil inclinations. Joash (24:1-27) prospers as he authorizes repair of the temple (24:4-14), but when he permissively tolerates idolatry (24:15-22) God "forsakes" him (24:20) and his term is brought to a tragic end (24:23-27). Similarly, Amaziah (25:1-28) has a mixed heart (25:2) which leads to initial success (25:5-16) but later failure (25:17-24). In addition, Uzziah (26:1-23) enjoys God's prosperity "as long as he sought the LORD" (26:5), but subsequent presumptuous pride inflicts him with the curse of leprosy (26:16-21). Only the next king, Jotham (27:1-9) prospers without record of failure because "he prepared his ways before the LORD his God" (27:6).

An exceedingly evil king, Jotham's son Ahaz (28:1-27), exhibits a disastrous record and causes Judah much suffering due to his idolatry and unfaithfulness to the Lord (28:19). His reign is a dark background to the good reign of his successor, Hezekiah (29:1-32:33). Hezekiah's reign is dealt with in detail because it exemplifies the blessing and deliverance God brings in response to faith and it comes closest of any kingdom to matching the devotion of David's reign (29:2; 30:26). He devotedly elevates Levitical worship in his massive religious reforms (29:3-31:21). Then his faith is tested by an impending Assyrian invasion (32:1-23). Hezekiah passes that test, but fails a later one by allowing the Babylonians to inspect Judah's wealth (32:27-31). Still, his devotion to God is comparable to David's.

Hezekiah's son Manasseh (33:1-20), however, begins his reign wickedly and is taken captive by the Babylonians, but after coming to repentance he is restored to Jerusalem. He is then succeeded by his son, the evil Amon (33:21-25). After Amon, Judah experiences her last good king, Josiah (34:1-35:27). He is compared to David in his devotion to God (34:2-3) and this is illustrated by his diligent obedience to the law when the "Book of the Law" is discovered in the temple (34:14ff.). He restored true worship, renewed the covenant between Judah and God (34:29-33), and kept the Passover (35:1-19). His death is attributed more to an unwise decision than sin (35:20-27).

The last four kings offer no hope for Judah: under Jehoahaz (36:1-3) they suffer from the Egyptians; under Jehoiakim (36:4-8) they suffer their first stage of Babylonian captivity; under Jehoiachin (36:9-10) they experience the second stage of captivity; and under Zedekiah (36:11-21) there is final captivity of Judah and devastation of Jerusalem. Judah's downfall comes in spite of God's compassionate warning through His prophets (36:15-16). The book ends, however, with a hopeful note in the decree of Cyrus allowing the return of the Jews to Judah (36:22-23).

Chronicles has presented the history of Judah in terms of the response of the kings and the people to the Davidic covenant. God's grace persists through blessings on good kings and curses on evil kings so that the Davidic line is preserved in hopes of future restoration.

Outline of 1 Chronicles

- I. The Genealogies of the Line of David 1:1-9:44
 - A. The genealogies of the patriarchs 1:1-2:2
 1. The genealogy from Adam to Abraham 1:1-27
 - a. The genealogy from Adam to Noah 1:1-4
 - b. The genealogy from Noah to Abraham 1:5-27
 - 1) The sons of Japheth 1:5-7
 - 2) The sons of Ham 1:8-16
 - 3) The sons of Shem 1:17-27
 2. The genealogy from Abraham to Jacob 1:28-2:2
 - a. The genealogy from Abraham to Isaac 1:28-34
 - b. The genealogy from Isaac to Jacob 1:35-54
 - 1) The sons of Esau 1:35-42
 - 2) The kings of Edom 1:43-54
 - c. The genealogy of the sons of Jacob 2:1-2
 - B. The genealogies of Judah 2:3-55
 1. The genealogy of Judah 2:3-8
 2. The genealogy of Hezron 2:9-24
 3. The genealogy of Jerahmeel 2:25-41
 4. The genealogy of Caleb 2:42-55
 - C. The genealogies of David 3:1-24
 1. The genealogy of David's sons 3:1-9
 2. The genealogy of Solomon 3:10-16
 3. The genealogy of Jeconiah 3:17-24
 - D. The genealogies of the twelve tribes 4:1-7:40
 1. The genealogies of the southern tribes 4:1-43
 - a. The genealogy of Judah 4:1-23
 - b. The genealogy of Simeon 4:24-43
 2. The genealogies of the Transjordan tribes 5:1-26
 - a. The genealogy of Reuben 5:1-10
 - b. The genealogy of Gad 5:11-22
 - c. The genealogy of Manasseh (east) 5:23-26
 3. The genealogy of Levi 6:1-81
 - a. The high priestly line 6:1-15
 - b. The Levitical line 6:16-30
 - c. The musicians 6:31-48
 - d. The Aaronic priests 6:49-53
 - e. The cities of the Levites 6:54-81
 4. The genealogies of the northern tribes 7:1-40

- a. The genealogy of Issachar 7:1-5
 - b. The genealogy of Benjamin 7:6-12
 - c. The genealogy of Napthali 7:13
 - d. The genealogy of Manasseh (west) 7:14-19
 - e. The genealogy of Ephraim 7:20-29
 - f. The genealogy of Asher 7:30-40
 - E. The genealogies of Benjamin 8:1-40
 - 1. The genealogy of Benjamin 8:1-5
 - 2. The genealogy of Ehud 8:6-28
 - 3. The genealogy of Saul 8:29-40
 - F. The genealogies of the remnant in Jerusalem 9:1-34
 - 1. The genealogy of the tribes who returned 9:1-9
 - 2. The genealogy of the priests who returned 9:10-13
 - 3. The genealogy of the Levites who returned 9:14-34
 - G. The genealogy of Saul 9:35-44
- II. The Reign of King David 10:1-29:30
 - A. David's rise to power 10:1-12:40
 - 1. The death of Saul 10:1-14
 - 2. The anointing of David as king 11:1-3
 - 3. The conquest of Jerusalem 11:4-9
 - 4. The mighty men of David 11:10-12:40
 - a. The chief mighty men of David 11:10-47
 - b. The mighty warriors at Ziklag 12:1-22
 - c. The mighty warriors at Hebron 12:23-40
 - B. David's reign as king 13:1-27:34
 - 1. His establishment in Jerusalem 13:1-17:27
 - a. The ark moved from Kirjath Jearim 13:1-14
 - b. The early prosperity in Jerusalem 14:1-17
 - 1) The establishment of David's house and family 14:1-7
 - 2) The victory over the Philistines 14:8-17
 - c. The ark brought to Jerusalem 15:1-16:43
 - 1) The transportation of the ark 15:1-29
 - a) The preparation for the move 15:1-24
 - b) The joy during the move 15:25-29
 - 2) The celebration over the ark 16:1-43
 - a) The placement in the tabernacle 16:1-6
 - b) David's psalm of thanksgiving 16:7-36
 - c) The maintenance of regular ministry 16:37-43
 - d. The institution of the Davidic covenant 17:1-27
 - 1) God's covenant with David 17:1-15

- 2) David's prayer of praise 17:16-27
 - 2. His military victories 18:1-20:8
 - a. David's early victories 18:1-13
 - b. David's administration 18:14-17
 - c. David's latter victories 19:1-20:8
 - 1) Victory over the Ammonites 19:1-20:3
 - a) The Ammonites and Syrians defeated 19:1-19
 - b) Rabbah conquered by Joab 20:1-3
 - 2) Victory over the Philistine giants 20:4-8
 - 3. His sinful census 21:1-30
 - a. The numbering of the people of Israel 21:1-8
 - b. The judgment of God 21:9-17
 - c. The deliverance from further judgment 21:18-30
 - 4. His organization for building the temple 22:1-27:34
 - a. The plans to build the temple 22:1-19
 - 1) The preparation of the materials 22:1-5
 - 2) The charge to the leaders 22:6-19
 - a) The charge to Solomon 22:6-16
 - b) The charge to Israel's leaders 22:17-19
 - b. The organization of the Levitical ministers 23:1-26:32
 - 1) Organization of the Levitical houses 23:1-32
 - a) The numbering of the Levites 23:1-6
 - b) The division of the Levites 23:7-23
 - c) The duty of the Levites 23:24-32
 - 2) Organization of the priests 24:1-19
 - 3) Organization of other Levites 24:20-31
 - 4) Organization of the musicians 25:1-31
 - a) The division of the musicians 25:1-8
 - b) The allotment of the musicians 25:9-31
 - 5) Organization of the gatekeepers 26:1-19
 - 6) Organization of the treasury officials 26:20-28
 - 7) Organization of the magistrates 26:29-32
 - c. The organization of the civil leaders 27:1-34
 - 1) The twelve military captains 27:1-15
 - 2) The leaders of the twelve tribes 27:16-24
 - 3) The royal officers of David 27:25-34
- C. David's last days 28:1-29:30
- 1. David's final exhortations 28:1-10
 - a. His charge to Israel 28:1-8
 - b. His charge to Solomon 28:9-10

2. David's final provisions for the temple 28:11-29:9
 - a. The commitment of the plans to Solomon 28:11-21
 - b. The collection of the offering for the temple 29:1-9
3. David's final prayer of thanksgiving 29:10-19
4. Solomon's accession as king 29:20-25
5. David's death 29:26-30

Outline of 2 Chronicles

- I. The Reign of Solomon 1:1-9:31
 - A. Solomon's establishment as king 1:1-17
 1. His initial worship as king 1:1-6
 2. His request for wisdom 1:7-12
 3. His military and economic power 1:13-17
 - B. Solomon's construction of the temple 2:1-7:22
 1. His preparation to build the temple 2:1-18
 - a. The selection of laborers 2:1-2
 - b. The request to Hiram for materials 2:3-10
 - c. The promise from Hiram of materials 2:11-16
 - d. The assignment of labor to foreigners 2:17-18
 2. His construction of the temple 3:1-5:1
 - a. Construction of the temple structure 3:1-17
 - 1) The construction of the house 3:1-7
 - 2) The construction of the Most Holy Place 3:8-14
 - 3) the construction of the pillars 3:15-17
 - b. Construction of the temple furnishings 4:1-5:1
 - 1) The work of Solomon 4:1-10
 - 2) The work of Hiram 4:11-18
 - 3) The summary of the work 4:19-5:1
 3. His dedication of the temple 5:2-7:22
 - a. The priests' installation of the ark 5:2-14
 - b. Solomon's sermon to the people 6:1-11
 - c. Solomon's prayer of dedication 6:12-42
 - 1) The posture of Solomon 6:12-13
 - 2) The recognition of God's faithfulness 6:14-17
 - 3) The appeal for God's attention 6:18-23
 - 4) The specific requests for God's intervention 6:24-40
 - 5) The closing request for God's favor 6:41-42
 - d. Solomon's worship in dedication 7:1-11
 - e. God's confirmation of the covenant 7:12-22
 - C. Solomon's success as king 8:1-9:28
 1. His political success 8:1-11
 - a. The enlarged territories 8:1-6
 - b. The subjugation of enemies 8:7-11
 2. His religious success 8:12-16
 3. His economic success 8:17-18
 4. His reputation for wisdom and wealth 9:1-28

- a. The visit of the queen of Sheba 9:1-12
 - b. The record of Solomon's great wealth 9:13-28
 - D. Solomon's death 9:29-31
- II. The Reigns of the Kings of Judah 10:1-36:23
 - A. The reign of Rehoboam 10:1-12:16
 - 1. The division of the kingdom 10:1-19
 - a. The request of Israel 10:1-5
 - b. The foolish decision of Rehoboam 10:6-15
 - c. The revolt of the people 10:16-19
 - B. The consolidation of the southern kingdom 11:1-23
 - a. The assembly of an army 11:1-4
 - b. The fortification of cities 11:5-12
 - c. The loyalty of the priests and Levites 11:13-17
 - d. The growth of Rehoboam's family 11:18-23
 - 2. The conflict with Egypt 12:1-12
 - a. The attack by Egypt 12:1-4
 - b. The confiscation by Egypt 12:5-12
 - 3. The death of Rehoboam 12:13-16
- C. The reign of Abijah 13:1-22
 - 1. The war with Jeroboam 13:1-20
 - a. The defiance of Abijah 13:1-12
 - b. The deliverance of God 13:13-20
 - 2. The death of Abijah 13:21-22
- D. The reign of Asa 14:1-16:14
 - 1. The evaluation of Asa 14:1-15
 - a. The obedience during his reign 14:1-8
 - b. The victory over the Ethiopians 14:9-15
 - 2. The reforms of Asa 15:1-19
 - a. The encouragement from Azariah 15:1-7
 - b. The restoration of true worship 15:8-19
 - 3. The sinful treaty with Syria 16:1-10
 - a. The establishment of the treaty 16:1-6
 - b. The rebuke for the treaty 16:7-10
 - 4. The death of Asa 16:11-14
- E. The reign of Jehoshaphat 17:1-20:37
 - 1. The prosperity of Jehoshaphat 17:1-19
 - a. The evaluation of Jehoshaphat 17:1-9
 - b. The military influence of Jehoshaphat 17:10-19
 - 2. The alliance of Jehoshaphat with Ahab 18:1-19:3
 - a. The alliance with Ahab 18:1-3

- b. The counsel for the war with Syria 18:4-27
 - 1) The encouragement of the false prophets 18:4-11
 - 2) The warning of Micaiah 18:12-27
 - c. The death of Ahab 18:28-19:3
 - 3. The reforms of Jehoshaphat 19:4-11
 - 4. The victory over Moab and Ammon 20:1-30
 - a. The threat of Moab and Ammon 20:1-4
 - b. The prayer of Jehoshaphat 20:5-13
 - c. The assurance from God 20:14-19
 - d. The deliverance from God 20:20-30
 - 5. The final days of Jehoshaphat 20:31-37
 - a. The summary of his reign 20:31-34
 - b. The sin of his alliance with Ahaziah 20:35-37
- F. The reign of Jehoram 21:1-20
 - 1. The evaluation of Jehoram 21:1-7
 - 2. The revolt of the Edomites and Libnah 21:8-11
 - 3. The judgment of God on Jehoram 21:12-17
 - 4. The death of Jehoram 21:18-20
- G. The reign of Ahaziah 22:1-9
 - 1. The evaluation of Ahaziah 22:1-6
 - 2. The death of Ahaziah 22:7-9
- H. The reign of Athaliah 22:10-23:21
 - 1. The deliverance of Joash from Athaliah 22:10-12
 - 2. The plot to dethrone Athaliah 23:1-11
 - 3. The death of Athaliah 23:12-15
 - 4. The enthronement of Joash by Jehoiada 23:16-21
- I. The reign of Joash 24:1-27
 - 1. The evaluation of Joash 24:1-3
 - 2. The repair of the temple 24:4-14
 - 3. The sin of Joash 24:15-22
 - 4. The death of Joash 24:23-27
- J. The reign of Amaziah 25:1-28
 - 1. The evaluation of Amaziah 25:1-4
 - 2. The victory over Edom 25:5-16
 - a. The discharge of Ephraim's troops 25:5-10
 - b. The defeat of Edom 25:11-13
 - c. The adoption of Edom's gods 25:14-16
 - 3. The defeat of Judah by Israel 25:17-24
 - 4. The death of Amaziah 25:25-28
- K. The reign of Uzziah 26:1-23

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 4. The death of Uzziah 26:22-23
- L. The reign of Jotham 27:1-9
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 - b. The return of Judah's captives 28:9-15
 - c. The appeal to Assyria for help 28:16-21
 3. The sinful idolatry of Ahaz 28:22-25
 4. The death of Ahaz 28:26-27
- N. The reign of Hezekiah 29:1-32:33
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 2. The reformation under Hezekiah 29:3-31:21
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 - b. The restoration of true worship 29:20-30:27
 - 1) The consecration of the people 29:20-30
 - 2) The sacrifices of the people 29:31-36
 - 3) The celebration of the Passover 30:1-27
 - a) The appeal to attend the Passover 30:1-12
 - b) The observance of the Passover 30:13-22
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 - c. The reforms concerning priests and Levites 31:1-21
 - 1) The contributions for priests and Levites 31:1-10
 - 2) The organization of priests and Levites 31:11-21
 3. The invasion by Assyria 32:1-23
 - a. The preparations of Hezekiah 32:1-8
 - b. The boasting of Sennacherib 32:9-19
 - c. The deliverance of Hezekiah 32:20-23
 4. The miraculous healing of Hezekiah 32:24-26
 5. The great wealth of Hezekiah 32:27-31
 6. The death of Hezekiah 32:32-33
- O. The reign of Manasseh 33:1-20
1. The evaluation of Manasseh 33:1-9
 2. The repentance of Manasseh 33:10-17
 3. The death of Manasseh 33:18-20

- P. The reign of Amon 33:21-25
- Q. The reign of Josiah 34:1-35:27
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 - 2. The reformation under Josiah 34:8-33
 - a. The repair of the temple 34:8-13
 - b. The discovery of the Book of the Law 34:14-18
 - c. The prophecy of Huldah 34:19-28
 - d. The restoration of true worship 34:29-33
 - 3. The celebration of the Passover 35:1-19
 - a. The preparations for the Passover 35:1-9
 - b. The observance of the Passover 35:10-19
 - 4. The death of Josiah 35:20-27
- R. The reign of Jehoahaz 36:1-3
- S. The reign of Jehoiakim 36:4-8
- T. The reign of Jehoiachin 36:9-10
- U. The reign of Zedekiah 36:11-21
 - 1. The evaluation of Zedekiah 36:11-14
 - 2. The fall of Jerusalem 36:15-21
- V. The decree of Cyrus to return to Jerusalem 36:22-23

Summary and Outline of Ezra

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

Ezra is the likely author of the book with his name. Besides the weight of Hebrew tradition, the internal evidence suggests this. The first person is used in Ezra's narration (7:27-9:15) and there is the same priestly emphasis and style of Chronicles, as well as obvious continuity (1:1-3; 2 Chr. 36:22-23). Ezra evidently used other available documents when he compiled the book as indicated by the Aramaic sections (4:7-6:18; 7:12-26).

Ezra was a Levite and direct descendant of Aaron (7:1-5). His father, Seraiah the high priest, was slain by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. (7:1; 2 Kings 25:18-22). As a renowned priest and scribe of the law (7:21) Ezra led the post-exilic remnant in rebuilding the temple and restoring temple worship.

The Date

The date of writing could be no earlier than 450 B.C., which is the probable date for the events of 10:17-44, and is evidently no later than the events of Nehemiah which begin in 444 B.C.

The Historical Background

Ezra covers two periods of post-exilic history separated by a gap of nearly 60 years. Chapters 1-6 cover the 23 years from Cyrus' edict to the rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel (538-515 B.C.). Then chapters 7-10 cover the period after Ezra returns from Babylon in 458 B.C. The book thus records the first two of three returns from Babylon, the third being under Nehemiah in 444 B.C.

Politically, this period is a new era in Israel's history. Persia has conquered Babylon (539 B.C.) and instituted new policies affecting the Jews. They allowed and subsidized the return of exiles to their homelands in order to promote peaceful relations. Some Jews, such as Daniel, Esther, and Mordecai, actually enjoyed a great amount of influence with the Persians. The kings mentioned in Ezra's record are Cyrus (559-530 B.C.; cf. 1:1ff.), Ahasuerus (Cambyses, 530-522 B.C.; cf. 4:6,21), Darius (Hystaspis I, 521-486 B.C.; cf. 6:1ff.), and Artaxerxes I (Longimanus, 465-424 B.C.; cf. 7:1ff.).

The religious tone of the Persian empire was more tolerant toward other faiths like Judaism. The exile of Judah resulted in new spiritual fervor and Messianic expectation in the returning remnant. Haggai and Zechariah, two prophets who ministered during the government of Zerubbabel, encouraged the people in their restoration of the temple and temple worship and incited their Messianic hope.

The Purpose

The book of Ezra continues and completes the history of Israel presented in Chronicles by documenting the return of the Jews to the land and their restoration of the temple. Theologically, it was written to demonstrate the faithfulness of God to his covenant with Israel, and thus encourage the people to faithfulness in their temple worship and covenant obligations.

Argument

Ezra divides into two sections separated by almost 60 years. The first 6 chapters record the return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel. The rest of the book records the return and restoration led by Ezra.

The return to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel (1:1-6:22) relate the events of the first return to Jerusalem by the remnant. As Jeremiah predicted (Jer. 29:10ff.), Judah's captivity comes to an end (1:1-11). Cyrus decrees the freedom and the subsidies which will help the Jews return. There follows a list of the names of those who returned (2:1-70). Such a list would prove helpful in the organization of the temple and the nation.

The work of rebuilding the temple takes place in several stages (3:1-6:22). The project begins with the rebuilding of the altar and the renewed worship of the enthusiastic remnant (3:1-7) before the foundation is laid (3:8-13). The emotional response at the foundation's completion shows the joy experienced by the realization of God's faithfulness (3:11-13). The work progresses from there only to meet the opposition of enemies which interrupts the construction (4:1-24). Opposition is recorded in three periods: under Cyrus (4:1-5), under Ahasuerus (4:6), and under Artaxerxes (4:7-24). Under the latter a letter charging Israel with seditious intent influences Artaxerxes to decree the end of construction. However, construction is resumed under Darius (5:1-6:12; 4:24) encouraged by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (5:1-2). A letter of complaint and inquiry sent to Darius by Tattenai the regional governor (5:3-17) receives a researched answer decreeing permission for the Jews to build (6:1-12). Construction is then resumed and completed (6:13-22). To mark the climactic achievement the Jews worship God and observe the Passover. This ends the account of the first restoration of the temple, a project sanctioned with the blessing of God (6:22).

The second half of the book records the return to Jerusalem and the restoration under Ezra (7:1-10:44). This section begins with the description of the return to Jerusalem (7:1-8:36). First, Ezra is introduced to display his qualifications (7:1-10). This is followed by a copy of the letter of Artaxerxes permitting the return of Ezra and the captives to Jerusalem (7:11-26). Ezra's response to the letter exhibits his recognition of God's sovereignty in the matter (7:27-28). After a list of the people who returned (8:1-14), there is another illustration of God's sovereignty in the account of the return to Jerusalem (8:15-36). In answer to fasting and prayer, God protects them from enemies on their journey so that they arrive safely.

The last event narrated in Ezra describes the restoration of the people (9:1-10:44) after their sinful intermarriage with local pagans is discovered (9:1-2). Ezra's repentance and prayer reminds God of His past faithfulness while confessing Israel's present unfaithfulness (9:5-15). This moves the people to confession and repentance (10:1-17) to which Ezra responds by commanding them to separate from the pagan wives (10:9-15). The people are obedient to the command and their separations are recorded by groups: the priests (10:18-22), the Levites (10:23-24), and the general populace (10:25-44). Ezra thus ends with a sinful situation used to demonstrate the overriding devotion of the remnant to God's will. This is an encouragement to God's people, as is the previous narrative showing God's faithfulness in building the temple and returning the people to the promised land.

Outline of Ezra

- I. The Return to Jerusalem and Rebuilding under Zerubbabel 1:1-6:22
 - A. The end of the Babylonian captivity 1:1-11
 1. The decree of Cyrus freeing the Jews 1:1-4
 2. The collection of gifts for the temple 1:5-11
 - B. The record of the people who returned 2:1-70
 1. The people of known descent 2:1-58
 - a. The leaders 2:1-2
 - b. The families 2:3-20
 - c. The cities 2:21-35
 - d. The priests 2:36-39
 - e. The Levites 2:40-42
 - f. The temple servants 2:43-54
 - g. The servants of Solomon 2:55-58
 2. The people of unknown descent 2:59-63
 - a. The people 2:59-60
 - b. The priests 2:61-63
 3. The summary of the people who returned 2:64-70
 - a. The number of people and livestock 2:64-67
 - b. The gifts of the leaders 2:68-70
 - C. The rebuilding of the temple 3:1-6:22
 1. The beginning of construction 3:1-13
 - a. The rebuilt altar and renewed worship 3:1-7
 - b. The completion of the temple foundation 3:8-13
 2. The interruption of construction 4:1-24
 - a. Opposition under Cyrus and Darius 4:1-5
 - b. Opposition under Ahasuerus 4:6
 - c. Opposition under Artaxerxes 4:7-24
 - 1) The opponents' letter to Artaxerxes 4:7-16
 - 2) The answer of Artaxerxes 4:17-22
 - 3) The cessation of construction 4:23-24
 3. The resumption of construction 5:1-6:12
 - a. The encouragement of the prophets 5:1-2
 - b. The opposition of Tattenai 5:3-17
 - 1) The protest of Tattenai to the Jews 5:3-5
 - 2) The letter of Tattenai to Darius 5:6-17
 - c. The decree of Darius 6:1-12
 - 1) The discovery of Cyrus' decree 6:1-2
 - 2) The previous decree of Cyrus 6:3-5

- 3) The new decree of Darius 6:6-12
 - 4. The completion of construction 6:13-22
 - a. The completion of the temple 6:13-15
 - b. The dedication of the temple 6:16-18
 - c. The celebration of the Passover 6:19-22
- II. The Return to Jerusalem and Restoration under Ezra 7:1-10:44
 - A. The return to Jerusalem 7:1-8:36
 - 1. The introduction to Ezra 7:1-10
 - a. The priestly qualifications of Ezra 7:1-6
 - b. The summary of Ezra's journey 7:7-10
 - 2. The letter of Artaxerxes 7:11-28
 - a. The content of the letter 7:11-26
 - 1) The permission to return with wealth 7:11-20
 - 2) The instruction to the treasurers 7:21-24
 - 3) The permission for self-government 7:25-26
 - b. Ezra's response to the letter 7:27-28
 - 3. The list of the people who returned 8:1-14
 - 4. The account of the return to Jerusalem 8:15-36
 - a. The preparations for the journey 8:15-30
 - 1) The selection of temple servants 8:15-20
 - 2) The proclamation of a fast 8:21-23
 - 3) The distribution of gifts for the temple 8:24-30
 - b. The safe journey and arrival in Jerusalem 8:31-32
 - c. The initial duties discharged in Jerusalem 8:33-36
 - B. The restoration of the people 9:1-10:44
 - 1. The sinful intermarriage of the people 9:1-2
 - 2. The intercession of Ezra 9:3-15
 - a. His great grief 9:3-4
 - b. His intercessory prayer 9:5-15
 - 1) God's past faithfulness 9:5-9
 - 2) Israel's present unfaithfulness 9:10-15
 - 3. The repentance of the people 10:1-17
 - a. The confession of the people 10:1-4
 - b. The response of Ezra 10:5-8
 - c. The command of Ezra 10:9-15
 - d. The obedience of the people 10:16-17
 - 4. The separation of the people from pagan wives 10:18-44
 - a. The separation of the priests 10:18-22
 - b. The separation of the Levites 10:23-24
 - c. The separation of the people 10:25-44

Summary and Outline of Nehemiah

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Introduction

The Author

The book clearly makes use of Nehemiah's personal memoirs. It is possible that Nehemiah himself wrote the book since so much is in first person (1:1-7:5; 12:27-43; 13:4-31). Another possibility is that Ezra used Nehemiah's memoirs for these sections and compiled the sections not in first person (7:6-12:26; 12:44-13:3). Hebrew tradition had considered the two books one, thus indicating they may have been one written by Ezra. However, the repetition of the lists in Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7 may argue they were separate works.

Nehemiah is identified as the cupbearer to king Artaxerxes I. This was a great position of trust and responsibility in the Persian administration. He became governor of Jerusalem and governed from 444 to 432 B.C. His character exhibits courage, compassion, integrity, godliness, and unselfishness.

The Date

The record of the second visit to Jerusalem in the "thirty-second year of Artaxerxes" (13:6) places the date of writing sometime shortly after about 425 B.C.

The Historical Background

Nehemiah shares much the same historical background as Ezra. The book records the third return of the exiles to Jerusalem in 444 B.C., or 13 years after Ezra's return. The book thus covers almost 20 years from the time of his first visit to the time of his second visit to Jerusalem in about 425 B.C. (13:6). Nehemiah led the Jews in rebuilding the walls of the city and in reorganizing the people. Malachi was a chief prophet who encouraged the people in their restoration during Nehemiah's administration. From his prophecy it is clear this period of Israel's history had many besetting sins which revealed indifference toward God and laxity in keeping the covenant.

The Purpose

Nehemiah documents the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall and the restoration of Jerusalem's people. It shows how God used Nehemiah to protect His people and the new temple as an assurance of His covenant faithfulness. Nehemiah also serves as an important beginning point for future prophecy because the date of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (2:4-8) marks the beginning of the "seventy weeks" prophecy of Daniel (Dan. 9:24ff.). As such, it is an encouragement to Israel that God is working in unfolding His program in history to bring about His kingdom.

Argument

Nehemiah has two main parts, one recording the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah, and the other recording the restoration of the people in Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah. The first emphasizes the physical reconstruction of Jerusalem, and the latter the spiritual renewal of the Jews.

In the first part of the book Nehemiah leads the Jews in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem (1:1-7:73). The account of the preparation to rebuild the wall (1:1-2:20) begins with Nehemiah in the service of Artaxerxes in Persia. There he hears of the ruined wall of Jerusalem (1:1-3) and petitions God for mercy (1:4-11). His prayer reflects an astute understanding of the terms of the Mosaic covenant as well as confidence in God's covenant faithfulness. His faith brings him before the king to request permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild its wall (2:1-10). Upon the king's decree of permission, Nehemiah visits Jerusalem to inspect the damage and encourages the Jews there to undertake the project (2:11-20). The theme of opposition to the work surfaces in these events (2:9-10,19-20) and foreshadows trouble ahead.

Next proceeds a record of the rebuilding (3:1-6:19). The work and the workers are well organized to cover all sections of the wall (3:1-32). However, Nehemiah and the Jews soon encounter problems within and without which threaten their project (4:1-6:14). Without, ridicule and threats led by Sanballat and Tobiah discourage the people until Nehemiah arms them and reminds them that God will fight for them (4:1-23). Within, the people complain of extortion from their leaders and Nehemiah is forced to rebuke the leaders (5:1-13). The mention of his unselfish sharing with others (5:14-19) forms a contrast with these selfish leaders. A second external threat comes from a conspiracy of Tobiah and Sanballat to do Nehemiah harm (6:1-14). However, he is able to avoid their treachery while continually expressing his faith in God through prayer (6:9,14). Amid the opposition, the wall is finally completed (6:15-19). Nehemiah attributes this accomplishment to God's doing (6:16), an assertion proven by the rapid completion (6:15).

The first half of the book ends with the registration of the people in Jerusalem (7:1-73). The details of organization show Nehemiah's diligence in rebuilding the nation. This completes the account of his physical restoration of the remnant.

The spiritual restoration of the remnant under Ezra and Nehemiah is the focus of the second half of the book (8:1-13:31). This begins with the renewal of the covenant led by Ezra (8:1-10:39). The reading of the law (8:1-18) results in celebration and observance of the Feast of Tabernacles. Soon after, the covenant renewal takes place (9:1-10:39) with the confession of sin by the people (9:1-4) and by the Levites (9:5-38). The prayer of the Levites reveals their clear understanding of God's program based on His covenants and His faithfulness to the covenants. The leaders then set their seals upon the covenant in ratification (10:1-27). The covenant contained stipulations about separation, the Sabbath, and temple worship (10:28-39). Ezra thus brought spiritual renewal according to the Mosaic provision through confession, prayer, and repentance.

The reformation of the nation continues under the leadership of Nehemiah (11:1-13:31). His first reform directed the resettlement of people who would dwell inside and outside of Jerusalem (11:1-36). There is also a record given of the priests and Levites registered and able to serve in the temple (12:1-26). These priests and Levites participated in the joyful ceremonies dedicating the completed wall (12:27-47).

The book closes with a list of reforms instituted by Nehemiah that concern the morality of the people (13:1-31). First, they are separated from the Gentile foreigners according to the law (13:1-3). Nehemiah also institutes reforms for temple practice (13:4-14), for observing the Sabbath (13:15-22), and for mixed marriages (13:23-29). Nehemiah's faith and

strict adherence to the law is an example for the nation in their post-exilic circumstances. The book demonstrates that God will unfold His program for Israel despite opposition and sin because He is faithful to His promises.

Outline of Nehemiah

- I. The Rebuilding of the Wall under Nehemiah 1:1-7:73
 - A. The preparation to rebuild the wall 1:1-2:20
 1. Nehemiah's discovery of the Jerusalem's ruined walls 1:1-3
 2. Nehemiah's prayer for God's mercy 1:4-11
 3. Nehemiah's request of King Artaxerxes 2:1-10
 - a. The favorable response of the king 2:1-8
 - b. The unfavorable concern of the governors 2:9-10
 4. Nehemiah's preparatory work in Jerusalem 2:11-20
 - a. He inspects the walls of Jerusalem. 2:11-16
 - b. He exhorts the people of Jerusalem. 2:17-18
 - c. He answers the enemies. 2:19-20
 - B. The rebuilding of the wall 3:1-6:19
 1. The record of the work and the workers 3:1-32
 - a. The workers on the north wall 3:1-5
 - b. The workers on the west wall 3:6-12
 - c. The workers on the south wall 3:13-14
 - d. The workers on the southeast wall 3:15-27
 - e. The workers on the northeast wall 3:28-32
 2. The problems with the work 4:1-6:14
 - a. The opposition from without 4:1-23
 - 1) The ridicule from the enemies 4:1-6
 - 2) The threat of attack by the enemies 4:7-9
 - 3) The discouragement of the people 4:10-12
 - 4) The precautions of Nehemiah 4:13-23
 - b. The oppression from within 5:1-19
 - 1) The complaint of the people about extortion 5:1-5
 - 2) The correction of the rulers by Nehemiah 5:6-13
 - 3) The example of unselfishness by Nehemiah 5:14-19
 - c. The conspiracy from without 6:1-14
 - 1) The deceitful invitation of the enemies 6:1-4
 - 2) The threatening letter of the enemies 6:5-9
 - 3) The treacherous plot of the enemies 6:10-14
 3. The completion of the work 6:15-19
 - a. The completion of the wall 6:15-16
 - b. The continuation of opposition 6:17-19
 - C. The registration of the people in Jerusalem 7:1-73
 1. The organization of Jerusalem's security 7:1-3
 2. The registration of Jerusalem's people 7:4-73

- a. The plan of registration by genealogy 7:4-5
 - b. The register of those of known descent 7:6-60
 - 1) The leaders 7:6-7
 - 2) The men of Israel 7:8-38
 - 3) The priests 7:39-42
 - 4) The Levites 7:43-45
 - 5) The servants 7:46-60
 - c. The register of those of unknown descent 7:61-65
 - 1) The men of Israel 7:61-62
 - 2) The priests 7:63-65
 - d. The summary of the registration 7:66-73
 - 1) The number of people and livestock 7:66-69
 - 2) The amounts of the gifts for the treasury 7:70-73
- II. The Restoration of the People under Ezra and Nehemiah 8:1-13:31
- A. The renewal of the covenant under Ezra 8:1-10:39
 - 1. The reading of the law 8:1-18
 - a. The reading and interpretation of the law 8:1-8
 - b. The response of the people 8:9-18
 - 1) The celebration because of understanding 8:9-12
 - 2) The observance of the Feast of Tabernacles 8:13-18
 - 2. The renewal of the covenant 9:1-10:39
 - a. The preparation for the renewal of the covenant 9:1-38
 - 1) The repentance of the people 9:1-4
 - 2) The prayer of the Levites 9:5-38
 - a) The reiteration of God's great works 9:5-15
 - b) The reiteration of Israel's sins 9:16-31
 - c) The concluding request and commitment 9:32-38
 - b. The ratification of the covenant 10:1-27
 - 1) The seals of the priests 10:1-8
 - 2) The seals of the Levites 10:9-13
 - 3) The seals of the leaders of the people 10:14-27
 - c. The stipulations of the covenant 10:28-39
 - 1) Concerning separation and the Sabbath 10:28-31
 - 2) Concerning temple worship 10:32-39
 - B. The reformation of the nation under Nehemiah 11:1-13:31
 - 1. The resettlement of the people 11:1-36
 - a. The plan of resettlement 11:1-2
 - b. The people dwelling inside Jerusalem 11:3-24
 - 1) The children of Judah 11:3-6
 - 2) The children of Benjamin 11:7-9

- 3) The priests 11:10-14
 - 4) The Levites 11:15-24
 - c. The people dwelling outside of Jerusalem 11:25-36
 - 1) The children of Judah 11:25-30
 - 2) The children of Benjamin 11:31-36
- 2. The register of the priests and Levites 12:1-26
 - a. Those during the return of Zerubbabel 12:1-11
 - b. Those during the reign of Joiakim 12:12-21
 - c. Those during the reign of Darius 12:22-26
- 3. The dedication of the Jerusalem wall 12:27-47
 - a. The preparation of the Levites and priests 12:27-30
 - b. The procession of the thanksgiving choir 12:31-43
 - c. The provision for contributions 12:44-47
- 4. The reformation of the people 13:1-31
 - a. Israel's separation from foreigners 13:1-3
 - b. Nehemiah's reforms in Israel 13:4-31
 - 1) Reforms concerning temple service 13:4-14
 - a) The expulsion of Tobiah from the temple 13:4-9
 - b) The restoration of Levitical support 13:10-14
 - 2) Reforms concerning the Sabbath 13:15-22
 - a) The rebuke for profaning the Sabbath 13:15-18
 - b) The cessation of trade on the Sabbath 13:19-22
 - 3) Reforms concerning mixed marriages 13:23-29
 - a) The rebuke of mixed marriages 13:23-27
 - b) The expulsion of Joiada 13:28-29
 - 4) Reforms summarized 13:30-31

Summary and Outline of Esther

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C. Haman's plot to exterminate the Jews 3:7-15.....	4
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A. The triumph of Mordecai over Haman 5:1-8:2.....	4
B. The triumph of the Jews over their enemies 8:3-9:32.....	5
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Introduction

The Author

The author of Esther was apparently a Jew who had intimate knowledge of Persian etiquette, customs, and palace life in Shushan. This suggests he lived in Persia and witnessed the events recorded. Mordecai is commonly suggested as the probable author, though chapter 10 implies this was written after his career had ended unless an editor added the conclusion. Another likely possibility is a younger contemporary of Mordecai. Others have suggested Ezra or Nehemiah, but there are too many stylistic differences with their works. The Talmud ascribed the book to the "Great Synagogue" of which Ezra was said to be president. Thus it is possible he was a collaborator.

The Date

Since chapter 10 speaks of the reign of Ahasuerus (465-435 B.C.) in the past tense, Esther was probably written shortly after this time but certainly no later than 400 B.C. because there is no trace of Greek influence in the historical detail or language.

The Historical Background

The actual events of the book extend over a decade from the third year of Ahasuerus (1:1, 483 B.C.) to the end of his twelfth year (3:7, 473 B.C.). Ahasuerus, also known as Xerxes, was a strong king who brought the Persian empire to its zenith of power. He tried to extend his rule over Greece but suffered the devastation of his fleet at the Island of Salamis. This occurred between chapters 1 and 2 of Esther. Shushan, the setting for this story, was the summer capital of the king located about 250 miles east of Babylon. The Persians treated the dispersed Jews well allowing many to return to Jerusalem. However, many Jews chose to stay in the Persian territories and Esther forms an important biblical portrait of them.

The religious atmosphere in Jerusalem is the same as under Ezra and Nehemiah. Indifference and disillusionment ruled in large part. Jews living in the dispersion were tolerated by the Persians because dualistic Persian Zoroastrianism favored beneficent and true deities.

The Purpose

Historically, Esther documents the preservation of the Jews in Persia and recounts the origin of the feast of Purim. Theologically, it illustrates God's providential and unfailing preservation of His people. God is not mentioned, but He providentially guides the events of the book. Thus the story would serve to encourage the dispersed Jews and the returned remnant to be faithful to God because he is concerned for them and faithful to His covenant with them.

Argument

The book proceeds in normal story fashion. The setting is established with the selection of Esther as queen, then the threat to the Jews adds conflict to the plot. Finally, the conflict is resolved with the triumph of the Jews over their enemies.

Esther is selected as queen (1:1-2:20) after the rebelliousness of Ahasuerus' wife, Vashti, brings her removal (1:1-22). Mordecai is introduced with Esther as the one who raised her and remains her secret connection to her Jewish heritage after she is selected by the king (2:5-11,19-20).

At this point, a threat to the Jews brings a conflict to the story (2:21-4:17). But preempting this is the important notation of Mordecai's discovery and disclosure of a plot to murder the king (2:21-23). Mordecai also figures in Haman's hatred of the Jews because he refused to honor Haman (3:1-6). Thus Haman formulates a plot to exterminate the Jews and wins the king's support (3:7-15). When Mordecai learns of the plan, he appeals to Esther to use her influence (4:1-17). His appeal recognizes the providence of God in placing Esther in a position of power (4:14) and Esther's response indicates she is trusting God to find favor with the king (4:16).

The resolution of the conflict and the triumph of the Jews (5:1-10:3) begins with the personal triumph of Mordecai over Haman (5:1-8:2). As Esther plans to reveal to Ahasuerus the evil design of Haman (5:1-8), Haman is plotting to have Mordecai hanged (5:9-14). Yet divine providence keeps the king from sleeping so that he discovers Mordecai's earlier unrewarded deed and chooses Haman to honor the Jew (6:1-14). Haman's death on the gallows prepared for Mordecai (7:1-10) and Mordecai's inheritance of Haman's house (8:1-2) are the last of a series of providentially configured ironies that illustrate God's care.

The Jews eventually triumph over their enemies (8:3-9:32) because of a new royal decree allowing them to defend themselves (8:3-17). The enemies are destroyed in two days (9:1-16) and the spontaneous celebration of the Jews leads to the institution of the Feast of Purim to commemorate God's deliverance (9:17-32). The book closes by noting Mordecai's prominence in the Persian kingdom (10:1-3).

The story of Esther is an encouragement to Jews concerning God's covenant care for them. Moreover, the feast of Purim serves as a yearly reminder of God's unfailing preservation of His people.

Outline of Esther

- I. The Selection of Esther as Queen 1:1-2:20
 - A. The removal of Queen Vashti by Ahasuerus 1:1-22
 - 1. The feasts of King Ahasuerus 1:1-9
 - 2. The refusal by Queen Vashti 1:10-12
 - 3. The removal of Queen Vashti 1:13-22
 - a. The counsel concerning her removal 1:13-20
 - b. The decree concerning her removal 1:21-22
 - B. The marriage to Esther by Ahasuerus 2:1-20
 - 1. The decree to gather beautiful young virgins 2:1-4
 - 2. The introduction to Mordecai and Esther 2:5-7
 - 3. The preparation of the women 2:8-14
 - a. The selection of the king's harem 2:8-11
 - b. The process of final the selection 2:12-14
 - c. The final selection of Esther as queen 2:15-20
- II. The Threat to the Jews 2:21-4:17
 - A. Mordecai's discovery of a plot to kill Ahasuerus 2:21-23
 - B. Haman's hatred of the Jews 3:1-6
 - 1. The promotion of Haman 3:1-3
 - 2. The hatred of Haman for Mordecai and the Jews 3:4-6
 - C. Haman's plot to exterminate the Jews 3:7-15
 - 1. The presentation of the plot to the king 3:7-11
 - 2. The publication of the decree against the Jews 3:12-15
 - D. Mordecai's appeal to Esther 4:1-17
 - 1. The grief of Mordecai and the Jews 4:1-3
 - 2. The communications between Mordecai and Esther 4:4-17
 - a. The first communication 4:4-12
 - 1) The inquiry from Esther 4:4-6
 - 2) The appeal from Mordecai 4:7-9
 - 3) The answer from Esther 4:10-12
 - b. The second communication 4:13-17
 - 1) The warning from Mordecai 4:13-14
 - 2) The answer from Esther 4:15-17
- III. The Triumph of the Jews 5:1-10:3
 - A. The triumph of Mordecai over Haman 5:1-8:2
 - 1. Esther holds her first banquet for the king. 5:1-8
 - a. The invitation to the banquet 5:1-5
 - b. The request at the banquet 5:6-8
 - 2. Haman plots to kill Mordecai. 5:9-14

3. The king honors Mordecai. 6:1-14
 - a. The king's plan to honor Mordecai 6:1-6
 - b. Haman's plan to honor himself 6:7-9
 - c. Haman's honoring of Mordecai 6:10-11
 - d. Haman's humiliation 6:12-14
 4. Haman is hanged. 7:1-10
 - a. Esther's disclosure at her second banquet 7:1-6
 - b. The king's anger at Haman 7:7-8
 - c. The execution of Haman 7:9-10
 5. Mordecai is given Haman's house. 8:1-2
- B. The triumph of the Jews over their enemies 8:3-9:32
1. The king's decree to save the Jews 8:3-17
 - a. The request of Esther to the king 8:3-6
 - b. The new decree of the king and Mordecai 8:7-14
 - c. The rejoicing of the Jews 8:15-17
 2. The Jews' destruction of their enemies 9:1-16
 - a. The enemies destroyed on the first day 9:1-10
 - b. The request of Esther for another day 9:11-13
 - c. The enemies destroyed on the second day 9:14-16
 3. The Jews' celebration of their victory 9:17-32
 - a. The Jews' spontaneous celebration 9:17-19
 - b. Mordecai's establishment of the Feast of Purim 9:20-28
 - c. Esther's confirmation of the Feast of Purim 9:29-32
- C. The prominence of Mordecai 10:1-3

Summary and Outline of Job

by

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Introduction

The Author

The book of Job is anonymous, which has led to many suggestions for its authorship: Job, Elihu, Moses, Solomon, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezra. Moses has many proponents, in part because of Talmudic tradition and the assumption that he acquired the story during his 40 years in Midian, which is adjacent to Uz (1:1). Solomon finds support because of his reputation for wisdom literature, the genre of Job, and the similarities between Job 28 and Proverbs 8. A plausible suggestion is that Job himself was the author. The details of lengthy conversations point to an eyewitness and the 140 years of additional life (42:16) would have given him ample occasion to record the story.

The Date

If Moses wrote Job in Midian, the date of composition would be the early fifteenth century. If Solomon is the author, then it was written in the middle of the tenth century. If Job wrote the book, it is dated from the patriarchal period making it the earliest book in the Bible.

Many things indicate Job lived in the patriarchal period. First, it appears he lived to be near 200 years old (42:16) which corresponds to the longer lives of the patriarchs (eg. Gen. 25:7). Also, Job's wealth is measured by livestock (1:3; 42:12), as was true of Abraham and Jacob (Gen. 12:16; 30:43), and not by silver or gold. Like the patriarchs, Job was a father-priest who offered sacrifices. Furthermore, the Chaldeans in Job are nomadic (1:17), a fact not true in later years. In addition, there is no mention of Israel, the exodus, the Mosaic law, or the tabernacle. Job also uses the patriarchal name for God, Shaddai, 31 times while the rest of the Old Testament uses it only 17 times. Finally, the book uses a number of personal names and places also associated with the patriarchal period. Therefore, if Job wrote the book, it would have been between 2100 and 1900 B.C.

The Historical Background

The historicity of the events of Job is sometimes questioned. But his homeland, Uz (1:1), was not a fictional place. It was located east of Edom, southeast of the Dead Sea, and bordered Midian in what is now northern Arabia. Also, Job's historical existence is affirmed by both an Old and New Testament author (Eze. 14:14,20; James 5:11).

The religious setting is evidently pre-law. Father's acted as priest and offered sacrifices for the family. Also, from the statements of Job's friends, it appears a form of retribution theology existed which considered suffering a divine punishment for sin.

The Purpose

Two major themes emerge from Job: God's sovereignty over creation, and faith amid incomprehensible suffering. Job was written to show that because God is sovereign over creation, man can trust His purposes in allowing suffering. Thus the message of Job is an encouragement to faith in God in adverse circumstances.

Argument

Most of Job consists of cycles of dialogue between Job and his friends. The latter part of the book contains three important discourses by Job, Elihu, and God. The prologue and epilogue are critical in understanding the overall message of the book because they reveal God's sovereignty behind Job's situation.

The prologue (1:1-2:13) introduces Job and the circumstances behind his suffering. He is introduced as an unquestionably righteous man (1:1-5). The two interviews of God with Satan (1:6-2:10) show that ironically his righteousness is the indirect reason for his suffering as he is accused by Satan in God's presence. The prologue shows that Job's suffering is not God's punitive action. Yet indirectly, his suffering is the result of God's permissive will. Job understands somewhat God's sovereignty in prosperity and suffering, and this keeps him from sinning with his lips (2:10). The introduction of Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar (2:11-13) sets the stage for the extensive dialogue which follows.

There are three cycles of dialogue between Job and His friends (3:1-27:23). Job's words begin and end the cycles which are put in the form of interchange between one friend at a time with Job's reply. In Job's beginning monologue (3:1-26) he bemoans his birth and questions why his life continues in view of such tremendous suffering. This questioning of God's plan prompts the replies of his friends.

Eliphaz begins the first cycle of dialogue (4:1-14:22) as he does the other two. In his speech (4:1-5:27) he rebukes Job and declares his suffering is a result of sin (4:1-21). His advice to Job is to accept his suffering as God's discipline while seeking God's mercy (5:1-27). Though Eliphaz demonstrates a lofty concept of God, his declarations indicate simplistic thinking about God's ways in light of the information given the reader in the prologue. Job's response (6:1-7:21) has the confidence of an innocent man and blames his friend for a wrong evaluation of his righteousness. Job continues to question God's justice in permitting his suffering (7:7-21).

In his first speech (8:1-22), Bildad pursues the reasoning of Eliphaz and rebukes Job for accusing God of injustice (8:1-4) arguing that God does not inflict the righteous but only the unrighteous (8:8-22). In response (9:1-10:22) Job concedes the relative unrighteousness of man before God and expresses the futility he feels in pleading with God (9:1-35). Then he continues by questioning God directly about the reason for suffering (10:1-22).

The speech of Zophar (11:1-20) also rebukes Job for impertinence before God whose ways are unknowable (11:1-12). His solution for Job is also repentance (11:13-20). Job's response (12:1-14:22) reveals a clearer understanding of God's ways than his friends have because he recognizes to a greater degree God's sovereignty in human affairs since God does not always prosper the righteous (12:1-11). Thus the traditional theology of divine retribution is challenged. Job believes still that he will be vindicated (13:13-19). Yet in his finite understanding, he continues to petition God for a justification of his suffering (13:20-14:22).

The second cycle of dialogue (15:1-21:34) also begins with Eliphaz (15:1-35). He assumes his previous position by rebuking Job as a sinner (15:1-16) and describing the divine inflictions of the wicked (15:1-35). Job's response (16:1-17:16) shows he is growing impatient with his friends' lack of compassion (16:1-5) as he continues to despair in his condition (16:6-

17:16). He recognizes a gap between finite man and the infinite God and longs for a mediator to fill that gap on his behalf (16:18-17:2).

Bildad's rejoinder (18:1-21) defends his friends against Job's personal attack (18:1-4) and seems to ignore Job's assertion of innocence by describing the fate of the wicked (18:5-21). Job's disappointment in his friends grows (19:1-6,12-22). Significantly, he sees his ultimate vindication in the future Redeemer because he understands justice does not reside chiefly in this life (19:23-29).

Zophar's second speech (20:1-29) answers Job's observation that some of the wicked prosper, by arguing that their prosperity is short-lived. But Job challenges this with the assertion that often the wicked experience no apparent calamity in this life (21:1-34). Again, the second cycle illustrates Job's challenge to the expectations of life by notation of the exceptions, of which he is an example.

The last cycle of dialogue (22:1-26:14) is once more led by Eliphaz who asserts that Job's righteousness is of no avail to God because of his overriding wickedness (22:1-30). However, the reader has seen in the prologue that Eliphaz is wrong. Job's answer (23:1-24:25) maintains his innocence and sense of frustration while revealing his understanding of God's unfathomable sovereignty in the appointments of his life (23:13-17). The fearful attitude of Job elevates him over his more presumptuous friends in their understanding of God.

Bildad answers Job by agreeing with his lofty view of God's sovereignty, but uses it to argue that therefore no one can ever be justified before God (25:1-5). Job recognizes the absence of hope and help in Bildad's theology (26:1-14). His understanding of God's greatness does not exclude but includes justification of unworthy men.

At this point, the cycle of dialogue ends with a closing monologue by Job (27:1-23). He steadfastly maintains his righteousness positioning himself apart from the enemies of God and their punishment.

The dialogues have revealed the presuppositions of many in regards to suffering. The friends argue from the normal expectation that God prospers the righteous and causes the wicked to suffer. Job, however, argues from the unexplainable exceptions in which the reason for suffering is hidden in the sovereignty of God. Job thus proves his superior faith and his superior understanding of God's greatness, yet he continues to demand an explanation from God.

The cycles of dialogue give way to three discourses delivered by Job, Elihu, and God (28:1-42:6). Job's discourse takes the form of a summary monologue (28:1-31:40). His opening discourse on wisdom (28:1-28) shows that he understands he is not wise enough to understand his suffering. This leaves only faith, also expressed as "the fear of the Lord," and obedience to the known will of God as man's duty (28:28). Job's summary defense (29:1-31:40) shows that in no way does he concede to his friends that his troubles are due to some sin. He recalls his former days of prosperity (29:1-25) and contrasts this with his present calamity (30:1-31). Furthermore, he rigorously defends his innocence in every area of personal conduct (31:1-40).

The next discourse is spoken by Elihu (32:1-37:24) in four separate speeches. He speaks now because the three friends are speechless thinking Job is incorrigibly self-righteous (32:1-22). Elihu shares this opinion (32:2) but answers Job from a different perspective. His

first speech (33:1-33) refutes Job's belief that God is silent in regards to his suffering. He argues that God speaks to men in various ways, if they can hear, and that He designs suffering as a preventative for sin (33:29-30).

Elihu's second speech (34:1-37) answers Job's insinuations that God is not fair with a defense of God's justice. He asserts that Job's questioning of God's justice is out of line (34:34-37). The third speech (35:1-16) contests Job's inconsistent complaint that his righteous life is no concern to God yet should earn better treatment by God (35:1-3). Elihu argues that Job's arrogant attitude prevents God's vindication of him (35:9-16). In his fourth speech (36:1-37:24), Elihu proclaims the goodness and greatness of God in relation to man (36:1-23) and creation (36:24-37:24) in order to prove to Job that it is presumptuous to question God's wisdom and ways. Job's silence after all four speeches may indicate his recognition of some truth in Elihu's words. Elihu's theology is not simplistic like the three friends', but is based on a lofty and majestic concept of God that humbles men.

The final discourse is a two-part direct challenge to Job by God which reinforces the awesomeness of His person addressed by Elihu (38:1-42:6). Through a long series of questions, God challenges Job to explain the mysteries of the inanimate creation (38:4-38) and the animate creation (38:39-39:30). At this, Job finally confesses his sin of presumption (40:3-5), but God continues His theology lesson in a second part of the discourse (40:6-41:34). Here God widens the gap between man and Deity by challenging Job to do the works of God (40:6-14) and by using the examples of behemoth and leviathon (40:15-41:34).

Job is finally reduced to complete repentance (42:1-6) with the realization that he has dared to speak of things "too wonderful" or beyond his human ability and right to understand. The epilogue (42:7-17) describes how God rebukes the three friends, defends Job, and returns Job's prosperity double. God never tells Job why he suffered, but this fits the purpose of the book which is to show that God is sovereign over creation and the best man can do when faced with unexplainable suffering is continue to trust Him because He is God. Thus the book encourages men to faith and a greater concept of God.

Outline of Job

- I. Prologue 1:-2:13
 - A. The introduction of Job as a righteous man 1:1-5
 - B. The interviews with Satan that result in Job's affliction 1:6-2:10
 - 1. The first interview and loss of Job's prosperity 1:6-22
 - a. The agreement between God and Satan in heaven 1:6-12
 - b. The destruction of Job's prosperity by Satan 1:13-19
 - c. The righteous response of Job to this calamity 1:20-22
 - 2. The second interview and loss of Job's health 2:1-10
 - a. The agreement between God and Satan in heaven 2:1-6
 - b. The destruction of Job's health by Satan 2:7-8
 - c. Job's righteous response to this calamity 2:9-10
 - C. The introduction of Job's three friends 2:11-13
- II. Three Cycles of Dialogue Between Job and His Friends 3:1-27:23
 - A. Job's introductory monologue 3:1-26
 - 1. He wishes that he had never been born. 3:3-10
 - 2. He wishes that he had died at birth. 3:11-19
 - 3. He wonders why he can not die since he is suffering. 3:20-26
 - B. The first cycle of dialogue 4:1-14:22
 - 1. Eliphaz's first speech 4:1-5:27
 - a. He rebukes Job's attitude. 4:1-6
 - b. He declares that suffering is the result of sin. 4:7-11
 - c. He supports his thesis by describing a vision. 4:12-21
 - 1) The circumstances of the vision 4:12-16
 - 2) The message of the vision 4:17-21
 - d. He advises Job. 5:1-27
 - 1) Job should realize that men will suffer. 5:1-7
 - 2) Job should seek God because He is merciful. 5:8-16
 - 3) Job should accept God's discipline. 5:17-27
 - 2. Job's response to Eliphaz 6:1-7:21
 - a. He asserts suffering causes him to speak rashly. 6:1-13
 - 1) He complains because of his great distress. 6:1-7
 - 2) He wishes that God would kill him. 6:8-10
 - 3) He expresses his lack of hope. 6:11-13
 - b. He expresses disappointment in his friends. 6:14-30
 - 1) They are undependable in hard times. 6:14-23
 - 2) They do not properly consider to his words. 6:24-30
 - c. He laments the brevity and futility of life. 7:1-6
 - d. He prays to God about his distressed life. 7:7-21

- 1) He reminds God that his life is short. 7:7-10
 - 2) He says he will continue to complain. 7:11-16
 - 3) He asks God why he is targeted for trouble. 7:17-21
3. Bildad's first speech 8:1-22
 - a. He rebukes Job for accusing God of injustice. 8:1-4
 - b. He advises Job to turn to God and prosper again. 8:5-7
 - c. He argues for God's justice. 8:8-22
 - 1) Former generations would teach Job this. 8:8-11
 - 2) The unrighteous do not prosper. 8:12-19
 - 3) God does not forsake an upright man. 8:20-22
 4. Job's response to Bildad 9:1-10:22
 - a. He cannot contend with God. 9:1-35
 - 1) God is so great no one can stand against Him. 9:1-13
 - 2) Job thinks it is futile to plead with God. 9:14-31
 - 3) Job wants a mediator to help him. 9:32-35
 - b. He asks God about his unfair suffering. 10:1-22
 - 1) He questions God about his unfair suffering. 10:1-7
 - 2) He asks why God is destroying him. 10:8-17
 - 3) He asks why God allowed his birth. 10:18-22
 5. Zophar's first speech 11:1-20
 - a. He rebukes Job for his words against God. 11:1-6
 - b. He declares that God cannot be known by Job. 11:7-12
 - c. He implores Job to repent and be restored. 11:13-19
 - d. He reminds that the wicked will be punished. 11:20
 6. Job's response to Zophar 12:1-14:22
 - a. He answers his friends' wisdom. 12:1-13:19
 - 1) God does not always bless the righteous. 12:1-11
 - 2) He is not inferior to them. 13:1-12
 - 3) He declares that he will be vindicated. 13:13-19
 - b. He speaks to God about his suffering. 13:20-14:22
 - 1) He asks God for a fair hearing. 13:20-27
 - 2) He notes the nature of life and death. 13:28-14:12
 - 3) He longs for God to deal with him. 14:13-18
 - 4) He knows life is hopeless. 14:19-22
- C. The second cycle of dialogue 15:1-21:34
1. Eliphaz's second speech 15:1-35
 - a. He rebukes Job for his words against God. 15:1-16
 - 1) Job's words prove his sinfulness. 15:1-6
 - 2) Job thinks he is wiser than others. 15:7-13
 - 3) Job is a sinner like all other men. 15:14-16

- b. He describes what God does to the wicked. 15:17-35
 - 1) He exhorts Job to listen. 15:17-19
 - 2) The wicked are tormented. 15:20-26
 - 3) The wicked will not prosper. 15:27-35
 - 2. Job's response to Eliphaz 16:1-17:16
 - a. He reproaches his friends for long-windedness. 16:1-5
 - b. He complains of his suffering at God's hands. 16:6-17
 - 1) God has targeted him for trouble. 16:6-14
 - 2) Job's is caused to sorrow unfairly. 16:15-17
 - c. He wants to be represented fairly to God. 16:18-17:5
 - 1) He longs for an advocate with God. 16:18-17:2
 - 2) He calls upon God to be his guarantor. 17:3-5
 - d. He despairs of his condition. 17:6-16
 - 1) He is an example of suffering to the people. 17:6-9
 - 2) He expresses his hopelessness. 17:10-16
 - 3. Bildad's second speech 18:1-21
 - a. He rebukes Job's attitude towards his friends. 18:1-4
 - b. He describes the fate of the wicked. 18:5-21
 - 1) They are trapped by their own schemes. 18:5-10
 - 2) They are haunted by calamity and disaster. 18:11-16
 - 3) They leave no memory or heritage. 18:17-19
 - 4) They are an example to others. 18:20-21
 - 4. Job's response to Bildad 19:1-29
 - a. He charges his friends with an unfair attack. 19:1-6
 - b. He charges God with persecuting him. 19:7-12
 - c. He charges all with forsaking him. 19:13-22
 - d. He is confident God will vindicate him. 19:23-29
 - 5. Zophar's second speech 20:1-29
 - a. His anger with Job's words 20:1-3
 - b. The brevity of the wicked's prosperity 20:4-11
 - c. The poisoning effect of sin 20:12-19
 - d. The judgment of God on the prosperous wicked. 20:20-29
 - 6. Job's response to Zophar 21:1-34
 - a. He tells them to withhold their mocking. 21:1-6
 - b. He asks them about the prosperous wicked. 21:7-34
 - 1) They live happily while rejecting God. 21:7-16
 - 2) They deserve to be punished for sin. 21:17-21
 - 3) They may die in peace or in bitterness. 21:22-26
 - 4) They often prosper without calamity. 21:27-34
- D. The third cycle of dialogue 22:1-26:14

1. Eliphaz's third speech 22:1-30
 - a. God is not interested in Job's righteousness. 22:1-5
 - b. Job has sinned against others. 22:6-11
 - c. Job has defied God. 22:12-20
 - d. Job should repent and be restored. 22:21-30
2. Job's response to Eliphaz 23:1-24:25
 - a. He continues to assert his innocence. 23:1-17
 - 1) He longs to present his case to God. 23:1-7
 - 2) He is confident of his vindication. 23:8-12
 - b. He is frustrated at God's injustice. 23:13-24:17
 - 1) He is terrified of God's sovereignty. 23:13-17
 - 2) There is no retribution on oppressors. 24:1-12
 - 3) There is no retribution on violent sinners. 24:13-17
 - c. He declares the wicked will be punished. 24:18-25
3. Bildad's third speech 25:1-6
 - a. He declares God's immeasurable greatness. 25:1-3
 - b. He declares God's unattainable righteousness. 25:4-5
4. Job's response to Bildad 26:1-14
 - a. He criticizes Bildad for being of no help. 26:1-4
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Summary of Psalms

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

The historical superscriptions offer the best and only certain indication of the authorship of most of the Psalms. The authenticity of these superscriptions has been questioned by those who object to the earlier dates they assign, but there is abundant evidence that the superscriptions are truthful. In addition, the superscriptions may relate information about the type of psalm, the musical instruments involved, the melody used, liturgical uses, and historical background.

According to the title inscriptions, seven authors are identified. Almost half (seventy-three) are designated as Davidic (3-9; 11-32; 34-41; 51-65; 68-70; 86; 101; 103; 108-110; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138-145). In addition, the New Testament reveals David also wrote the anonymous psalms 2 and 95 (Acts 4:25; Heb. 4:7) making his a total of seventy-five, or half of the total collection. Asaph, a post-exilic priest in charge of music (Ezra 2:41), is designated as the author of twelve psalms (50; 73-83). Ten psalms (42; 44-49; 84-85; 87) are attributed to the sons of Korah, a guild of musicians (Num. 26:9-11). King Solomon wrote two psalms (72; 127) and one psalm each is attributed to Moses (90), the wise man Heman the Ezrahite (88; cf. 1 Kings 4:31; 1 Chr. 15:17,19), and the wise man Ethan the Ezrahite (89; cf. 1 Kings 4:31; 1 Chr. 15:17,19). Some of the remaining anonymous psalms (1-2; 10; 33; 43; 66-67; 71; 91-100; 102; 104-107; 111-121; 123; 125-126; 128-130; 132; 134-137; 146-150) are traditionally attributed to Ezra, but David is likely author of some since his musical ability was prolific (2 Sam. 6:5; 23:1; 1 Chr. 13:8; 15:3-28; 16:4-43; 23:1-5,25).

The Date

The originations of the various psalms date from the time of Moses (c. 1440-1410 B.C.) to the return from the Babylonian captivity (c. 430 B.C.). Many were written during the reigns of David (1020-970 B.C.) and Solomon (970-931 B.C.). Fourteen psalms are anonymous but have superscriptions describing a historical setting around the time of David (3; 7; 18; 30; 34; 51-52; 54; 56-57; 59; 60; 63; 142).

The compilation and formation of the Psalter was accomplished over several centuries. Individual psalms were written and used in Israel's worship, though some never found their way into the final collection (cf. Ex. 15:1-18; Ex. 15:21; Deut. 32:1-43; Judg. 5; 2 Sam. 1:17-27; Jonah 2). A number of small collections were eventually organized into groups such as the psalms of David, psalms of Asaph, or pilgrim songs (120-134). These anthologies gradually evolved into the five books of Psalms: Book I (1-41); Book II (42-72); Book III (73-89); Book IV (90-106); and Book V (107-150). Each book closes with a doxology and Psalm 150 forms the doxology for the entire Psalter. The collection and editing of the five books involved at least three key figures in Israel's history who organized worship: David (1 Chr. 15:16); Hezekiah (2 Chr. 29:30); and Ezra (Nehemiah 8). The book of Psalms assumed its present form sometime after the return from exile probably at the hand of a single inspired editor. His finishing touch is seen in the use of Psalms 1 and 2 as an introduction and 145-150 as a grand finale.

The Historical Background

The psalms were written under a wide and varying range of circumstances to many different audiences and thus reflect many different moods and themes. However, there are some general themes which appear throughout the Psalter. The political mood is very nationalistic and enemies of God and Israel are often the objects of the psalmist's imprecations. Religiously, the psalms present the conflict between good and evil and the people of God and the wicked. The psalmist often praises God for deliverance from enemies or recognizes God's intervention for His people. Sometimes the psalmist looks forward to the ultimate triumph of the Messianic kingdom.

The psalms had their practical purpose of use in Israel's worship and liturgy. The superscriptions give various liturgical indicators for occasion, proper use, instruments, or melody. Regardless of a psalm's original setting, it could and would be incorporated into the expression of Israel's worship.

The Purpose

The primary purpose for the psalms is to be a vehicle for the expression of God's people in worship. The psalms represent the response of an individual or nation to the person and work of God which results from reflection upon His program for His people. The psalms were written in recognition of God's gracious works in history and were then used to respond to God in worship. Some of the psalms also evoked worship for what God is yet to do through the coming Messiah. The psalms covered the whole range of human experience and emotion present in one's relationship to God, and thus became a useful songbook for Israel's worship on different occasions including temple worship, religious festivals, and local and national gatherings.

Literary Nature

Psalms is the largest collection of religious lyric poetry in existence. Lyric poetry refers to short poems meant to be sung which express the thoughts and feelings of the author. The psalmist often drew from his experiences to find expression for man's need or God's provision. Since many times the emotions expressed are intense, lyric poetry is usually brief. Other major characteristics of lyric poetry are covered below.

Evocative language. As lyric poetry, the Psalms use emotive or evocative language that concentrates the discourse. This language includes extensive use of symbols, images, figures, and emotive words and expressions. Some of the more common figures include simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, apostrophe, metonymy, and synecdoche. Imagery often reflects the way of life in ancient Israel drawing from comparisons to military or agricultural life.

Meter and design. The individual psalms also show components of artistic design. One of these components is the use of meter. The Psalms evidence the use of meter and rhythm, although the exact patterns used by the Hebrews is hard to determine with certainty. The incorporation of meter gives the individual psalms an artistic quality of balance, harmony, variation, unity, and design. Only a few psalms arrange the poetry into stanzas or strophes, but the alphabetic acrostic design is used in some fashion in a number of psalms (9-10; 25; 34; 37; 111-112; 119; 145). This was perhaps used to aid in learning and memorization or simply to call attention to the beauty of the subject or passage.

Parallelism. This is the predominate feature of Hebrew poetry and is crucial to understanding the Psalms. This rhyme of thoughts instead of sounds is usually found in two or three lines and occasionally more. There are three basic types of poetic parallelism: synonymous, in which the second line repeats or echos the first (19:1); antithetic, in which the second line contrasts with the first (1:6); and synthetic, in which the second line completes or amplifies the first (19:7). Other less prominent types of parallelism include: analytic, in which the second line gives a consequence of the first (23:1); climactic, in which the second line repeats the first and brings it to a climax (29:1); and emblematic, in which the second line illustrates the figure presented in the first (103:11).

Musical indicators. Lyric poetry was meant to be set to music, so the Psalms include many directions or musical indicators. The superscriptions are often directed "to the choirmaster" (eg. 44-47) who was probably the chief musician in charge of temple music. The "sons of Korah" (42; 44-49; 84; 87-88) could refer to the authors of these particular psalms or to the performers of music. Other headings indicate the instruments to be used (eg. 4; 5; 6; 8; 12; 46; 61) or the melody to be sung (eg. 22; 45; 56-59). Also, The term "selah" is found 71 times in the text of the Psalms, not in the superscription. It is thought to indicate a pause or interlude of some kind and may have been added later to these psalms.

Classification_of_Types

Form criticism, led by Hermann Gunkel, has helpfully identified different kinds of psalms which share common features and were perhaps used in common worship settings. Their classification is basically according to the form of their contents. Some of the more important types are characterized below.

Individual laments. These psalms are basically the psalmist's personal cry for help out of a distressful situation (e.g. 6; 13; 31; 39). They have the following form: 1) Introductory cry to God; 2) Complaint describing the psalmist's lamentable state; 3) Confession of trust expressing confidence in God; 4) Petition or prayer for God's help; 5) Vow or expression of praise to God for answering the prayer.

National laments. These psalms follow the same basic pattern as the individual laments only they tend to be shorter (e.g. 44; 60; 74; 79). They represent occasions when the nation faced a national crisis and together approached God with their lament and petition for help.

Thanksgiving psalms. These psalms are also called psalms of declarative praise (e.g. 21; 30; 32; 34). Their arrangement is different from the laments: 1) Proclamation to praise God, usually expressed by "I will praise . . ."; 2) Introductory statement of what God has done; 3) Report of deliverance in which the psalmist explains that he cried out, the Lord heard, and the Lord delivered him; 4) Renewed vow of praise where praise actually occurs; 5) Descriptive praise or instruction of others.

Descriptive praise psalms. Rather than describe a personal deliverance, these psalms praise God directly (e.g. 33; 36; 105; 111). Their form is much simpler: 1) Call to praise which invites others to praise God; 2) Cause for praise which usually gives a summary reason

for praise in the grace and greatness of God and then amplifies this by specific illustrations; 3) Conclusion in the form of a new exhortation or call to praise.

Other_types. There are a number of other types of psalms which have distinguishing characteristics. The royal psalms (e.g. 2; 18; 20; 35) are distinguished more by function than by form. They refer to some high point in the king's career such as a coronation, wedding, or victory in battle. Wisdom psalms (e.g. 1; 37; 49; 119) reflect the characteristics of biblical wisdom literature. The enthronement psalms (e.g. 93; 96-97; 99) are distinguished by the phrase "YHWH reigns" which could refer to the future reign of the Messiah, the universal reign of God, the historical reign of God over Israel, or the reign of God celebrated in an annual "enthronement festival" (though this occasion lacks conclusive evidence). The pilgrim psalms are designated in the headings by "A song of ascents" (e.g. 120-134) which probably refers to Israel's "goings up" to worship in Jerusalem for the major religious festivals.

The Psalms display an amazingly broad range of experiences and emotions which allowed them to be used in a great variety of ways in Israel's worship. In this way they became Israel's national hymnbook and vehicle of expression for their worship of God.

NOTE: No Outline was produced for Psalms.

Summary and Outline of Proverbs

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

Proverbs was composed at the hands of different authors. The Hebrew title "Proverbs of Solomon" recognizes the main author, King Solomon. He is designated as author of the first section (chs. 1-9), the second section (10:1-22:16), and the source of the third section arranged by "the men of Hezekiah" (chs. 25-29). Solomon had a reputation as the wisest of the wisemen in ancient Israel (1 Kings 4:34; 10:1-13,24) and is credited with 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs. The "men of Hezekiah" (25:1) were evidently a group of scribes or wisemen under King Hezekiah who copied Solomon's proverbs.

Two other authors are named in Proverbs. Agur is the author of chapter 30, and Lemuel of chapter 31 (though 31:10-31 is sometimes considered another's work). Virtually nothing is known of these two men. Some have suggested, with no good evidence, that these names are aliases for Solomon. An anonymous section, 22:17-24:34, is thought by some to be a reproduction of the sayings of Amenemope of Egypt (dated somewhere between 1000 and 600 B.C.) because of similarities, but it cannot be proved whether they were obtained from him or whether they were copied by him from the Hebrews.

The Date

Solomon probably wrote his proverbs during the middle of his reign, or about 950 B.C. Agur and Lemuel could have lived then or somewhat later. Hezekiah's men wrote during that king's reign (729-686 B.C.) and are likely candidates for the final compilation of Proverbs.

The Historical Background

The book of Proverbs is not historical material, but consists of topical maxims. This kind of wisdom literature also existed in Egypt and surrounding Mesopotamian countries at that time. Its appeal was to all men because it dealt with many ordinary areas of life. The biblical proverbs, however, elevate themselves above other works by their emphasis on godly righteousness and the fear of the Lord.

When Solomon wrote his proverbs, Israel was at its political, religious, and economic peaks. His era was a time of devotion to God encouraged by the completion of the temple. Hezekiah's reign was also a spiritual high point which came after a time of idolatry.

The frequent address to "my son" or "my sons" has led some to believe the Proverbs were originally used to teach students in a school for wisemen (cf. Jer. 18:18; Eze. 7:26). Yet the presence of the mother's instruction (1:8; 6:20; 23:19,22-26) show that the setting could have been at home.

The Purpose

The purpose for the book appears in 1:2-6. From this passage, it can be summarized that the purpose of Proverbs was to impart moral discernment and wisdom to its readers. Wisdom refers to skillful living which finds its motivation and goal in the "fear of the LORD" (1:7). A proverb, or *mashal* refers to a general principle that is true in most cases, and thus could be relied upon to guide one's life.

Argument

Proverbs is divided into a prologue and six sections each designated by author or compilers. The sections are arranged within the book with some indication of design. With subsections and individual proverbs it is much harder to discern any order or arrangement.

The Solomonic prologue (1:1-7) well introduces not only his first section (1:8-9:18) but the entire book by defining the purpose of Proverbs. Proverbs was written to impart wisdom for skillful living in the fear of the Lord.

Solomon's first section (1:8-9:18) then extolls wisdom and argues for the importance of obtaining it. The section begins negatively with a warning to resist the enticement of sinners and avoid their ways (1:8-19). Next, wisdom is pictured making a public appeal and declaring the consequences of its rejection or reception (1:20-33). Solomon then encourages a diligent search for wisdom as he enumerates the benefits of wisdom and its value as a safeguard from evil (2:1-22). Obedience to Solomon's commands is rewarded with wisdom; its value shown in some practical applications (3:1-35). Wisdom is also depicted as a desirable family treasure which should be pursued diligently (4:1-27). Furthermore, wisdom guards against adultery (5:1-23).

Solomon's first set of proverbs continues with a series of warnings on the pitfalls of the unwary (6:1-7:27). Several practices are scorned as folly: suretyship (6:1-5), idleness (6:6-11), deceit (6:12-19), and adultery (6:20-35). The last is expanded into an explanation of the craftiness of the seductive woman and warnings to avoid her (7:1-27). A more positive section follows where personified wisdom proclaims her excellence (8:1-36). Wisdom is presented as the very moral fabric that undergirds the creation (8:22-31). The final presentation of Solomon in this section relates the rival invitations of wisdom and folly (9:1-18).

A second section designated as "The Proverbs of Solomon" (10:1-22:16) forms the largest portion of the book and is a conglomeration of assorted proverbs. The only noticeable division occurs between the mostly antithetical proverbs (10:1-15:33) and the mostly synonymous proverbs (16:1-22:16). These proverbs continue imparting wisdom on a wide variety of topics and circumstances relevant to ordinary life.

A third section, usually labeled "The Sayings of the Wise" (22:17-24:34), is anonymous. It appears to be composed of thirty various sayings (22:17-24:22) with an addendum of further sayings (24:23-34; cf. 24:23). Again, these proverbs address many different areas of life.

The proverbs of Solomon collected by Hezekiah's men form another division of the book (25:1-29:27). The first half of this section contains proverbs about various relationships

with people (25:2-26:28): kings (25:1-7), neighbors (25:8-20), enemies (25:21-24), one's self (25:25-28), fools (26:1-12), sluggards (26:13-16), and gossips (26:17-28). The second half concerns various aspects of conduct (27:1-29:27).

The words of Agur appear next (30:1-33). These sayings appear to be separated by those dealing with the knowledge of God (30:2-9) and those which group together observations about certain aspects of life (30:1-33). As such they are not as direct and admonishing as Solomon's.

The book closes with the words of Lemuel (31:1-31), unless he is not the author of the acrostic poem (31:10-31). His words reflect the advice of his mother regarding the behavior of kings (31:2-9). Proverbs closes with a tribute to the virtuous woman (31:10-31) who appropriately embodies the virtues of wisdom. Wisdom is presented throughout the book as something desirable and essential to a full and rewarding life, and it is actually imparted through the many sayings.

Outline of Proverbs

- I. The Prologue 1:1-7
 - A. The author 1:1
 - B. The purpose 1:2-6
 - C. The theme: The fear of the Lord and wisdom 1:7
- II. The Discourses of Solomon Extolling Wisdom 1:8-9:18
 - A. Warning about the enticement of sinners 1:8-19
 - 1. Advice to accept the teaching of parents 1:8-9
 - 2. Warning to resist the enticement of sinners 1:10-15
 - 3. Reasons to avoid the way of sinners 1:16-19
 - B. Wisdom's appeal often ignored 1:20-33
 - 1. The public appeal to turn to wisdom 1:20-23
 - 2. Wisdom laughing in the day of calamity 1:24-28
 - 3. The consequences of rejecting and accepting wisdom 1:29-33
 - C. The value of wisdom as a safeguard 2:1-22
 - 1. The encouragement to search for wisdom 2:1-5
 - 2. The Lord as the source of wisdom 2:6-9
 - 3. The benefits of finding wisdom 2:10-20
 - a. Deliverance from evil men 2:10-15
 - b. Deliverance from the immoral woman 2:16-20
 - 4. The contrasting destinies of the upright and wicked 2:21-22
 - D. The reward of wisdom for obedience 3:1-35
 - 1. The advice to obey the commandments 3:1-12
 - 2. The delights of gaining wisdom 3:13-20
 - 3. The application of practical wisdom 3:21-35
 - a. The security of adhering to wisdom 3:21-26
 - b. The application with a neighbor 3:27-30
 - c. The application with an oppressor 3:31-35
 - E. Wisdom as a family treasure to be followed 4:1-27
 - 1. Wisdom as life's principle pursuit 4:1-9
 - 2. The two ways of life 4:10-19
 - a. The way of wisdom 4:10-13
 - b. The way of wickedness 4:14-17
 - c. The two ways in contrast 4:18-19
 - 3. Advice to diligently follow wisdom 4:20-27
 - F. Wisdom as a safeguard against adultery 5:1-23
 - 1. The plea to attend to wisdom 5:1-6
 - 2. The warning to avoid the immoral woman 5:7-14
 - 3. The plea for fidelity in marriage 5:15-20

4. The consequences of immorality 5:21-23
- G. Wisdom's warning of the pitfalls of the unwary 6:1-7:27
 1. The folly of suretyship 6:1-5
 2. The folly of idleness 6:6-11
 3. The folly of deceit 6:12-19
 - a. The deceitful man 6:12-15
 - b. Six deceitful things the Lord hates 6:16-19
 4. The folly of adultery 6:20-35
 - a. The preventative of the parents' advice 6:20-24
 - b. The warning against lusting 6:25-29
 - c. The punishment for adultery 6:30-35
 5. The craftiness of the seductress 7:1-27
 - a. Wisdom's protection from the seductress 7:1-5
 - b. The simpleton's encounter with the seductress 7:6-23
 - c. Concluding advice to avoid the seductress 7:24-27
- H. Wisdom's proclamation of its excellence 8:1-36
 1. Wisdom cries out to all. 8:1-3
 2. Wisdom extols her virtues. 8:4-21
 - a. The uprightness of wisdom's instruction 8:4-11
 - b. The rewards of wisdom 8:12-21
 3. Wisdom declares her role in creation. 8:22-31
 4. Wisdom appeals to obtain her blessing. 8:32-36
- III. The rival invitations of wisdom and folly 9:1-18
 1. The invitation of wisdom 9:1-12
 2. The invitation of folly 9:13-18
- IV. The Proverbs of Solomon 10:1-22:16
 - A. Mostly contrasting proverbs 10:1-15:33
 - B. Mostly synonymous proverbs 16:1-22:16
- V. The Sayings of the Wise 22:17-24:34
 - A. Thirty sayings of the wise 22:17-24:22
 - B. Further sayings of the wise 24:23-34
- VI. The Proverbs of Solomon Collected by Hezekiah's Men 25:1-29:27
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Summary and Outline of Ecclesiastes

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

The author refers to himself as Qoheleth which means "preacher" or "one who addresses an assembly." Though some have thought this a proper name, it is more easily seen as a title for Solomon. He also calls himself "a son of David, king in Jerusalem" (1:1) and claims to be the wisest in Jerusalem (1:16), a fit description of Solomon (1 Kings 4:29-30). Certainly these claims would have been rejected by the Jews if made by an impostor, but Talmudic tradition proves the opposite. Further, the experiences of the Preacher (2:1-10) are undeniably parallel to Solomon's during his reign. Also, he is a reputed teacher of wisdom (12:9; 1 Kings 4:32), so not surprisingly, the proverbs of chapters 7 and 10 are remarkably similar to those in the book of Proverbs, largely his work.

Still, some object to Solomonic authorship. The chief reason is the claim that the language is that of post-exilic Hebrew. However, studies have shown that the language of Ecclesiastes is unique among Hebrew compositions, and even so, finds many similarities to literature of the Solomonic era. Another objection is based on the verb "was" which implies the author was a deposed king (1:12), but the verb can also be understood in the sense of "I have been [and still am] king." Furthermore, it is said that the author was one of many Israelite kings (1:16), but Solomon was only the third king. But the mention of other rulers could easily refer to preceding Gentile rulers. The fact remains that there is no conclusive or persuasive evidence that Solomon did not write the book.

The Date

Since the book gives Solomon's retrospective view of his life, it was likely written near the end of his reign. Since his reign extended from about 970 to 930 B.C., it was probably written about 935 B.C.

The Historical Background

The book is focused in Jerusalem (1:2,12,16), the seat of Solomon's government and the center of worship. The Solomonic era was characterized by peace, prosperity, and harmonious international relationships. Also, the construction of the temple by Solomon brought unity to Israel's worship. Ecclesiastes reflects the latter part of Solomon's reign, that is, after the restoration from his escapade into immorality and idolatry (1 Kings 11:7-13).

The Purpose

The purpose is drawn from understanding Solomon's perspective. He writes as one "under the sun" (used 29 times), or from a finite earthly standpoint. From this perspective, all is "vanity" (used 37 times), or meaningless and futile. Thus he is a realist who grapples with the perplexity of life. From his conclusion (12:9-14) it is clear that his solution to finding satisfaction in life is to look beyond this world to God, who is the only key to meaning and significance in this "life under the sun." Thus Ecclesiastes was written to direct people to faith in God which allows enjoyment of life, and to the fear of God which causes one to live in light of future judgment.

Argument

The book is loosely organized around the theme of "vanity", which is presented at the beginning. Solomon first argues to demonstrate the theme, then he draws deductions from the theme which are conveyed as wise advice for this life.

The theme is declared in an introductory section (1:1-11). After stating that "all is vanity" (1:2), he offers support for the declaration (1:3-11). From the perspective of this life all seems meaningless because there is no ultimate profit in a man's labor (1:3). Each generation must pick up where the other leaves off, always eluded by satisfaction with their accomplishments (1:4-8). Man is caught up in a cycle that repeats what has already been done (1:9-11).

Solomon now demonstrates the truth of his declaration from his own experiences, God's sovereignty, man's labor in life, and life's inscrutability (1:12-6:12). His own experiences brought no satisfaction and showed life is futile (1:12-2:26). Despite great attainments (1:12-18), fleshly pleasures (2:1-11), great wisdom (2:12-17), and hard work (2:18-26) he found no pleasure. Yet, he understands that man can enjoy life as a gift from God in spite of an apparently meaningless existence (2:24-26).

Another reality that makes life futile is God's preordained plan (3:1-4:3). He has a plan for everything (3:1-8), but since that plan is unknowable, Solomon advises man to enjoy life (3:9-15). God's plan also includes the injustice seen in the world (3:16-4:3). In His plan it will be judged (3:16-17), but it exists for now to show man his mortality (3:18-21). Man has only one viable option in the midst of injustice, that is to enjoy life and leave judgment to God (3:17,22).

There is also futility that accompanies hard work (4:4-6:9). It is futile when done for selfish purposes (4:4-16). Furthermore, its fruits are easily lost by various circumstances (5:1-17). Thus, the Preacher concludes that the enjoyment of life under such futility is a gift from God (5:18-20). The man who is not enabled to enjoy the fruits of his labor is a tragedy (6:1-9). His conclusion to the demonstration of the theme recognizes the inscrutability of life which makes it impossible for man to surmise what is good for him (6:10-12).

The author now turns to deductions from his theme of futility (7:1-12:8). Since God's ways are unknowable and life is futile, then adversity and prosperity should be taken in stride (7:1-14). One should also live in balance avoiding excessive behavior (7:15-29). Divine retribution, though certain, is an enigma (8:1-17) hard to discern or predict, thus one should submit to earthly kings to avoid trouble (8:1-9). Its seeming inconsistency in this life should lead one to enjoy life with the confidence that God is in control (8:10-17).

Man's knowledge is so limited in this life "under the sun" that he should enjoy life now while he can (9:1-11:6). Death is full of uncertainties and misfortune is unpredictable (9:1-12). Furthermore, wisdom should be the guiding principle of life if it is to be fully satisfying (9:13-11:6). Solomon gives advice for wise conduct since he regards it as the only way to live in the face of life's uncertainty (11:1-6). His summary advice is to enjoy life while youth permits before old age, which advances judgment, weakens and kills (11:7-12:8).

The book ends with Solomon's grand conclusion to the development of his theme (12:9-14). He first calls attention to the importance of his words (12:9-12) which serves to emphasize his final conclusion (12:13-14). He concludes that in this life one should "Fear God and keep His commandments" since future judgment is certain. This expression of faith in God is the only way to face the perplexities of life and enjoy it, because ultimately God holds the key to life's puzzle.

Outline of Ecclesiastes

- I. The Declaration of the Theme 1:1-11
 - A. The title 1:1
 - B. The theme: All is futility 1:2
 - C. The support for the theme 1:3-11
 - 1. There is no profit in labor. 1:3
 - 2. The reasons why labor is profitless 1:4-11
 - a. Everything starts over again. 1:4-7
 - 1) Generations come and go. 1:4
 - 2) Nature's patterns are cyclical. 1:5-7
 - b. Man is never satisfied with work completed. 1:8
 - c. There are no new contributions from labor. 1:9-11
- II. The Demonstration of the Theme 1:12-6:12
 - A. The preacher's experiences prove Life is futile. 1:12-2:26
 - 1. The futility of human efforts and attainments 1:12-18
 - a. Human effort can not bring about change. 1:12-15
 - b. Attainment of wisdom is futile. 1:16-18
 - 2. The futility of fleshly pleasures 2:1-11
 - a. Pleasure and mirth are useless. 2:1-2
 - b. The preacher tried all kinds of pleasures. 2:3-8
 - c. His supreme self indulgence was futile. 2:9-11
 - 3. The futility and limitations of attaining wisdom 2:12-17
 - 4. The futility of labor 2:18-26
 - a. One does not know who inherits the results. 2:18-21
 - b. It causes grief and anxiety in life. 2:22-23
 - c. The enjoyment of labor is a gift from God. 2:24-26
 - B. God's preordained plan makes life futile. 3:1-4:3
 - 1. God has a plan for everything in life. 3:1-8
 - 2. Since God's plan is unknowable, man should enjoy life. 3:9-15
 - 3. God's plan includes the futility of injustice. 3:16-4:3
 - a. Injustice will be judged. 3:16-17
 - b. Injustice is allowed to show man's mortality. 3:18-21
 - c. Man should enjoy life in the midst of injustice. 3:22
 - d. Without enjoyment of life, man is better off dead. 4:1-3
 - C. Hard work in life is futile. 4:4-6:9
 - 1. Hard work done selfishly is futile. 4:4-16
 - a. The futility of selfish toil with envy 4:4-6
 - b. The futility of toil when not shared with another 4:7-12
 - 1) The folly of the lonely laborer 4:7-8

- 2) The benefit of a companion 4:9-12
 - c. The futility of hard-won power with a leader 4:13-16
 - 2. The futility of losing the fruits of hard work 5:1-17
 - a. Loss from a rash vow 5:1-7
 - 1) The prudence of few words 5:1-3
 - 2) The loss in not paying a vow 5:4-7
 - b. Loss from governmental injustice 5:8-9
 - c. Loss of satisfaction with riches 5:10-12
 - d. Loss from misfortune 5:13-17
 - 3. The enjoyment of life in view of futility 5:18-6:12
 - a. The enjoyment of the fruits of hard work 5:18-20
 - b. God's enablement to enjoy these fruits 6:1-9
 - 1) The futility of a man unable to enjoy 6:1-2
 - 2) The plight of a man dissatisfied 6:3-6
 - 3) The futility for a man dissatisfied 6:7-9
 - D. Life is immutable and inscrutably foreordained. 6:10-12
- III. The Deductions from the Theme 7:1-12:8
 - A. Adversity and prosperity should be taken in stride. 7:1-14
 - 1. Wisdom in adversity 7:1-10
 - a. Wisdom in times of sorrow 7:1-4
 - b. Wisdom in listening to others 7:5-7
 - c. Wisdom in waiting 7:8-10
 - 2. The value of wisdom with prosperity 7:11-12
 - 3. The appointment of prosperity and adversity by God 7:13-14
 - B. Avoid extremes in righteousness and wickedness. 7:15-29
 - 1. The unpredictable end of a righteous life 7:15
 - 2. The warning against excessive behavior 7:16-18
 - 3. The assessment of wisdom in behavior 7:19-29
 - a. It is needed among sinful men. 7:19-22
 - b. It is inaccessible. 7:23-24
 - c. It is rare among men. 7:25-29
 - C. Divine retribution is an enigma. 8:1-17
 - 1. Submit to the king to avoid trouble. 8:1-9
 - a. Wisdom gives insight in a matter. 8:1
 - b. The king is sovereign in judgment. 8:2-5
 - c. There is a time of judgment for every matter. 8:6-9
 - 2. Divine retribution often seems inconsistent. 8:10-17
 - a. The wicked will eventually be judged. 8:10-13
 - b. Life should be enjoyed even if inconsistent. 8:14-15
 - c. God's work is inscrutable. 8:16-17

- D. Man does not know what will happen in life. 9:1-11:6
 - 1. Man should enjoy life now. 9:1-12
 - a. The righteous and the wicked will all die. 9:1-3
 - b. After death there is no hope of enjoyment. 9:4-6
 - c. Man should enjoy life now while he can. 9:7-10
 - d. Misfortune is uncertain. 9:11-12
 - 2. Wise behavior should be followed in life. 9:13-11:6
 - a. Wisdom is effective, though sometimes forgotten. 9:13-18
 - b. Wisdom can be undone by folly. 10:1-7
 - c. Wisdom is helpful in tasks. 10:8-10
 - d. Wisdom chooses what to say. 10:11-20
 - 1) The folly of a fool's words 10:11-15
 - 2) Careful criticism of rulers and the rich 10:16-20
 - e. Wisdom works diligently in spite of uncertainty. 11:1-6
 - E. Life and God should be enjoyed in youth. 11:7-12:8
 - 1. Man should enjoy life before old age and judgment. 11:7-10
 - 2. Man should honor God before old age weakens and kills. 12:1-8
- IV. Conclusion to the Theme 12:9-14
- A. The search for acceptable words 12:9-10
 - B. The importance of wise words 12:11-12
 - C. The final conclusion to fear and obey God 12:13-14

Summary and Outline of Song of Solomon

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

The Hebrew title "Song of Songs" comes from the first verse which names this book as Solomon's most exquisite song. His authorship is questioned by some critics who claim the first verse merely says it is "about Solomon" and that the language reflects a later date. But these objections pale against the evidence for Solomonic authorship. He is designated the author in normal Hebrew fashion in 1:1 and is mentioned six more times (1:1,5; 3:7,9,11; 8:11-12). Five times the main character is called a king (1:4,12; 3:9,11; 7:5) and the evidence of royal trappings confirms this (3:6-11; 6:12). Also, a sizeable harem (6:8; 1 Kings 11:3) is best suited to Solomon. Furthermore, geographical locations are mentioned in the north and south evidencing a still united kingdom (e.g. 6:4). Solomon wrote 1005 songs and had a great knowledge of plant and animal life (1 Kings 4:32-33). This book alludes to twenty-one plant and fifteen animal species. Finally, Jewish tradition has always maintained that Solomon wrote the Song.

The Date

The book reflects a period of Solomon's reign (970-930 B.C.) before his fall into immorality. Here his harem is relatively small compared to that of his later life (6:8; 1 Kings 11:3). Thus a good date for the origination of the Song is about 965 B.C.

The Historical Background

This is the poetic story of the romance and wedding of King Solomon to the Shulamite woman. The Shulamite (6:3) was perhaps from the town of Shunem southwest of the Sea of Galilee in the tribal area of Issachar. Reference is also made to Lebanon as her home area (4:8). The other characters in the story, the Daughters of Jerusalem, are apparently the Shulamite's attendants. Solomon's pure love for the Shulamite may seem inconsistent with his eventual marriage to 700 wives and his 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:3), but these marriages were political arrangements, not the results of romance as is true here.

Geographically, the Song mentions fifteen locations from Lebanon in the far north to Egypt in the south. The setting for the scenes is pastoral with only brief glimpses of the royal court in Jerusalem where the wedding appears to take place.

It is sometimes suggested there are three main characters in the story, the third being a shepherd who finally steals the Shulamite from Solomon. But Solomon's failure and heartbreak would not be expected in a Song designated as his most memorable.

The Purpose

The first and most obvious purpose of the Song is to celebrate the beauty of marital love as related in Solomon's courtship of the Shulamite. It is a commentary on Genesis 2:24-25 and paradisaical love and thus becomes God's endorsement of marital love. Theologically, the Song must be viewed in the context of the whole revelation of Scripture. When this is done, the marital love pictured in the Song is representative or symbolic of the love between God and His people; first Israel, now the church (cf. Eph. 5:25-32). It anticipates the consummation of the covenant between God and His people accomplished in the Messiah. This is not surprising since elsewhere in Scripture Solomon is typical of the Messiah.

Argument

The Song is a lyric poem with unity and natural progression. It relates the courtship, wedding, and marriage of Solomon and his bride then concludes with a climactic statement extolling love.

The first scenes of the courtship period (1:2-3:5) take place in the royal palace in Jerusalem. There the bride and the king express their love for each other in idyllic terms (1:2-11). The mutual admiration continues at a royal banquet (1:12-2:7). The Shulamite then describes the king's marriage proposal and expresses her commitment to him (2:8-17). She is troubled at night by a dream of losing her lover, but she eventually finds him (3:1-5). This section thus displays the beauty of love in their courtship.

The wedding section (3:6-5:1) reflects the celebration and beauty of this occasion. There is a description of the wedding procession (3:6-11) and the activities of the wedding night (4:1-5:1). The physical aspect of consummating love is related with the strictest tone of purity and joy, as God intended it.

The final section shows the maturation of the marriage (5:2-8:14). There is a brief conflict between the bride and king but love resolves it and they are reconciled (5:2-6:13). Following this incident their love for one another is renewed (7:1-8:14). They renew their sexual relationship (7:1-10) and the bride invites the king to her homeland (7:11-8:4) where their love is further renewed and affirmed (8:5-14). This final portion of the book includes a climactic statement extolling the beauty and virtue of love (8:6-7). The truth of this statement is illustrated in the Song by the love exhibited between Solomon and the Shulamite, and points to the higher love of God for His people.

Outline of Song of Solomon

- I. The Introduction 1:1
- II. The Courtship 1:2-3:5
 - A. The bride and the king express their love in the palace. 1:2-11
 - 1. The bride longs joyfully for her beloved. 1:2-4
 - a. She rejoices in his love. 1:2-4a
 - b. The daughters of Jerusalem rejoice with her. 1:4c
 - 2. The bride laments her dark appearance 1:5-6
 - 3. The bride expresses desire to be with the king's flocks 1:7-8
 - a. She asks the king where he rests his flocks. 1:7
 - b. The daughters of Jerusalem give her directions. 1:8
 - 4. The king praises the bride's beauty 1:9-11
 - a. The king compares her to his finest horse. 1:9-10
 - b. The daughters of Jerusalem join in the praise. 1:11
 - B. The bride and the king talk at the banquet. 1:12-2:7
 - 1. The bride expresses her attraction to the king. 1:12-14
 - 2. The king praises the bride for her beauty. 1:15
 - 3. The bride praises the king's attractiveness. 1:16-2:1
 - 4. The king praises the bride's surpassing beauty. 2:2
 - 5. The bride rejoices in the king's affection for her. 2:3-7
 - a. She rejoices in his protective presence. 2:3
 - b. She rejoices in his displays of affection. 2:4-6
 - c. She warns the daughters of Jerusalem. 2:7
 - C. The bride describes the king's proposal. 2:8-17
 - 1. He appears physically attractive at his coming. 2:8-9
 - 2. He proposed that she come away with him. 2:10-15
 - 3. They are committed to one another. 2:16-17
 - D. The bride dreams of losing and finding her lover. 3:1-5
 - 1. She could not find him at night. 3:1
 - 2. She searched the city and asked for him. 3:2-3
 - 3. She finds him and holds him securely. 3:4
 - 4. She tells the daughters of Jerusalem not to arouse love. 3:5
- III. The Wedding 3:6-5:1
 - A. The wedding procession 3:6-11
 - 1. The bride describes the king's entourage. 3:6-8
 - 2. The bride describes the king's palanquin. 3:9-10
 - 3. The bride tells the daughters of Jerusalem to view him. 3:11
 - B. The wedding night 4:1-5:1
 - 1. The king praises the bride's beauty. 4:1-15

- a. He describes her beautiful physical features. 4:1-7
 - b. He invites her to come with him. 4:8
 - c. He describes her ravishing love. 4:9-11
 - d. He compares her to a fragrant locked garden. 4:12-15
 - 2. The bride invites the king to come into her. 4:16
 - 3. The king declares the consummation of the marriage. 5:1a
 - 4. The daughters of Jerusalem encourage their lovemaking. 5:1b
- IV. The Maturation of the Marriage 5:2-8:14
 - A. Conflict between the bride and the king is resolved. 5:2-6:13
 - 1. The bride explains the source of the conflict. 5:2-8
 - a. She insensitively delayed in coming to the door. 5:2-6a
 - b. He had gone so she searched for him in the city. 5:6b-7
 - c. She gives the daughters of Jerusalem a message. 5:8
 - 2. The daughters of Jerusalem question the bride. 5:9-6:3
 - a. They ask what is special about her lover. 5:9
 - b. She answers by describing the king's beauty. 5:10-16
 - c. They ask where her lover has gone. 6:1
 - d. She answers by describing his location and love. 6:2-3
 - 3. The king and his bride are reconciled. 6:4-13
 - a. The king praises the bride's beauty. 6:4-10
 - b. The bride describes her reception by the king. 6:11-12
 - c. The daughters of Jerusalem hail her return. 6:13a
 - d. The king encourages his bride to return. 6:13b
 - B. The love between the bride and the king is renewed. 7:1-8:14
 - 1. They renew their sexual relationship. 7:1-10
 - a. The king praises her sexual beauty. 7:1-5
 - b. The king expresses his desire to enjoy her. 7:6-9a
 - c. The bride responds with a desire to please him. 7:9b-10
 - 2. The bride invites the king to her homeland. 7:11-8:4
 - a. She promises him love and refreshment there. 7:11-13
 - b. She expresses a desire for greater intimacy. 8:1-3
 - c. She warns the daughters of Jerusalem about love. 8:4
 - 3. They renew their love in the bride's homeland. 8:5-14
 - a. The bride's family notes the couple's arrival. 8:5a
 - b. The bride affirms their unquenchable love. 8:5b-7
 - c. The bride recalls how her love for Solomon began. 8:8-12
 - 1) Her brothers protected her purity. 8:8-9
 - 2) She met the king and gave herself to him. 8:10-12
 - d. The bride and king invite each other to love. 8:13-14
 - 1) The king responds that he is waiting for her. 8:13

2) The bride responds that he should come quickly. 8:14

Summary and Outline of Isaiah

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

The authorship of Isaiah was never questioned until the late eighteenth century when higher criticism led to the theory of Deutero-Isaiah. These critics claim that the author of chapters 1-39 is not the same as the author of chapters 40-66. Denying any supernatural predictive element, they conclude that the context of the Babylonian captivity and mention of the Persian king Cyrus (chs. 44:28-45:1) prove a post-exilic date in contrast to the Assyrian background of chapters 1-39. Differences in theology, language, and style are also used to support this theory.

There is abundant internal evidence to refute the liberal's denial of Isaiah's authorship. First, there is the reality of the miraculous predictive element in prophecy. If this is denied, God's own argument for sovereignty is eviscerated (41:21-23,26). Also, Palestine is clearly the historic setting of 40-66 because idolatry, condemned in chapters 41, 44, 57, and 65-66, was not a problem after the Babylonian captivity. Actually, Babylon is mentioned more than twice as often in 1-39 as in 40-66 showing that the contexts are the same and that 1-39 anticipates 40-66. The only shift is not in context, but from present to future realities. As to differences between the two parts, it can be shown that similarities are greater than the differences. For example, the term "Holy One of Israel" appears twelve times in 1-39 and fourteen times in 40-66, but rarely in any of the other prophets. There is also consistent use of various themes such as the "highway" motif, the remnant, justice, peace, and joy. Any differences in theology, language, and style can be expected because different subject matter is addressed. Isaiah is named in 1:1 as the author, and there is no convincing evidence that this changes anywhere in the text.

External evidence for Isaiah's authorship includes consistent Jewish and Christian tradition and the testimony of the LXX and the Book of Ecclesiasticus. The priority of Isaiah is also evidenced in the pre-exilic prophetic writings (Nah. 1:15 and Isa. 52:7; Zeph. 2:15 and Isa. 47:8; Jer. 31:35 and Isa. 51:15). Furthermore, New Testament figures cited Isaiah as author of both sections (Matt. 3:3 and Isa. 40:3; John 12:38-41 and Isa. 6:9-10; 53:1; Rom. 9:27-33; 10:20 and Isa. 10:22; 65:1). It is hard to believe that the author of the greatest piece of Old Testament literature would pass into anonymity when other authors are clearly identified.

Isaiah, the son of Amoz, was married to a prophetess and fathered at least two sons (1:1; 7:3; 8:3). He ministered mostly in Jerusalem during the reigns of four kings of Judah: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (c. 740-680 B.C.). Talmudic tradition and Justin Martyr (A.D. 100-165) claim Isaiah was sawed in half during the reign of evil Manasseh (cf. Heb. 11:37). He was the chief of the prophets whose book is noted for its majestic character and Messianic content.

The Date

The book was written sometime during Isaiah's ministry between 740 and 680 B.C. Chapters 40-66 in particular may have been written later in his life under the reign of Manasseh (697-680 B.C.).

The Historical Background

Isaiah's ministry lasted about 60 years. It began near the end of Uzziah's reign (790-739 B.C.) and continued through Hezekiah's (715-686 B.C.). He outlived Hezekiah (who died 686 B.C.) by a few years because he records the death of the Assyrian king Sennacherib in 681 B.C. (37:38). He ministered in Judah at the same time Hosea and Micah ministered in the northern kingdom.

Isaiah saw the rise of Assyrian power led by Tiglath-pileser (745-727 B.C.) and the captivity of the northern kingdom by Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.). It was a time of national deterioration in which both kingdoms allied with foreign nations for help and security. Spiritually, Judah had seen a time of moral revival under Jotham (739-731 B.C.), but his successor, Ahaz, chose to rely on Assyria instead of God when Judah was threatened by Syria and Israel. This led to subjugation to Assyria and spiritual apostasy. His successor, Hezekiah, brought revival and religious reform to Judah. He took Isaiah's advice to rely on God when Sennacherib attacked in 701 B.C., and God delivered by killing 185,000 Assyrians. Later however, Hezekiah formed alliances with Egypt and Babylon which brought renewed oppression by Assyria against Judah. After the captivity of the northern kingdom by Assyria, Isaiah warned Judah of the coming captivity by the Babylonians, who were gaining world power.

The Purpose

Isaiah was written to remind Judah of a proper covenant relationship with God and of God's program of deliverance for His people. Isaiah knew Judah would be taken captive (Deut. 28:49-50; 64-67) and that God would judge and restore the nation according to the terms of the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 30:1-5). Thus he writes to warn of the impending judgment by Babylon (chs. 1-39) and to comfort those who would be in exile with assurances of restoration and the coming of the Messianic kingdom (chs. 40-66). The theme of deliverance is prominent in the phrase "salvation is of the Lord," used twenty-six times, and by the fact that this is also the meaning of the name "Isaiah".

Argument

The first major division of Isaiah (chs. 1-39) emphasizes the theme of judgment while the latter (chs. 40-66) reveals God's plan for restoration and the establishment of the kingdom through the Messiah. This first division is better broken down to show the theme of judgment with introductory prophecies, explicit prophecies of judgment on Israel and the nations, a section on God's judgment and rule over the earth, judgment on Samaria and Judah, a concluding prophecy of judgment and glory, and a section forming a historical transition to the second division.

The introductory prophecies (1:1-6:13) begin with a formal condemnation of Judah's corruption (1:1-31). Judah and Jerusalem have utterly forsaken and rebelled against God (1:1-15, 21-23) and will experience His judgment (1:24-31) unless they change and become reconciled (1:16-20). Since Isaiah is more convinced of their judgment than their reconciliation with God, he goes on to prophecy of the coming millennial kingdom (2:1-5:30). The glorious kingdom (2:1-4) will be preceded by the Day of the Lord (2:5-4:6) or God's consummate judgment of the world. This Day is prefigured in Judah and Jerusalem's judgment at the hands of another people

(3:1-12). Still, God will faithfully renew Jerusalem through the Messianic "Branch of the Lord" (4:2-6). God also uses a parable about a vineyard to illustrate and pronounce Judah's sin and consequent judgment (5:1-30). Because Judah rejected God's law in the Mosaic covenant (5:24-25), a distant nation will be used to render judgment (5:26-30). Against this awful background, Isaiah records his divine commission to minister to Judah (6:1-13). His ministry will meet rejection so that God will move to destroy the nation while preserving a faithful remnant.

The next section consists of various prophecies of judgment (7:1-35:10). The first of these predicts the judgment of Israel and the establishment of Messiah's kingdom (7:1-12:6) and comes as a result of the threat against Judah by Israel and Syria during the reign of Ahaz. As Isaiah proclaims the doom of Israel and Syria, he also declares to Ahaz the sign of Immanuel as an assurance of God's immediate and future deliverance (7:1-25). Assyria will destroy not only Syria and Israel, but because Ahaz failed to trust God for deliverance, they will also overrun Judah (7:18-8:22; 9:8-10:4). In the midst of this gloom, Isaiah inserts the hope of the coming kingdom of the Messiah who will govern righteously (9:1-7). God will also destroy Assyria and preserve a remnant of Israel (10:5-34). His faithfulness to the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants is demonstrated by the prophecy of the restoration under the Messiah's kingdom (11:1-12:6). The coming righteous "Branch" (11:1-16) will be of Davidic lineage (11:2) and will bring blessing to all nations (11:10).

The program of God's ultimate deliverance of His people includes the judgment of many nations (13:1-23:18). In this section there is a series of pronouncements against Judah's enemies and also sinful Judah. The first judgment is against Babylon (13:1-14:23). Their total destruction is described as "the day of the Lord" (13:6) brought on by their pride which is emphasized in the description of the fall of the king of Babylon (14:3-21). The judgments of other nations follows: Assyria (14:24-27), Philistia (14:28-32), Moab (15:1-16:14), Damascus and Syria (17:1-14), Ethiopia (18:1-7), Egypt (19:1-25), Egypt and Ethiopia together (20:1-6), Babylon again (21:1-10), Edom (21:11-12), Arabia (21:13-17), Jerusalem and Judah (22:1-25), and the city of Tyre (23:1-18). Judgment is a part of God's covenant program because it is the means by which He will ultimately turn the nations to Himself, a fact indicated in several places (14:32; 17:7-8; 18:7; 19:16-25).

The judgment of the nations is next implied in the overall judgment of the whole earth and the reestablishment of God's rule over the earth in His kingdom (24:1-27:13). The rebellion against God's moral laws by all the peoples of the earth is reason for the punishment (24:14-16). The tremendously violent universal judgment will precede God's reestablished rule over the earth in the coming kingdom (25:1-27:13). Israel will praise God in the end for the blessings of the kingdom (25:1-12). Isaiah conveys their song of future salvation and resurrection as a nation (26:1-21) and describes their complete restoration (27:1-13). Again, judgment is the purifying means God uses to bring about the restoration of the world and Israel.

The subject returns to judgment as Isaiah predicts in greater detail the fate of Samaria and Judah (28:1-33:24). Ephraim and Jerusalem are condemned (28:1-29) for their drunkenness and corruption at the leadership level (28:1-8). The nation scorns Isaiah's predictions, so God will send a foreign nation against them (28:9-15). Jerusalem will suffer as they are besieged by the enemy, and the human wisdom that seeks deliverance apart from God will be confounded until they are given divine understanding in the restoration (29:1-24). Judah's alliance with Egypt is the best that human wisdom can do to deliver from the threat of Assyria, but God

condemns this and announces He will deliver Jerusalem from Assyria (30:1-31:9). This deliverance is ultimately realized in the coming King and His kingdom (32:1-20). He will reign in perfect peace and righteousness. In contrast to the restoration to come, the plunderer Assyria will be plundered (33:1-24). Zion will also be plundered (33:10-16), but they are promised an eventual view of the beautiful land of the King (33:17-24).

The section on judgment ends with a concluding prophecy of both judgment and glory (34:1-35:10). God's terrible judgment on the nations is described and its certainty guaranteed (34:1-17). In contrast, Zion will experience a glorious future (35:1-10). This concluding prophecy exemplifies the relationship of the intertwined themes of judgment and restoration seen in the book thus far. God will be faithful to His promises to bless His people and the world, but it will only come after purifying judgment.

The next section is distinct as a historical transition (chs. 36-39) between the two major divisions of the book. The story focuses on events in the reign of Hezekiah. The first major event is the attempt by Sennacherib to lay siege and conquer Jerusalem (36:1-37:38). It is pictured as a direct challenge by Assyria to the ability of God to deliver His people from danger (36:1-22). Isaiah counsels Hezekiah to trust in God for deliverance. Hezekiah trusts God, and God delivers Jerusalem by miraculously slaying 185,000 Assyrian soldiers (37:1-38). The story represents in microcosm God's eschatological deliverance of Israel's faithful remnant from all enemies while showing the necessity of faith to experience God's blessing.

The historical section relates another event in the recovery of Hezekiah from his illness (38:1-22). Isaiah informs Hezekiah that he will die, but Hezekiah petitions God for his life. God then promises him fifteen more years during which he will see another deliverance from Assyria. In spite of God's goodness, another event relates Hezekiah's sin against God in allowing the Babylonian envoy to inspect the treasures of Judah (39:1-8). Hezekiah's pride prompts a rebuke through Isaiah and a prediction of Judah's captivity to Babylon. This historical section illustrates the importance of faith and obedience to God under the Mosaic covenant in order to receive God's blessings. Conversely, unbelief results in divine judgment. These last words predicting the doom of Judah also anticipate in some way the words of comfort found in the next major section of the book.

The prophecies of consolation (chs. 40-66) form the second major division of the book. The emphasis here turns from judgment to restoration and the hope of the Messianic kingdom. This half of the book is to be understood from the viewpoint of God's judgment having been accomplished with Judah and Israel (40:2) thus preparing the way for the coming of the Messiah and His kingdom. It would thus provide encouragement to Israel in exile in Babylon.

The prophecies of consolation begin with promises of Israel's restoration (40:1-48:22). God's sovereignty over the earth (40:1-31) is proclaimed and seen in the announcement of deliverance which is to follow Israel's punishment (40:1-5). Deliverance consists of the coming of the Lord Himself (40:3-5). A major theme of these prophecies of consolation is the assurance that God will do all that He promises (40:6-8). God's sovereignty over the earth is then extolled (40:12-31) to show he is able to deliver His people and to show Himself as the only One worthy of Israel's devotion. The polemic against idolatry that appears here is another theme that recurs in this last half of the book.

The polemic against idolatry serves as a major emphasis of God's assurance of help for Israel (41:1-29). God confronts the nations declaring Himself the One who controls world events and ridiculing the nations' trust in feeble idols (41:1-7). He then assures Israel of His protection because the nation is His chosen servant (40:8-20). God's knowledge of the future is another argument against idols (41:21-29).

The theme of the Servant of the Lord is introduced at this point (42:1-25). The Servant takes the role of God's Messiah in light of the fact that the blind servant Israel has failed to accomplish God's will (42:18-25). This chosen Servant will bring God's justice and light to the world (42:1-9) and cause the world to praise God (42:10-17).

The eschatological Servant, however, does not mean that Israel is forsaken as God's servant (43:1-44:23). The nation will be regathered from Babylon (43:1-21) and blessed abundantly (44:1-5). Again, God declares His uniqueness, exhibited in Israel's future redemption, as a refutation of impotent idols (44:6-20). The instrument of Israel's immediate deliverance will be God's chosen servant, Cyrus (44:24-45:25). Cyrus, the future Persian king, is amazingly mentioned by name, a fact which emphasizes God's sovereignty over history (44:24-28). Cyrus' deliverance of Israel foreshadows the ultimate deliverance of the Servant of the Lord which will also bring the Gentiles to God (45:14-25).

With the mention of Cyrus, God has indicated His overthrow of the Babylonian power. He proclaims His superiority over Babylon (46:1-47:15) by mocking the inability of their gods to deliver (46:1-13). God also guarantees the destruction of Babylon (47:1-15). The judgment of Babylon in an important event that prepares the way for the restoration of Israel. Thus God next exhorts Judah to remember His prophecies, recognize His sovereignty, and flee Babylon (48:1-22). The fulfillment of prophecy is a crucial argument God uses to establish His right to rule (48:3-5).

Having assured Israel of their restoration, God now goes into more detail about the role of the eschatological Servant. He describes the salvation that will come through the suffering Servant (49:1-55:13). The Servant's mission (49:1-26) is to bring salvation to all the earth (49:1-7) and to restore the remnant of Israel (49:8-26). Unlike disobedient Israel, the Servant will be submissive to God and is worthy of Israel's trust (50:1-11). The obedience of the Servant guarantees the restoration of Zion (51:1-52:12). The remnant is comforted with God's assurance of coming righteousness and protection (51:1-16). Jerusalem is also comforted with the announcement of the removal of God's judgment and the arrival of salvation (51:17-52:10).

Judah's deliverance will not come through their own suffering, but the suffering and subsequent triumph of God's Servant (52:13-53:12). Though the Servant will suffer and die at the hands of men, He will triumph over death which assures Israel of her own restoration (54:1-17). Because of the Servant's work God will be able to prosper Israel, care for her as a husband, bring peace, and establish righteousness. Also, since Israel's sin is vicariously punished in the Servant, God can invite all to accept His salvation (55:1-56:8). This salvation is seen as a fulfillment of His covenant promises to David (55:3-5) and a testimony to the sureness of His Word to come to fulfillment (55:8-11). Gentiles will also be included in the covenant blessings (56:1-8) according to the promise to Abraham to bless all nations.

At this point the sin that keeps Israel from receiving God's blessings comes into focus. God rebukes Israel for her present sins of idolatry and neglect of the covenant (56:9-57:21). Still, God will forgive backsliders who come to Him in humility (57:14-21).

The final section of the book is a wonderful elaboration of Israel's future glory (58:1-66:24). Israel's sins have separated them from God and the experience of this glory (58:1-59:21). They are guilty of empty ritualism in their fasts (58:1-14) which is evidence of their spiritual depravity (59:1-15a). Israel's sin is so severe only God will be able to save them through His Redeemer (59:15b-21).

The restoration of Israel under the Messiah (60:1-63:6) is first viewed from the perspective of the Gentiles who will bless Israel and pay homage to her in Israel (60:1-22). Next, Israel's restoration is seen as the work of the coming Messiah who will rebuild the nation (61:1-11). God assures Israel that He will bring their salvation to pass, therefore they should prepare for His coming (62:1-12). God's coming will bring this salvation, but also judgment (63:1-6).

At this point God's salvation becomes the subject of a prayer by the remnant of Israel which brings God's response (63:7-65:25). The remnant reviews God's past deliverances and ask for a fresh deliverance from enemies (63:7-64:12). God's answer (65:1-25) reveals His program for Israel from judgment for their sin and the sparing of a remnant to the new world He will create for them.

The consummation of God's promises (66:1-24) is prefaced with God's declared desire for pure worship (66:1-6). He then assures Israel of her final sudden restoration and the destruction of all enemies (66:7-17). In the "new heavens and the new earth" God will enjoy the perpetual worship of all nations as a climax to His program for the world (66:18-24).

The assurances of restoration in the last half of the book are as strong as the assurances of judgment in the first half. Both are in God's sovereign plan for Israel as He works to fulfill his covenant promises in and through them. Isaiah shows how the purifying judgment of captivity is preparatory to the ultimate work of God's Servant, the Messiah, who will redeem His people and bring the world into submissive worship. These words are the basis of comfort to a nation on the brink of national captivity.

Outline of Isaiah

- I. Introductory Prophecies 1:1-6:13
 - A. God's formal condemnation of Judah's corruption 1:1-31
 1. The corruption of Judah 1:1-15
 - a. God charges Judah with corruption. 1:1-4
 - b. God describes the extent of Judah's corruption. 1:5-6
 - c. God describes the result of Judah's corruption. 1:7-9
 - d. God is weary of empty religious ritualism. 1:10-15
 2. The plea for reconciliation 1:16-20
 3. The unfaithfulness of Jerusalem 1:21-31
 - a. God cites Jerusalem's sins. 1:21-23
 - b. God announces Jerusalem's purging. 1:24-31
 - B. The millennial Kingdom which comes after judgment 2:1-5:30
 1. The glory of the millennial kingdom 2:1-4
 2. The preceding Day of the Lord 2:5-4:6
 - a. The announcement of that Day 2:5-22
 - 1) Judah's sins bring this judgment 2:5-9
 - 2) Man's pride is humbled by this judgment 2:10-18
 - 3) Man attempts to hide from this judgment 2:19-22
 - b. The judgment on Judah and Jerusalem 3:1-12
 - 1) God will cause social upheaval. 3:1-9
 - 2) God bemoans Judah's fate. 3:10-12
 - c. The condemnation of oppression and luxury 3:13-4:1
 - 1) God rebukes the leaders for oppression. 3:13-15
 - 2) God rebukes the women for extravagance. 3:16-4:1
 - d. The renewal of Jerusalem 4:2-6
 3. The parable of the vineyard as reason for judgment 5:1-30
 - a. The failure of the vineyard 5:1-7
 - 1) God's care results in wild grapes. 5:1-4
 - 2) God announces destruction of the vineyard. 5:5-6
 - 3) The vineyard is interpreted as Israel. 5:7
 - b. Woes upon the wicked of Israel 5:8-23
 - 1) Woe to materialists and pleasure seekers 5:8-12
 - 2) God's justice against wickedness 5:13-17
 - 3) Woe to blatant sinners 5:18-23
 - c. A summary of God's judgments 5:24-30
 - 1) God is angry over rejection of the Law. 5:24-25
 - 2) God uses a distant nation in judgment. 5:26-30
 - C. Isaiah's commission to minister 6:1-13

1. Isaiah's cleansing before a Holy God 6:1-7
 2. Isaiah's answer to God's call to go 6:8
 3. Isaiah's ministry outlined 6:9-13
 - a. People will not repent. 6:9-10
 - b. God will destroy. 6:11-12
 - c. A remnant will remain. 6:13
- II. Prophecies of Judgment 7-35
- A. The Messiah's kingdom and Israel's judgment 7:1-12:6
 1. The destruction of Israel by Assyria 7:1-10:4
 - a. The sign of Immanuel 7:1-25
 - 1) Israel and Syria threaten Judah. 7:1-2
 - 2) Isaiah is sent to proclaim their doom. 7:3-9
 - 3) God gives Ahaz the sign of Immanuel. 7:10-17
 - 4) Assyria will bring great desolation. 7:18-25
 - b. The sign of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz 8:1-22
 - 1) Isaiah gives the sign of Assyria's coming. 8:1-4
 - 2) Assyria will overflow and shatter. 8:5-10
 - 3) Isaiah is encouraged to fear God alone. 8:11-18
 - 4) The people will not seek God. 8:19-22
 - c. Prophecy of the Messiah's coming kingdom 9:1-7
 - 1) The people will rejoice in the light. 9:1-5
 - 2) The Messiah will establish His government. 9:6-7
 - d. Prophecy of judgment on the Kingdom of Israel 9:8-10:4
 - 1) Arrogant Samaria will be devoured. 9:8-12
 - 2) God judges because of evil leaders. 9:13-17
 - 3) The wicked will destroy each other. 9:18-21
 - 4) Woe is upon those who abuse the poor. 10:1-4
 2. The destruction of Assyria by God 10:5-34
 - a. Assyria judged for her arrogance 10:5-19
 - 1) God announces judgment by another nation. 10:5-11
 - 2) The king boasts of his power. 10:12-14
 - 3) God mocks and answers this boasting. 10:15-19
 - b. The preservation of a remnant of Israel 10:20-34
 - 1) The remnant will return to God. 10:20-23
 - 2) Assyria's oppression will cease. 10:24-27
 - 3) God will destroy Assyria in the land. 10:28-34
 3. The restoration of the Messiah's kingdom 11:1-12:6
 - a. The coming righteous Branch 11:1-16
 - 1) He will be anointed to rule righteously. 11:1-5
 - 2) Creatures of the earth will live in peace. 11:6-9

- 3) He will be sought by the Gentiles. 11:10
 - 4) He will gather the remnant from enemies. 11:11-16
 - b. Israel's future praise to the Lord 12:1-6
 - 1) God is praised for His salvation. 12:1-3
 - 2) God is praised for His great deeds. 12:4-6
- B. Judgments against the nations 13:1-23:18
 - 1. Against Babylon 13:1-14:23
 - a. The announcement of Babylon's destruction 13:1-22
 - 1) God assembles a destroying army. 13:1-5
 - 2) The terrible day of the Lord is coming. 13:6-10
 - 3) God will punish the world for its evil. 13:11-16
 - 4) The Medes will make Babylon desolate. 13:17-22
 - b. God's mercy on Israel 14:1-2
 - c. The fall of the king of Babylon 14:3-21
 - 1) The king's destruction brings world peace. 14:1-8
 - 2) The king is welcomed in Hell. 14:9-11
 - 3) Lucifer is fallen from heaven to Sheol. 14:12-17
 - 4) The king is dishonored in death. 14:18-21
 - d. God's utter destruction of Babylon 14:22-23
 - 2. Against Assyria 14:24-27
 - 3. Against Philistia 14:28-32
 - 4. Against Moab 15:1-16:14
 - a. Mourning for Moab's destruction 15:1-9
 - b. Moab's oppression turned to righteousness 16:1-5
 - c. Moab's pride and vain lamentation 16:6-12
 - d. Moab's few survivors 16:13-14
 - 5. Against Damascus 17:1-14
 - a. The end of Damascus announced 17:1-3
 - b. Jacob's waning glory 17:4-6
 - c. Results of future judgment announced 17:7-11
 - 1) Men will respect God. 17:7-8
 - 2) There will be desolation. 17:9-11
 - d. God's rebuke of the nations 17:12-14
 - 6. Against Ethiopia 18:1-7
 - 7. Against Egypt 19:1-25
 - a. The judgment of present Egypt 19:1-15
 - 1) God brings civil war and subjugation. 19:1-4
 - 2) Drought causes hardships. 19:5-10
 - 3) Wise men are confounded. 19:11-15
 - b. The condition of future Egypt 19:16-25

- 1) They will fear Judah. 19:16-17
 - 2) Cities will swear allegiance to the Lord. 19:18
 - 3) They will turn to God and worship Him. 19:19-22
 - 4) They will worship with Assyria. 19:23-25
8. Against Egypt and Ethiopia 20:1-6
 - a. Isaiah's depiction of their fate 20:1-2
 - b. Isaiah's pronouncement of their fate 20:3-6
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 - a. Isaiah's vision of Babylon's revolt 21:1-5
 - b. Isaiah's placement of a watchman 21:6-10
 10. Against Edom 21:11-12
 11. Against Arabia 21:13-17
 12. Against Jerusalem 22:1-25
 - a. The judgment on Jerusalem 22:1-14
 - 1) Isaiah mourns for their destruction. 22:1-4
 - 2) Isaiah announces a day of trouble. 22:4-8a
 - 3) The people do not turn to God for help. 22:8b-11
 - 4) Instead of mourning they feast. 22:12-14
 - b. The judgment on Shebna 22:15-25
 - 1) He will die in a foreign country. 22:15-19
 - 2) He will be replaced by Eliakim. 22:20-25
 13. Against Tyre 23:1-18
 - a. Tyre's fall 23:1-14
 - 1) God afflicts them with economic loss. 23:1-9
 - 2) Other nations mourn over her. 23:10-14
 - b. Tyre's future 23:15-18
- C. God's judgment and rule over the earth 24:1-27:13
1. God's punishment of the whole earth 24:1-23
 - a. The plundering of the whole earth 24:1-6
 - 1) All earth's distinctions are emptied. 24:1-3
 - 2) This is because they broke God's laws. 24:4-6
 - b. The cessation of merry-making 24:7-13
 - c. The responses of the righteous and wicked 24:14-16
 - d. The violence of the judgment 24:17-23
 - 1) It is like being caught in a trap. 24:17-18
 - 2) The earth is like a reeling drunkard. 24:19-20
 - 3) It is like imprisonment. 24:21-23
 2. God's rule over the earth in the kingdom 25:1-27:13
 - a. Israel's praise for kingdom blessings 25:1-12
 - 1) God has subjected enemies to Himself. 25:1-5

- 2) God will remove death. 25:6-8
 - 3) God will save. 25:9
 - 4) God will humble His enemies. 25:10-12
 - b. Israel's kingdom song of salvation 26:1-21
 - 1) An appeal to trust in the Lord 26:1-6
 - 2) An appeal for justice 26:7-11
 - 3) Israel's peace 26:12-15
 - 4) Israel's travail and resurrection 26:16-19
 - 5) A warning of God's coming judgment 26:20-21
 - c. Israel's restoration in the kingdom 27:1-13
 - 1) God will punish Leviathan. 27:1
 - 2) God's vineyard will be fruitful. 27:2-6
 - 3) God will purify Israel. 27:7-11
 - 4) God will regather Israel. 27:12-13
- D. Judgments against Samaria and Judah 28:1-33:24
- 1. Woe to Ephraim and Jerusalem 28:1-29
 - a. Judgment on the drunkards 28:1-8
 - 1) Drunkards will be trampled under foot. 28:1-4
 - 2) The Lord will bless the remnant. 28:5-6
 - 3) Drunk prophets and priests are removed. 28:7-8
 - b. Judgment on the scorers 28:9-15
 - 1) Scorers mock Isaiah's warning. 28:9-10
 - 2) A foreign nation will come against them. 28:11-13
 - 3) They made a covenant with death. 28:14-15
 - c. The cornerstone in Zion 28:16-22
 - 1) God's cornerstone brings justice. 28:16-19
 - 2) God's destruction is certain. 28:20-22
 - d. A lesson from God 28:23-29
 - 1) God teaches how to sow cummin. 28:23-26
 - 2) God teaches how to thresh cummin. 28:27-29
 - 2. Woe to Ariel (Jerusalem) 29:1-24
 - a. The judgment upon Ariel 1-8
 - 1) They will be beseiged. 29:1-4
 - 2) Many nations will come against her. 29:5-8
 - b. The blindness of disobedience 29:9-16
 - 1) They are blinded by God. 29:9-10
 - 2) They are as those unable to read. 29:11-12
 - 3) God will confound the wisdom of men. 29:13-16
 - c. The future recovery of reverence for God 29:17-24
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Summary and Outline of Jeremiah

by

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Introduction

The Author

No one has seriously challenged the authorship of Jeremiah for this book. He is named as the author in 1:1 and the biographical and autobiographical nature of the book confirms this. Jeremiah is referred to by name 131 times. External evidence agrees. Both Daniel (Dan. 9:2) and Ezra (Ezra 1:1) refer to Jeremiah's prophecy as the work of Jeremiah. There is also the weight of Jewish tradition. Finally, in the New Testament Matthew quotes the book (31:15) and attributes it to Jeremiah (Matt. 2:17-18). Chapter 52 is evidently the only section not written by Jeremiah. His secretary, Baruch, may have added it, or similarities with 2 Kings 24:18-25:30 may suggest it was by the author of the Book of Kings.

Jeremiah was born about 647 B.C. in Anathoth, a town about three miles northeast of Jerusalem. His father, Hilkiyah, was a priest and the great grandfather of Ezra (1:1; Ezra 7:1). God ordained Jeremiah a prophet before birth (1:5), but his actual calling came in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign (1:2), or about 627 B.C. Jeremiah was forbidden by God to marry as a sign of judgment to Judah (16:2ff.). His ministry was centered in Jerusalem for about forty years (627-586 B.C.) and continued in Egypt for another five years (chs. 44-45). His life was full of conflict as he and his message met constant rejection and persecution by his countrymen.

The Date

The book of Jeremiah evidences multiple stages of growth (25:13; 30:2; 36:2,32). The final arrangement of chapters 1-51 may well have been completed after he was taken hostage to Egypt in 586 B.C. (51:64). Chapter 52 was obviously added later because it records the release of Jehoiachin in 561 B.C.

The Historical Background

Jeremiah's ministry began in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign (640-609 B.C.) and he saw the reigns of four others: Jehoahaz (609 B.C.), Jehoiakim (609-597 B.C.), Jehoiachin (597 B.C.), and Zedekiah (597 B.C.). There were three phases to his ministry. In the first phase he ministered to Judah under the threat of oppression by Assyria and Egypt (627-605 B.C.). In the second phase he warned Judah of Babylon's judgment and he saw Jerusalem besieged by them (605-586 B.C.). The third phase consists of his ministry in Jerusalem and Egypt after the captivity of Judah (586-580 B.C.).

On the international level in Jeremiah's time, Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon struggled for dominance. Babylon's rise to preeminence began when Nabopolassar took the city of Babylon from Assyria in 626 B.C. Ninevah fell later in 612 B.C. and Palestine was wrestled from Egyptian control in 605 B.C.

Nationally, the scene was dismal. Josiah had a reforming influence on Judah, but he met a tragic death in a battle with Egypt. Jehoahaz was deposed after only three months on the throne and taken to Egypt as a prisoner. Jehoiakim's reign experienced the first Babylonian deportation of Judah (605 B.C.) as the king switched allegiance between Egypt and Babylon. He died in a Babylonian attack on Jerusalem in 597 B.C. and was replaced by his son Jehoiachin who ruled only three months before being deported to Babylon. At that time Nebuchadnezzar

looted the city and removed 10,000 other important people (2 Kings 24:12-16). Zedekiah's eleven year vassal rule came to an end when Babylon successfully completed a two-year siege against Jerusalem in 586 B.C. during which the city and temple were destroyed.

The spiritual decline of Judah during Jeremiah's ministry paralleled the political tragedy. After Josiah's religious renewal the nation quickly reverted to idolatry and immorality. Judgment was inevitable for such wickedness. Jeremiah was a contemporary of the Judean prophets Zephaniah and Habakkuk, and the exilic prophets Daniel and Ezekiel.

The Purpose

The purpose of Jeremiah's prophecy is to give a final warning to Judah of impending Judgment brought on by the nation's sin. Jeremiah declares the reason for the judgment to be Judah's rejection of God's laws and His prophets, of which Jeremiah's rejection is an illustration. God's patience would soon give way to judgment. The prophet's unpopular advice to Judah is to submit to God's judgment in the Babylonian captivity so the nation would be spared total destruction. Though the purpose of warning dominates the book, Jeremiah briefly encourages his people with the promise of God's restoration of the remnant through the new covenant (chs. 30-33).

Argument

The large portion of the book after the introduction (ch. 1) consists of prophecies about Judah's judgment (chs. 2-45). A smaller section follows which prophecies judgments against the nations (chs. 46-51). The book then concludes with a historical supplement (Ch. 54).

The introduction (1:1-19) describes Jeremiah's background and divine commission as a prophet to the nations. The forecast for his ministry is full of conflict and trouble, yet he is to boldly speak the Word of God to the people of Judah and the nations.

The Word of God to Judah consists of condemning prophecies (2:1-45:5). These prophecies begin with the announcement of Judah's fate (2:1-25:38), continue with a historical description of the rejection of Jeremiah (26:1-29:32), include a section consoling Israel with future restoration (30:1-33:26), and ends with another historical section describing the fall of Jerusalem (34:1-45:5). Judgment is the main theme; its outworking displayed in the historical sections and the consoling section.

The announcement of Judah's fate (2:1-20:18) begins with general prophecies of judgment (2:1-20:18) then moves to more specific prophecies (21:1-23:40). The general prophecies of judgment enumerate and condemn the sins of Judah while elaborating on the terrible judgment approaching. God first condemns Judah for her apostasy (2:1-3:5). He indicts Judah for idolatry, ungodly alliances with Egypt and Assyria, and the pursuit of false gods like a shameless harlot.

Jeremiah then declares that Judah's incorrigibility will be judged (3:6-6:30). In spite of the total depravity of Judah, God calls them to repentance while reminding them of Israel's fate (3:6-4:4). But as if to acknowledge their refusal to repent, their judgment from the north is described (4:5-31). It is viewed as imminent, catastrophic, and inescapable which causes Jeremiah to cry out in anguish (4:19-22). The justification for God's terrible judgment by a

foreign nation is the sinfulness of Judah, specifically, the apostasy led by wicked leaders in the nation (5:1-31). The destruction of Jerusalem is so certain that God gives notice of the impending attack on Jerusalem (6:1-30). Judah has ignored His warnings and exhausted His patience, therefore the invasion by a northern enemy is announced.

The indictment of Judah continues with God's condemnation of their false worship (7:1-10:25). Judah's temple worship rests on the lies of its leaders which give a false security (7:1-27). Their corruption is so extreme, as evidenced in their history of disobedience (7:21-27), that God prohibits prayer for Judah (7:16-20). This disobedience in worship will incur the judgment of God so as to bring false worship to an end (7:28-8:3). The apostasy of the nation is blamed on the religious leaders who teach lies and give the people a false sense of security in their false religion (8:4-17). The prospect of Judah's rebellion and fate is so anguishing to Jeremiah that he records his and the people's lament for Judah and God's response (8:18-9:26). God explains His design in judgment, which is to refine Judah through punishment (9:7-9) which includes captivity among the Gentiles (9:16). The judgment and exile are finally announced in view of the inexcusable sin of choosing the gods of the Gentiles as opposed to the unique God of Israel (10:1-25). This prompts Jeremiah to pray for God's leniency toward Judah (10:23-25).

Judah's condemnation is next expressed in terms of her unfaithfulness to God's covenant with them (11:1-12:17). God through Jeremiah reminds Judah of the terms of the covenant and points out their unfaithfulness to it (11:1-17). As a result of his teaching Jeremiah's life is threatened, but God assures him of vengeance against his enemies (11:18-12:6) and pronounces judgment on Judah and the nations (12:7-17).

Jeremiah is also used to emphasize God's coming judgment by use of a linen belt and wine bottles, both of which picture Judah's ruin and destruction (13:1-27). God will also send a drought, a prospect that moves Jeremiah to intercede for his people. But God does not relent in His intention, though He assures Jeremiah that his life will be preserved (14:1-15:21). Another object lesson for the people comes through Jeremiah's life. He is restricted from marriage, mourning, and feasting to demonstrate that Judah will be judged (16:1-17:18). Though God will judge Judah for her sins, He will also restore a remnant and bring Gentiles to obedience (16:14-21). An additional sermon by Jeremiah sets forth observation of the Sabbath as a test of Judah's devotion (17:19-27).

An important message of God's judgment and grace is illustrated by the use of pottery (18:1-20:18). Jeremiah visits a potter who mars a vessel but reforms it into another vessel. So God offers to refashion His plans for judgment if Judah repents, but they reject His offer and instead plan to persecute Jeremiah (18:1-23). Jeremiah is persecuted by Pashur, a chief priest (20:1-6), when he uses a broken flask to illustrate and pronounce Judah's doom (19:1-15). This treatment causes the prophet to lament his fate in a complaint to God (20:7-18). This ends the section of general prophecies against Judah. Those which follow are directed more specifically to individuals.

The specific messages of judgment (21:1-23:40) are a series of messages to Judah's rulers and false prophets. First Jeremiah delivers God's message of judgment to the kings of Judah (21:1-23:8). When Zedekiah sends to Jeremiah hoping for a favorable message about the threat of the Babylonians, he receives a message of doom instead (21:1-22:9). Likewise, Jeremiah predicts the death of Shallum (Jehoahaz) in the land where he will be led captive

(22:10-12). Jehoiakim will also die because of his unjust rule (22:13-23). His successor, Coniah (Jehoiachin), will be taken captive by the Babylonians and die there (22:24-30). Throughout this section mention is made of the throne of David as that which is being abused. Thus, the conclusion of the messages against the kings predicts the coming King who will rule in righteousness on David's throne. He will lead Israel into their restoration (23:1-8).

The specific messages of judgment continue as Jeremiah addresses the false prophets of Judah (23:9-40). Their sins are listed and wickedness described (23:9-15). Their chief offense is misleading the people by pretending to represent God and speak for Him. For this God will bring them everlasting shame (23:16-40).

The section announcing Judah's fate concludes with prophecies summarizing the fate of Judah in captivity (24:1-25:38). Two baskets of figs are used to depict the better fate of the exiles and the doom of those who remain in Judah (24:1-10). Furthermore, God ordains the time of their captivity as seventy years (25:1-11) after which Babylon will be punished (25:12-14). Babylon's judgment foreshadows God's greater judgment to come upon all nations who have set themselves against God and His people (25:15-38).

Though Judah's depravity has been denounced in messages of judgment, it is now illustrated in the rejection and persecution of Jeremiah (26:1-29:32). The first rejection described happens under Jehoiakim (26:1-24). Following God's command, Jeremiah preaches God's call to repentance and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple as a consequence of rejecting His call. He is arrested and threatened with death, but is finally allowed to live. The second episode occurs under Zedekiah (27:1-29:32). Wearing symbolic bonds and a yoke, Jeremiah tells the nations, Zedekiah, the priests, and the people to submit to the domination of Babylon (27:1-22). His message is refuted by the false prophet Hananiah who predicts the overthrow of Babylon; a claim Jeremiah challenges (28:1-17). Further opposition comes when Jeremiah sends a letter to the exiles telling them to prepare for a seventy-year captivity in Babylon and warning them against false prophets in Babylon (29:1-23). He is opposed by Shemiah who tries to assume the role of high priest, but instead receives a judgment from God (29:24-32). The rejection encountered by Jeremiah demonstrates the rebelliousness of Judah and the hardness of their hearts which is the reason for punishment.

In the midst of these prophecies of doom there is brief consolation in a prophecy of Israel's future restoration (30:1-33:26). God promises them restoration in the land after their captivity (30:1-31:30). He will heal them, cleanse them, and prosper them as a once more united nation. The climactic promise in this section is the promise of a new covenant with Israel in which God will forgive their sins and restore them to a personal relationship with Him (31:31-34). This covenant is eternal and unconditional and thus assures the future of Israel and Jerusalem (31:38-40). The restoration of Israel is both affirmed and illustrated when Jeremiah, in prison on the verge of Jerusalem's destruction, buys a field which God promises him he will possess after the restoration of the nation (32:1-44). The restoration is finally reaffirmed in a second prophecy of Jeremiah's from prison (33:1-26). In describing the future joy, God once more promises a Davidic King who will fulfill His covenant with David (33:14-26). This prophecy of consolation aptly fits between the dark forecast of captivity for Judah and the account of the fall of Jerusalem.

In a historical section, Jeremiah relates the circumstances surrounding the fall of Jerusalem (34:1-45:5). As a background for the fall of the city, Jeremiah records some events that occurred before the fall (34:1-36:32). The mistreatment of slaves under Zedekiah brought God's rebuke and promise of judgment (34:1-22). Also, under Jehoiakim (35:1-36:32), the obedience of the Recabites brings further rebuke to Judah (35:1-19), and this king's destruction of Jeremiah's written prophecy brings a specific rebuke and judgment upon him (36:1-32). These examples of Judah's hardness in the face of judgment show them to be incorrigible and show the following judgment to be justified.

The mistreatment of Jeremiah continues during the siege and fall of Jerusalem (37:1-39:18). His message to Zedekiah is still unpopular (37:1-10) and this leads to his brief imprisonment in a cistern (37:11-38:13). Then in a secret conference with the king, Jeremiah advises him once more to submit to the Babylonians (38:14-28). Zedekiah does not follow the advice and when Jerusalem is penetrated he is blinded and carried off to Babylon, but Jeremiah is released (39:1-18). The fall of Jerusalem represents the fulfillment of God's many prophecies through Jeremiah to Judah.

After the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah recounts his ministry to the remnant in Judah, the remnant in Egypt, and to Baruch (40:1-45:5). In Judah (40:1-42:22), Jeremiah remained to advise the puppet governor Gedaliah (40:1-16). However, Gedaliah is assassinated (41:1-18) which causes the remaining Jews to want to flee to Egypt to avoid Babylon's reprisal; a move Jeremiah tries to discourage (42:1-22). The remnant, under the leadership of Johanan, rejects Jeremiah's counsel and takes all the remaining Jews and Jeremiah to Egypt (43:1-7). There Jeremiah predicts an invasion by Babylon (43:8-13). Their unrepentant attitude and indulgence in idolatry in Egypt confirms their impenetrable hardness and guarantees God's judgment (44:1-30). This section on Jerusalem's demise ends with the disillusionment and distress of Baruch who God encourages with a personal promise of life while maintaining His sovereign right to judge His people (45:1-5). God's sovereignty in judgment is the ultimate reason behind the terrible destruction of Jerusalem, but His sovereignty is equally the hope for restoration.

Following the destruction of Jerusalem is a major division marking the prophecies concerning the nations (46:1-51:64). The placement of these here in the text suggests that if God judged Judah for her sin, then surely the idolatrous nations will not be spared. The first prophecy concerns Egypt and her imminent invasion by Babylon (46:1-28). The assurance to Israel, however, is that God will preserve her while He judges all the nations (46:27-28). A second shorter prophecy pronounces judgment on Philistia (47:1-7) followed by a longer prophecy against Moab (48:1-47). Moab is destroyed because of her pride, but God will restore a remnant of the nation in the latter days (48:47). After this come prophecies against Ammon (49:1-6), Edom (49:7-22), Damascus (49:23-27), Kedar and Hazor (49:28-33), Elam (49:34-39), and Babylon (50:1-51:64).

The prophecy against Babylon is lengthy and must have been an encouragement to the exiles. Her destruction will signal the renewal of Israel's covenant relationship with God (50:1-20). While Babylon is being attacked, Israel's Redeemer will save the captives (50:21-46). God's vengeance on Babylon is a display of His sovereignty over that nation and all nations, and is God's way of avenging their treatment of Jerusalem (51:1-44). As confirmation of the certainty of the judgment, the remnant is warned to flee Babylon (51:45-58). The message of

Babylon's demise is entrusted to Seraiah, an official under Zedekiah, who will go and read the words in Babylon (51:59-64).

The note that the words of Jeremiah have ended indicate that 52:1-34 is a historical supplement added later to verify Jeremiah's prophecies. It is a rehash of the capture and destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people to Babylon. The final event recorded is the release of Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon (52:31-34). This is an important indication that the judgment of Israel is coming to an end and the promises of restoration and blessing will soon be fulfilled.

Jeremiah's prophecy consists of lengthy warnings to Judah of judgment at the hands of Babylon. In spite of God's offers of leniency, the sin of the nation was too ingrained to allow repentance. Thus the judgment of Judah is justified and necessary to Israel's future purification and restoration under the new covenant. The historical record of Jerusalem's fall proves the accuracy of God's pronouncements. In like manner, God promises to judge the nations. Jeremiah is a record of God's faithfulness to His covenants with Israel, which includes faithfulness in judgment, and faithfulness in blessing.

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Summary and Outline of Lamentations

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

The book is anonymous but attributed to Jeremiah for many reasons. First, there is the uniform testimony of Jewish and Christian tradition. Also, Lamentations fits as a proper postscript to the book of Jeremiah; the latter predicts and records the fall of Jerusalem while the former laments the event. Moreover, the same compassion and grief over Jerusalem's predicament is evident in both. There are also similarities in content though the literary form differs (cf. 1:2 and Jer. 30:14; 1:15 and Jer. 8:21; 1:16 and 2:11 and Jer. 9:1,18; 2:22 and Jer. 6:25; 4:21 and Jer. 49:12). The author was evidently an eyewitness of the destruction of Jerusalem who recorded his feelings soon after the event. No one fits this role better than Jeremiah.

The Date

Since Jerusalem was destroyed in mid-August of 586 B.C., Jeremiah probably wrote soon after this while things were fresh in his memory. He also probably wrote before he was forced to go to Egypt by his countrymen in 583-582 B.C. (Jer. 43:1-7). The careful acrostic arrangement indicates that Jeremiah may have written his reflections immediately but arranged them later.

The Historical Background

Lamentations shares the same historical setting as the book of Jeremiah. Jerusalem suffered a nineteen-month Babylonian siege (588-586 B.C.) during which the inhabitants experienced severe famine as they vainly cried to their idols for help. The Egyptian attempt to help Judah against Babylon failed. On July 18, 586 B.C. the walls of the city were breeched, and on August 14 the city and temple were burned. King Zedekiah was taken captive thus ending the rule of the Davidic dynasty.

Spiritually, the inconceivable end of the holy city Jerusalem, the temple, and the Davidic dynasty, as well as the captivity of the people represented the darkest hour in Israel's history. With the exile of Judah in Babylon a new era began in Jewish history. During the "Dispersion" sacrifices could no longer be offered and Jews would meet for worship in small assemblies called "synagogues." Still the promise of restoration remained for the nation as hope for the future.

The Purpose

The primary purpose of the book is to give literary expression to the tremendous grief over the loss of the Holy City and the temple. Lamentations also shows how God's warnings are completely and literally fulfilled as it affirms His sovereignty in judgment. These warnings include not just those of Jeremiah, but on a larger scale, the warnings of curses in the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 28). The purpose of lament briefly gives way to a note of hope in God's faithfulness to His people (3:19-39).

Argument

Lamentations is composed of five dirges all of which are arranged in alphabetic acrostic except the last (ch. 5). The dirges first lament the destruction of Jerusalem because of sin and God's anger over Jerusalem's sin, then express Jeremiah's confidence in God, his record of the siege, and his prayer for restoration.

The theme of the first dirge is the destruction of Jerusalem due to sin (1:1-22). Jeremiah begins with a lament over Jerusalem's condition after her fall (1:1-11). The utter desolation of the city is described (1:1-7), then attributed to her great sinfulness (1:8-11). This leads to a section in which Jerusalem personified pleads for God's mercy (1:12-22). She describes her great grief (1:12-17) and confesses her guilt (1:18-22). The first dirge ends with a request for God's judgment upon the nations (1:21-22).

The second dirge focuses on God's anger because of Jerusalem's sin (2:1-22). God's anger at Jerusalem is directed at the city itself, the temple, and the leaders (2:1-9). Jeremiah then expresses his grief for the city as enemies mock her condition (2:11-17). Again Jerusalem personified pleads for God's mercy (2:18-22).

The third dirge expresses Jeremiah's response of confidence in God (3:1-66). First, he expresses his personal despair at his affliction and anguish (3:1-18). Then comes a climactic positive confession of hope in God (3:19-39). In his suffering, Jeremiah holds onto the hope of God's future mercy (3:19-24) and explains this hope in God such that the sovereignty of God's righteous judgment is affirmed (3:25-39). He follows this with his prayer for salvation for his people (3:40-66) based confidently on his experience of personal deliverance earlier in his ministry (3:52-66).

The siege of Jerusalem is described in the fourth dirge (4:1-22). The terrible conditions during the siege (4:1-10) and the causes of the siege in the sin of the people (4:11-20) are elaborated. Misplaced trust in the help of other nations and the king was a primary sin of Judah (4:17-20). The dirge ends with a call for vindication as judgment passes from Jerusalem to Edom (4:21-22).

The final dirge is a prayer for the restoration of the city and the people of God (5:1-22). Jeremiah reminds God of the vulnerable condition of the city and the mistreatment of the people (5:1-14). He then expresses repentance for the sin of the people (5:15-18) which opens the way for his request for God's work of restoration (5:19-22). This final note of the book is a recognition of God's sovereignty in judgment and of the hope of restoration.

Jeremiah's lament for the destruction of Jerusalem acknowledges God's just judgment for Judah's sin according to the terms of the Mosaic covenant. Yet a glimmer of hope is also present because Jeremiah also understands God's covenant faithfulness to Israel.

Outline of Lamentations

- I. First Dirge: The Destruction of Jerusalem because of Sin 1:1-22
 - A. Jeremiah's lament over Jerusalem 1:1-11
 - 1. The desolation of Jerusalem 1:1-7
 - a. The city is like a lonely woman. 1:1-2
 - b. The city's calamity is described. 1:3-6
 - 1) Judah is in exile. 1:3
 - 2) There is no more worship. 1:4
 - 3) Her enemies are triumphant. 1:5
 - 4) Her splendor has departed. 1:6
 - c. The city remembers pleasant days. 1:7
 - 2. The cause of Jerusalem's desolation 1:8-11
 - a. The city sinned greatly. 1:8
 - b. The city ignored the consequences. 1:9a
 - c. The city suffered the consequences. 1:9b-11
 - 1) She collapsed. 1:9b
 - 2) She was overrun by the enemy. 1:10
 - 3) Her people suffer famine. 1:11
 - B. Jerusalem's plea for mercy 1:12-22
 - 1. Jerusalem's grief 1:12-17
 - a. Her sorrow is incomparable. 1:12
 - b. Her sorrow was caused by God's judgment. 1:13-15
 - 1) God made her desolate. 1:13
 - 2) God delivered her to the enemy. 1:14
 - 3) God destroyed the people. 1:15
 - c. She has no comforter. 1:16-17
 - 2. Jerusalem's confession 1:18-22
 - a. She admits her guilt. 1:18-19
 - 1) She rebelled against the Law. 1:18
 - 2) She was deceived. 1:19
 - b. She asks God to notice her distress. 1:20
 - c. She asks for judgment on the nations. 1:21-22
- II. Second Dirge: God's Anger because of Jerusalem's Sin 2:1-22
 - A. God's anger at Jerusalem. 2:1-9
 - 1. His anger was directed at the city. 2:1-5
 - a. She was cast down without pity. 2:1-2
 - b. God removed her leaders. 2:3
 - c. God destroyed her as an enemy. 2:4-5
 - 2. His anger was directed at the temple. 2:6-7

- a. God destroyed the temple. 2:6
 - b. God gave the temple to the enemy. 2:7
 - 3. His anger was directed at the leaders. 2:8-10
 - a. God purposed to destroy the leaders. 2:8
 - b. God scattered them among the nations. 2:9
 - c. The elders mourn. 2:10
 - B. Jeremiah's grief for Jerusalem 2:11-17
 - 1. He grieves at the destruction and starvation. 2:11-12
 - 2. He longs to comfort her. 2:13
 - 3. He blames the false prophets. 2:14
 - 4. He describes the mocking of her enemies. 2:15-17
 - 1) They mock her devastation. 2:15
 - 2) They gloat over their victory. 2:16
 - 3) This is a fulfillment of God's purpose. 2:17
 - C. Jerusalem's plea for mercy 2:18-22
 - 1. She cries out to God in great grief. 2:18-19
 - 2. She asks God to consider His destruction. 2:20-21
 - 3. God's destructive judgment is affirmed. 2:22
- III. Third Dirge: Jeremiah's Response of Confidence in God 3:1-66
- A. Jeremiah's cry of despair 3:1-18
 - 1. He acknowledges God's affliction on him. 3:1-3
 - 2. He describes God's affliction. 3:4-18
 - a. God afflicted him outwardly and inwardly. 3:4-6
 - b. God imprisoned him in affliction. 3:7-9
 - c. God targeted him for affliction. 3:10-13
 - 1) Like an ambushing bear 3:10-11
 - 2) Like a shooting archer 3:12-13
 - 3. He describes the results of God's affliction. 3:14-18
 - a. He is ridiculed. 3:14
 - b. He is filled with bitterness. 3:15
 - c. He is decimated. 3:16
 - d. He has no peace. 3:17
 - e. He has no hope. 3:18
 - B. Jeremiah's confession of hope in God 3:19-39
 - 1. He confesses his only hope in suffering. 3:19-24
 - a. His soul is overwhelmed except for one hope. 3:19-21
 - b. He has hope in God's mercy. 3:22-24
 - 2. He explains his hope in God. 3:25-39
 - a. Affliction should be endured with hope in God. 3:25-33
 - 1) God is good to those who wait for Him. 3:25-27

- 2) Endurance in affliction is encouraged. 3:28-30
 - 3) Affliction is only temporary. 3:31-33
 - b. Affliction comes because of injustice. 3:34-36
 - c. Affliction comes from God's sovereignty. 3:36-39
 - C. Jeremiah's prayer for salvation 3:40-66
 - 1. He encourages prayer to God. 3:40-42
 - 2. He acknowledges God's anger and judgment. 3:43-47
 - a. God's anger has slain them. 3:43
 - b. God will not hear their pleas. 3:44
 - c. God made them refuse before their enemies. 3:45-46
 - d. God has brought desolation. 3:47
 - 3. He vows to cry to God until He hears. 3:48-51
 - a. He cries in behalf of his troubled people. 3:48
 - b. He vows ceaseless crying until God hears. 3:49-50
 - c. His crying shows his suffering for his people. 3:51
 - 4. He recounts his past personal deliverance. 3:52-66
 - a. He was persecuted and imprisoned. 3:52-54
 - b. He called out to God and God heard. 3:55-57
 - c. He asked God to vindicate him. 3:58-66
 - 1) He acknowledges God's defense. 3:58-60
 - 2) He recites the injustice of his enemies. 3:61-63
 - 3) He asks God to destroy his enemies. 3:64-66
- IV. Fourth Dirge: The Seige of Jerusalem 4:1-22
 - A. The conditions during the seige 4:1-10
 - 1. The precious people have become worthless. 4:1-2
 - 2. The people are famished and desolate. 4:3-5
 - 3. The desolation is worse than Sodom's. 4:6
 - 4. The leaders are left desolate. 4:7-9
 - 5. The women cooked their children. 4:10
 - B. The causes for the seige 4:11-20
 - 1. God's wrath is fulfilled. 4:11-12
 - 2. The prophets and the priests sinned. 4:13-16
 - a. They killed the upright. 4:13
 - b. They are treated as lepers. 4:14-15
 - c. They are scattered without respect. 4:16
 - 3. The city made foreign alliances in vain. 4:17-19
 - 4. The city trusted vainly in her king. 4:20
 - C. The call for vindication 4:21-22
 - 1. Judgment would pass to Edom. 4:21
 - 2. Jerusalem's judgment is finished. 4:22

- V. Fifth Dirge: The Prayer for Restoration 5:1-22
 - A. The reminder of the need for restoration 5:1-14
 - 1. Foreigners possess the city. 5:1-3
 - 2. Basic needs are scarce. 5:4-6
 - 3. The city is subject to others. 5:7-8
 - 4. Famine makes life dangerous. 5:9-10
 - 5. All the people are mistreated. 5:11-14
 - B. The repentance of sin 5:15-18
 - 1. There is sorrow because of sin. 5:15-16
 - 2. There is despair at the desolation of the city. 5:17-18
 - C. The request for restoration 5:19-22
 - 1. God's sovereign reign is recognized. 5:19
 - 2. God's neglect of His people is questioned. 5:20
 - 3. God's renewal of His people is requested. 5:21-22

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Introduction

The Author

Few have questioned Ezekiel's authorship of this prophecy. The author is identified as Ezekiel twice (1:3; 24:24) and the autobiographical first person singular is used throughout the book. The unity is also evident in consistent style, language, and thematic development. The author displays a unique style of writing filled with graphic descriptions of visions and accounts of parables, allegories, and symbolic actions. Finally, the prophecy reflects a priestly emphasis by its attention to the temple, offerings, the altar, and the priests. This harmonizes with Ezekiel's priestly vocation.

Ezekiel was born to Buzi the priest in 623 B.C. This date is derived from the reference to his "thirtieth year," assumed to be his age, which was the fifth year of Jehoiachin (593 B.C.). This also notes the beginning of his ministry which lasted at least 22 years till 571 B.C., the last date given for his prophecies (29:17). Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was a priest commissioned by God to a prophetic ministry in Judah. He was taken captive by Babylon in 597 by Nebuchadnezzar and lived in his own house in Tel Abib by the Chebar river (1:1; 3:15). Ezekiel's wife died when the siege of Jerusalem began in 588 B.C. as a sign of Judah's impending judgment.

The Date

The prophecies of Ezekiel are carefully dated from 593 B.C. (1:1) to 571 B.C. (29:17). The latter date would represent the date of the completion of the book.

The Historical Background

Ezekiel's 22 years of ministry saw the threat of Jerusalem by Babylon and the exile of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in three stages. The first, in 605 B.C. resulted in the deportation of Daniel and his friends. Then in 597 B.C. ten thousand Jews, King Jehoiachin, and Ezekiel were exiled. Finally, in 586 B.C. the city was utterly destroyed. Ezekiel was thus a contemporary of Daniel (cf. 14:14,20; 28:3) and was about 20 years younger than Jeremiah.

The exiles found somewhat favorable conditions in Babylon since Daniel, previously deported, had become a leader in the empire and a counselor to Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon was then at its very zenith of power and glory. Ezekiel exhibits a priestly perspective on events which refrains from political commentary, mentioning no kings of Israel except David. Religiously, the nation under God's judgment was in its worst days ever. They had no king, no country, no city, and no temple. Despite God's discipline, the Jews remained a very rebellious people in exile. Ezekiel's home became a center of ministry from where he counseled the elders of the nation. This may have been the prototype of the synagogue form of worship.

The Purpose

Like many of the prophets, Ezekiel consists of a two-fold theme: Condemnation and consolation. Before the final destruction of Jerusalem he wrote to notify the exiles of impending judgment and call them to repentance. He dispersed their false hopes of a rescue by Egypt or of a shortened captivity. After the fall of Jerusalem he wrote prophecies about the hope of God's promises of restoration and blessing to console the despairing Jews.

Argument

The condemnation section of Ezekiel comprises the first three fourths of the book following an introductory section on the commissioning of Ezekiel (1:1-3:27). Condemnation comes in the form of judgments pronounced on Judah (4:1-24:27) and then the nations (25:1-32:32). Prophecies of comfort and consolation written after the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation make up the last quarter (33:1-48:35).

Ezekiel begins with a description of his fantastic vision of God's glory and subsequent commission to the prophetic ministry (1:1-3:27). The vision (1:4-28) is a fairly cryptic display of God's glory, but the glory itself is clearly the focus (1:28; 3:12). This introduces the theme of God's glory which unites the book. It is the basis of Ezekiel's ministry, the judgment of Judah and the nations, and the restoration of Israel because God's glory is associated with His rule over the world; the role denied Him by idolatrous Judah and the nations. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was commissioned to represent God's glory to Judah in a prophetic ministry even though they would not listen (2:1-3:27). He would speak words of judgment to the exiles in Babylon (2:1-3:15) and function as a watchman to warn them (3:16-21) though his ministry would meet with opposition (3:22-27).

The first section of condemning prophecies is addressed to Judah (4:1-24:27). Ezekiel begins with some introductory messages of judgment (4:1-7:27). By various object lessons he illustrates the truth of Judah's judgment (4:1-5:4): the clay tablet, lying on his side, defiled bread, and a shaved head. The explanation of these illustrations affirms that the total devastation of Jerusalem is brought on by her sin (5:5-17). The chief offense of Judah is their idolatry (6:1-14). Because of this they will all be destroyed except a remnant. Ezekiel dispels all hope of reprieve when he prophesies the imminency of the judgment (7:1-27). He announces its arrival and the thorough destruction which will leave Judah feeling hopeless.

Ezekiel's priestly perspective is seen in his vision of the departure of God's glory from the temple (8:1-11:25). Once more he beholds a vision of God's glory (8:1-4) which makes the abominations practiced in the temple all the more heinous in contrast (8:5-18). The idolatrous practices he sees in the temple are just cause for swift judgment. This judgment is envisioned by Ezekiel in the form of six men who slay the idolators (9:1-11). Then in another elaborate vision of God's glory, he sees the glory leave the temple and the city (10:1-11:25). The departure of God's glory from His people signifies His judgment upon them; something also emphasized by the prophet's message to the wicked rulers (11:1-12). Ezekiel's despair of Israel's seeming end is consoled by God's reassurance that a remnant will be restored (11:13-21). These are fitting last words as God's glory leaves the nation and commits it to judgment among the nations (11:22-25).

As if to convince the skeptical exiles of the finality of their country, holy city, and temple, Ezekiel delivers a series of messages affirming the certainty of judgment (12:1-24:27). First he prophesies about the certainty of the coming exile for the remainder of the nation (12:1-28). He depicts the departure from Judah by packing his belongings and departing, and by eating in fear, then explains the significance (12:1-16). He also refutes the objections of the people who doubt the fulfillment of these warnings (12:21-28).

Next, Ezekiel prophesies against the leaders of Judah (13:1-14:23). The false prophets and prophetesses who misled the people will be judged (13:1-23). So too the idolatrous elders (14:1-11). The persistent sin of the people will bring destruction on Jerusalem that will seem to leave no survivors, yet God will preserve a remnant (14:12-23).

Ezekiel now turns to the use of parables with interspersed messages to convey God's pronouncement of judgment on Judah (15:1-24:27). The first parable describes a discarded vine to illustrate the fate of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (15:1-8). In the next parable, the relationship of God to Israel is depicted in filial and marital imagery (16:1-43). God had cared for Israel as a baby and raised her up to be beautiful (16:1-14), but Israel played the harlot in return (16:15-34), therefore God will punish her (16:35-43). Another parable pictures Judah as one of three sisters (with Samaria and Sodom) (16:44-63). Though Judah is the most wicked of the three, God will restore her with Samaria and Sodom and institute an everlasting covenant with Judah according to His past promises.

The next parable represents Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon as an eagle who carries off some branches, the kings of Judah (17:1-24). The parable is used to dash the hopes of a rescue by Egypt and to pronounce judgment on Judah's last king, Zedekiah. However, the establishment of God's future kingdom is incorporated into the imagery of the cedar tree (17:22-24).

In the following section Ezekiel refutes a proverb accusing God of injustice in punishing children for the father's sins (18:1-32). The point of his rebuttal is that God justly punishes each person for his own sin. God is not in the wrong, but Judah is, thus God invites them to repent and avoid judgment altogether (18:30-32).

Ezekiel is then told to "take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel" (19:1-14). Using parables of a lioness and her captured cubs and an uprooted vine he laments the punishment of Judah under the Babylonians.

At this point a message is delivered to the elders, who inquire of the Lord through Ezekiel, which summarizes God's dealings with Israel (20:1-44). Israel's rebellion in Egypt, the wilderness, Canaan, and at present is reviewed before God promises to restore Israel in the future after the punishment of captivity. These are words of both strong condemnation and strong consolation.

Messages of condemnation continue through Ezekiel's parables of judgment on Jerusalem using the symbols of a forest fire and a drawn sword ready to destroy Judah and the Ammonites (20:45-21:32). Another message lists the sins of Jerusalem and the wickedness of the leaders before strongly condemning the nation to dispersion (22:1-31). Following this message are two parables also describing judgment (23:1-24:14). The first pictures Jerusalem as

one of two harlot sisters with Samaria who both commit lewd acts with the nations so that God judges them (23:1-49). The second uses a cooking pot to depict the filthiness of Judah and her purifying judgment (24:1-14).

The final sign was the tragic death of Ezekiel's wife (24:15-27). The silent mourning of the prophet symbolizes the silent mourning of Israel in Babylon. The intensity of this last dramatic message to Judah demonstrates the depth of their rebelliousness and the hardness of their hearts which God through Ezekiel tried to reach. Their ultimate rejection of the warnings are a foregone conclusion as seen in these prophecies of now unavoidable judgment.

A second major division of the condemning prophecies turns the focus from Judah to the surrounding nations (25:1-32:32). This not only indicates the certainty of Judah's judgment, but suggests that if God so judges His own special people, how much more He will judge the wicked nations.

The first four prophecies condemn Ammon (25:1-7), Moab (25:8-11), Edom (25:12-14), and Philistia (25:15-17) for their contempt for Judah. The next nation, Tyre, is also condemned because of contempt for the fate of Jerusalem (26:1-28:19). Tyre will be destroyed by Babylon (26:1-21) and the loss of her former beauty and prosperity is lamented (27:1-36). The king of Tyre is the specific subject of a further pronouncement (28:1-19). In terms which also seem to refer to the fall of Lucifer, the king is condemned for his pride and his fall is lamented. After Tyre, judgment on Sidon is pronounced (28:20-23), but divine protection is promised for Israel as God punishes all the nations who despised her (28:24-26).

An extensive section of judgment is devoted to Egypt (29:1-32:32) probably because of her role in both persecuting Judah and attempting to deliver Judah from God's instrument, Babylon. The proclamation of her judgment compares her to a slain river monster and describes her total devastation and lowly future state (29:1-16). The instrument of divine punishment is Babylon (29:17-30:26) who will destroy Egypt much as Assyria was destroyed (31:1-18). Ezekiel laments the desolation of Egypt (32:1-16) and describes her descent into Sheol where she will be accompanied by other wicked nations (32:17-32).

This ends the section which focuses on judgment. The judgment of Judah naturally suggests the judgment of the nations around her. That God judges these nations who despise Judah shows He still cares for His people and works on their behalf in spite of their rebelliousness.

The prophecies of condemnation now give way to prophecies of consolation in the restoration of Israel (33:1-48:35). This also shows the certainty of Judah's doom as it looks beyond their purifying judgment to a time of future blessing.

The introductory section justifies God's judgment on Judah as Ezekiel's ministry as a watchman is described (33:1-33). The force of the passage is that Ezekiel has fulfilled his responsibilities as Judah's watchman by warning them of danger and giving opportunity to escape. However, since they did not heed the warnings, judgment overtook them. Thus the destruction of Jerusalem is briefly described (33:21-22), and portrayed as the result of Judah's sin and refusal to listen to Ezekiel.

God's care for His people is next contrasted with the neglect by the irresponsible leaders (shepherds) of Judah (34:1-31). God will punish them and raise up a good shepherd to feed and rule the flock. The shepherd is the Messianic Servant David who will bless them with peace and safety. This is a comforting scenario for those Jews in exile who had fully experienced the corruption of Judah's leaders. Perhaps to reinforce the promise of God's safety for Judah, the prophecy guaranteeing the destruction of Israel's enemy, Edom, is reserved for this section (35:1-15).

The actual restoration of Israel is described in comforting terms (36:1-37:28). The judgment of the nations is seen as a necessary preparation for the restoration (36:1-7). After this, God will renew his nation by returning His favor, returning the people to the land, and making the land fruitful again (36:8-38). Contained in these promises is the new covenant promise of spiritual cleansing and renewal (36:25-32). The rebirth of Israel into a new nation is then illustrated in two ways (37:1-28). They will be restored like dry bones which come to life (37:1-14) and the divided kingdoms will be reunited like two sticks placed in one hand (37:15-28). This will be a ministry of the Davidic King who will also restore God's personal presence with the nation and make an everlasting covenant with them (37:24-28).

The security of Israel in the future is affirmed by the prophecy of the destruction of Gog, Israel's enemy in an end-time conflagration (38:1-39:29). Gog, in allegiance with other nations, will attack Israel (38:1-17) but God's intervention will bring them to destruction before the whole world (38:18-39:20). After Israel's last enemy is destroyed, the nation will be restored in their land and God's name will be sanctified among the Gentiles (39:21-29).

The final section on the restoration of Israel is viewed proleptically from the perspective of the millennial kingdom (40:1-48:35). The first vision focuses on the reestablishment of the temple (40:1-43:27). The minute attention to detail and measurements serves to assure the exiles of the reality of this future hope. The climactic element in the vision is the return of the Lord in His glory to the temple (43:1-12). This return signifies the restored blessing of God on a cleansed Israel in contrast to the departing glory from a sinful nation in chapters 10-11.

Also in the kingdom there will be a reorganized form of temple worship (44:1-46:24). The laws for priests (44:10-45:8) and sacrificial worship (45:9-46:24) assure the remnant of the full restoration of the privileges of temple worship denied in captivity. The final laws concerning the redistribution of the land and the presence of the river of life (47:1-48:35) are more than technical descriptions. They are the ultimate assurance to the exiles that they will receive the full promises of the covenant in inheriting their own land and enjoying eternal life.

Ezekiel is as strong in his assurances of restoration and blessing as he is in his pronouncements of destruction and judgment. The warnings to Judah ultimately give place to the comforting promises of God's future blessing because God is faithful to His people and His covenant with them. Judgment and blessing will be the avenues for His glory to be displayed once more in the world.

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Summary and Outline of Daniel

by

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Introduction

The Author

Modern critics have challenged the authorship of Daniel on several grounds. Primarily their presuppositions precluding miraculous prophecy causes them to date Daniel in the second century after the many graphic prophecies of the book are fulfilled. But this denies God's sovereignty in the affairs of men which is the crucial theme of the book. They go on to argue that there are historical inaccuracies, but this has been answered by research and archeological discoveries. Another argument is that the use of Persian and Greek terms argues for a late date, but Daniel lived in the Persian era and Greek influence was present in his day. Also, critics object to the developed theological concepts (e.g. the Messiah, angels, resurrection), but these concepts are found throughout the Old Testament as early as Genesis. Furthermore, their erroneous idea that the "Writings" of the Hebrew canon, which includes Daniel, was closed about 165 B.C. is not consistent with the inclusion of earlier works (e.g. Psalms and Proverbs). Daniel was probably not included in the "Prophets" section of the canon because he was considered a governmental figure as opposed to a prophet specifically commissioned to minister to Israel. Finally, it argued Daniel fits the Maccabean period when apocalyptic literature flourished. But Ezekiel also contains apocalyptic form.

There are many positive evidences that Daniel wrote this book bearing his name in the sixth century. He is identified as the writer (12:4) and uses the first person consistently after chapter 6. Also, the author's familiarity with prominent people, customs, religions, and history of the sixth century makes Daniel the likely writer. Furthermore, Ezekiel testified to the historicity and prominence of Daniel (Eze. 14:14,20; 28:3) and the Lord Jesus Christ attributed the book to him (Matt. 24:15). In addition, Josephus notes that Alexander the Great was shown Daniel's prophecy long before the second century. Finally, there is the agreement of both Jewish and Christian tradition.

Daniel was evidently a native of Jerusalem and from a royal family (1:4). When taken captive to Babylon in 605 B.C. he was about 16 years old, but after three years of training he rose to prominence in Babylon and eventually became a leader of the wise men, a counselor to Nebuchadnezzar, and the prime minister under Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius I. His ministry of about 70 years endured six Babylonian and two Persian rulers. Daniel is a notable example of faith, courage, integrity, and prayerfulness.

The Date

Daniel's visions are dated from 605 to 536 B.C., the latter being the third year of Cyrus (10:1). No doubt the visions were recorded as they occurred to him, but finally arranged soon after 536 B.C.

The Historical Background

The book of Daniel shares the same historical background as Jeremiah and Ezekiel. With the defeat of Ninevah and Assyria, Babylon began its campaign against other cities. The first invasion of Jerusalem in 605 resulted in Daniel and his friends being deported. Judah and Jerusalem finally were destroyed in 586 B.C. while Daniel was in exile. Daniel saw the rise and

fall of the Babylonian empire. Babylon conquered Egypt in 568 B.C., but the Persians led by Cyrus were growing in power until finally Babylon was taken in 539 B.C. Thus Daniel saw the first return of the Jews to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel in 539 B.C. Daniel predicted the later course of Gentile powers as he envisioned the coming Greek and the Roman empires. This period of Gentile domination of Israel is known as the times of the Gentiles. Daniel's contemporaries were Jeremiah earlier in life and Ezekiel, who also lived in exile. The exiles were spiritually devastated with the loss of Jerusalem and the temple and further oppressed by having to live with the Babylonian religion; Daniel and his friends were given names after Babylonian deities. The Babylonians worshiped a pantheon of gods, but their devotion to the chief god, Bel Merodach (Marduke), was almost monotheistic in nature. They had a great temple, Esagila, with huge towers and public devotion was expected. Nebuchadnezzar evidences monotheistic tendencies in Daniel and perhaps could be considered a convert to YHWHism after his divine chastisement (ch. 4).

The Purpose

The book of Daniel was written to alleviate the despair of the exiled Jews who wondered about the future of their nation and the relative promises of God. Daniel's prophecy accomplishes this by revealing God's program for Israel during and after Gentile domination. Theologically, the book's purpose is to present God as the sovereign authority in human history (4:25) who directs the kingdoms of men and brings in the kingdom of the Messiah (ch. 2). It shows God is faithful to His covenant in spite of the appearance of having cast Israel aside.

Argument

After the introductory first chapter, Daniel is clearly divided in two parts. The first (chs. 2-7), reveals the prophetic history of the Gentiles and is distinguished by use of Aramaic. The second part (chs. 8-12) is written in Hebrew and reveals the prophetic history of Israel.

The first chapter explains how Daniel came to Babylon and rose to prominence and thus prepares the reader for his influence seen in the Babylonian government. It also creates the atmosphere of a somewhat hostile environment against which God can display His sovereignty.

The prophetic history of the Gentiles (2:1-7:28) is revealed in Daniel's interpretations and visions, but also in significant historical events. The first revelation of Gentile history comes in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:1-49). After the king's dream (2:1), his inability to find an interpreter (2:2-13) emphasizes the sovereignty of God in finally giving the interpretation through Daniel (2:14-49). His interpretation of the image reveals the course of four kingdoms in history beginning with Babylon (2:36-40). A fifth kingdom is a form of the fourth (2:41-43) and the final kingdom is God's (2:44-45). This reveals that the Gentiles will maintain power for some time before God establishes the Messianic kingdom for Israel.

The next episode of the book describes Nebuchadnezzar's persecution of the three Hebrew youths and their deliverance from the fiery furnace (3:1-30). Two significant emphases emerge in this event. First, God rewards the faith of the three amid Gentile persecution (3:16-18). Second, God's sovereignty in delivering His own from danger is proved (3:28-30). These historical facts may have symbolic significance for the circumstances of Israel in exile and in

their future under Gentile domination. God will reward the faith of the remnant and protect them through tribulation to come.

The next event involves Nebuchadnezzar's dream about God's sovereign rule and is narrated by him (4:1-37). Once more he can find no interpreter for his dream, this time about a tree which is cut down (4:4-18). Daniel's interpretation reveals that the king will be humiliated and lose his rule for a time (4:19-27). The prophetic interpretation is fulfilled (4:28-33) and results in Nebuchadnezzar's recognition of the sovereignty of God's rule in human affairs (4:34-37), Daniel's stated purpose for the ordeal (4:25b).

Belshazzar's overthrow (5:1-31) also displays God's sovereignty by showing how He can destroy one kingdom and raise up another. Again, the interpretation, this time of handwriting on the wall, belongs to Daniel alone (5:5-12). Next, Daniel's faith is tested in the new Persian empire when Darius issues a decree prohibiting prayer (6:1-28). Daniel's deliverance from the lions' den is attributed to God who rewards his faith (6:21-23). Darius also comes to the recognition of God's sovereignty and the indestructibility of His kingdom (6:25-28). To the exiles, this story would encourage faith in their present circumstances and hope in the future triumph of God's kingdom.

The first part of the book ends with Daniel's vision of God's program for the Gentiles (7:1-28). The vision is of four beasts, representing the Gentile kingdoms, and a little horn, a significant end time ruler (7:1-14), who are all destroyed by God with the kingdom given to the Son of Man (7:9-14,23-27). The view of Gentile history given thus far and the faithfulness of God depicted in the events of chapters 2-7 would serve to encourage the exiles in Babylon.

Israel's future is more specifically addressed in the next part which is a prophetic history of Israel (8:1-12:13). Daniel's vision of the latter times of Gentile rule (8:1-27) conveys in more detail the shift in power from the third kingdom (Persia) to the fourth (Greece). Ominous details about the evil activity of the Greek little horn, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, against the Jews (8:13-14) foreshadows the evil king of the end time who opposes the Messiah and His kingdom.

In answer to Daniel's concern over the future of Israel after the seventy-year captivity, God next reveals His prophetic plan of Israel's future (9:1-27). Daniel recognizes Israel is suffering justly under the terms of the covenant and asks God for mercy (9:3-19). The answer comes as the prophecy of the seventy "sevens" which gives a specific timetable for Israel's future including the final activity of the terrible ruler who is yet to come (9:24-27).

The final vision is lengthy, but detailed in its disclosure of Israel's future (10:1-12:13). The circumstances described in the setting for the vision emphasize its significance (10:1-11:1). Then Israel's history under the second (Persia) and third (Greek) kingdoms is revealed (11:2-35). Described in amazing detail is the rise of the Greeks over the Persians (11:2-4), the wars between the Greek kings (11:5-20), and the rise of the terrible king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (11:21-35). The description of this king bridges into a description of the final antichrist who opposes God and Israel in the seventieth "seven" (11:36-12:3). Though the days ahead are frightening for Israel, the nation is delivered by God in the end (12:1-3).

Such a detailed prophecy of history, events, and the triumphant kingdom of God would be an encouragement to the dispersed nation of Daniel's day and a confirmation of God's

sovereign rule and control of human history. God's punishment of Israel will end, as will the times of Gentile domination, and He will keep all of His promises in the establishment of the Messianic kingdom.

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- I. Introduction 1:1-21
 - A. Nebuchadnezzar conquers Judah. 1:1-2
 - B. Daniel and his companions are deported to serve the king. 1:3-7
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar orders the young men brought to Babylon. 1:3-4
 - 2. Nebuchadnezzar orders a training program for them. 1:5
 - 3. Daniel and his companions are identified and named. 1:6-7
- II. The Prophetic History of the Gentiles 2:1-7:28
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 - 2. The king searches for an interpreter. 2:2-13
 - a. The court wisemen cannot interpret the dream. 2:2-13
 - 1) The king asks for an interpretation. 2:2-3
 - 2) The wisemen ask for the contents of the dream. 2:4-7
 - 3) The wisemen admit their inability. 2:8-11
 - 4) The king orders all wisemen destroyed. 2:12-13
 - 3. The interpretation is revealed to Daniel. 2:14-49
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 - b. Daniel blesses God for the interpretation. 2:17-23
 - c. Daniel explains his ability to interpret. 2:24-30
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 - 2) He explains the first four kingdoms. 2:36-40
 - 3) He explains the kingdom of iron and clay. 2:41-43
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 - 2. The three Hebrews defy the king's order to worship. 3:8-18
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 - b. The king threatens the Hebrews with the furnace. 3:13-15
 - c. The Hebrews answer with faith in God. 3:16-18
 - 3. The Hebrews are delivered from the fiery furnace. 3:19-27
 - a. They are thrown into the furnace. 3:19-23
 - b. The king sees four men walking in the furnace. 3:24-25
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 - 4. The king praises God and promotes the Hebrews. 3:28-30

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 - 2. The king has a dream about a great tree. 4:4-18
 - a. The king has a troublesome dream. 4:4-5
 - b. The king searches for an interpreter. 4:6-9
 - c. The king describes the dream to Daniel. 4:10-17
 - 1) He describes a great tree. 4:10-12
 - 2) He describes the command to cut the tree. 4:13-17
 - d. The king asks Daniel for an interpretation. 4:18
 - 3. Daniel interprets the dream for the king. 4:19-27
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 - b. The tree cut down is the king's humiliation. 4:23-25
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 - b. The king becomes as an animal. 4:31-33
 - 5. The king praises God upon being restored. 4:34-37
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 - c. A little horn speaks pompous words. 7:8
 - d. The Ancient of Days is described. 7:9-14
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 - 3) The Son of Man is given the kingdom. 7:13-14
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 - b. He is given a summary interpretation. 7:17-18
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Summary and Outline of Hosea

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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Introduction

The Author

Hosea is designated the author of this book in 1:1. Here he is called the son of Beeri. Little is known of him personally except that he was married to Gomer (1:3) and fathered two sons and a daughter (1:4,6,9). His ministry spanned the reigns of four kings in Judah (Uzziah to Hezekiah) and seven kings in the northern kingdom of Israel (Jeroboam II to Hoshea). He was a prophet to the North, which was often called "Ephraim" (1:4,6,10; 3:1; 4:1,15; 5:1,3,5,11,13; etc.). There has not been a convincing challenge to the unity of the book or to the authorship of Hosea.

The Date

Since the latest king mentioned is Hezekiah (715-686 B.C), Hosea probably recorded in final form his prophecies in that king's earlier years. Thus they are dated shortly after 715 B.C.

The Historical Background

The 40 to 45 year ministry of Hosea came about 200 years after the kingdom of Israel had divided and stretched over the reigns of four kings of Judah and the last seven of Israel. At the beginning of his ministry both Judah and Israel were enjoying military and economic prosperity in the "golden age" made possible by the decline of Assyrian power. But under Tiglath-pileser III (745-727 B.C.) Assyria began to gain strength and soon had Israel subjected as a puppet state (734 B.C.). Israel plotted revolt, but they were defeated and deported in 722 B.C. Judah was also made a vassal state in Hosea's time. The last chapter of Israel's history was characterized by great decline and confusion under the reigns of evil kings.

Religiously and morally Israel was at its lowest point in Hosea's day. Idolatrous practices involved child sacrifice and religious prostitution. In spite of the previous ministry of Amos, Israel remained steeped in sin and unwilling to repent at the preaching of God's prophets.

The Purpose

Hosea's purpose is to extend a final warning to Israel of impending judgment and call her to repentance on the basis of this fate and God's love. However, no positive response is expected, so judgment is pronounced and final restoration assured. Hosea's purpose should be understood against the promises of the Mosaic covenant (Deut. 28-30) which promises curses for disobedience and blessing for obedience. Israel's breach of the covenant is exposed and compared to harlotry while consequent judgment is announced.

Argument

Hosea follows a simple pattern which involves first his personal experience (chs. 1-3), and then a message to Israel of judgment and restoration (chs. 4-14). Hosea's experience with his wife and children is meant to illustrate and communicate the later message of love, judgment, and restoration.

Hosea's experience is a picture of God's dealings with Israel (1:1-3:5). In his marriage to Gomer (1:2-2:1) the three children are named to symbolize God's rejection of Israel (1:4-9), though restoration is also promised (1:10-2:1). Gomer's adultery is also used to illustrate the unfaithfulness of Israel (2:2-23). Because of Israel's harlotry with idols (2:2-5), they will be punished by God (2:6-13). But Israel will also be restored by God (2:14-23) because of His great love for her. This truth is conveyed through the imagery of the marital covenant involving God and the nation (2:16-20) and reflects on the next experience of Hosea. He is told to go and renew his love for Gomer and restore the marriage, which he does (3:1-5). In the same way, God, through the Davidic Messiah, will restore His relationship with Israel in the latter days (3:4-5).

The rest of the book contains Hosea's explicit message of God's judgment and restoration of Israel (4:1-14:9). The message begins with the indictment of Israel's guilt (4:1-6:3). The nation's sin is exposed (4:1-19) in terms of breaking the covenant (4:1-3), the rejection of the knowledge of God (4:4-10), and the pursuit of idols (4:11-19). This leads to the announcement of Israel's judgment (5:1-14). Judgment is attributed directly to their rejection of God (5:1-7) and is described as devastating and inescapable (5:8-14). The indictment ends with a brief reassurance of Israel's return to God and a compassionate invitation to repent (5:15-6:3).

The next section focuses on the persistent refusal of Israel to repent in response to God's warnings and invitations (6:4-8:14). Israel willfully transgressed their covenant with God (6:4-11) and now refuses to return to God, preferring instead to turn to ungodly foreign allies (7:1-16). These alliances are futile and make God's judgment all the more certain (7:13-16). Some specific aspects of their fate are named as punishment for persistent idolatry (8:1-14): Israel will be judged by an enemy, taken captive, and destroyed.

Hosea continues to pronounce God's judgment of Israel in graphic description (9:1-10:15). He describes their exile in Assyria where they will not be able to worship (9:1-9). He also describes how their idolatry is responsible for the murder of their children at the hands of the Assyrians (9:10-17). Israel's idolatry only increased in their time of economic and military prosperity, thus their king will be deposed and Israel will be utterly destroyed (10:1-15).

In the last section of the book, the darkness of God's judgment gives way to the bright hope of Israel's future restoration (11:1-14:9). Though He will punish them soon, God declares His continual love for His people in the past and at present (11:1-11). This assures their eventual return from captivity in Assyria (11:10-11). Still, God is angry with Israel's sin (11:12-13:16). Though He was faithful to them, they were relentless in their unfaithfulness (11:12-12:14), therefore God will be relentless in judgment (13:1-16). However, He remains their only hope of deliverance because He is their only Savior and King (13:4,10).

God's final promise to restore Israel is a strong assurance of their future (14:1-9). They are called to repentance (14:1-3), though it is implied this is something they will not do until after the Assyrian judgment. The promises of Israel's healing and prosperity and the removal of God's anger are reserved for this future time (14:4-7) when Israel will finally be cured of their idolatry (14:8).

Hosea's prophecy contains strong warnings, but also strong assurances of Israel's restoration. Yet to experience the blessings, they must be purified through judgment as

punishment for their grievous sins and unfaithfulness to the covenant. God's love always sought Israel, as Hosea sought Gomer, yet Israel never responded.

Outline of Hosea

- I. Hosea's Experience: A Picture of God's Dealings with Israel 1:1-3:5
 - A. Introduction 1:1
 - B. The marriage of Hosea to Gomer 1:2-2:1
 - 1. Hosea marries Gomer. 1:2-3
 - 2. Israel's rejection is symbolized by the children. 1:4-9
 - a. Jezreel symbolizes Israel's destruction. 1:4-5
 - b. Lo-Ruhamah symbolizes no mercy on Israel. 1:6-7
 - c. Lo-Ammi symbolizes Israel's abandonment. 1:8-9
 - 3. Israel's restoration is promised. 1:10-2:1
 - C. The application of Gomer's adultery 2:2-23
 - 1. Israel is accused of unfaithfulness. 2:2-5
 - a. Israel is charged with adultery. 2:2-3
 - b. Israel's children are born of harlotry. 2:4-5
 - 2. Israel will be punished by God. 2:6-13
 - a. She will be deprived of her lovers. 2:6-8
 - b. She will be deprived of produce. 2:9-10
 - c. She will be deprived of mirth. 2:11
 - d. Her vine and fig trees will be destroyed. 2:12
 - e. She will be punished for her idolatry. 2:13
 - 3. Israel will be restored by God. 2:14-23
 - a. God will renew His love for Israel. 2:14-15
 - b. God will renew His marriage with Israel. 2:16-20
 - 1) He will be acknowledged as husband. 2:16-17
 - 2) He will establish a covenant of peace. 2:18
 - 3) He will betroth her to Him anew. 2:19-20
 - c. God will renew His blessing upon Israel. 2:21-23
 - 1) He will renew agricultural blessings. 2:21-22
 - 2) He will renew His mercy toward Israel. 2:23
 - D. The restoration of Hosea's marriage 3:1-5
 - 1. God commands Hosea to love Gomer again. 3:1
 - 2. Hosea restores Gomer as his wife. 3:2-3
 - 3. The illustration is applied to Israel. 3:4-5
- II. Hosea's Message: God's Judgment and Restoration of Israel 4:1-14:9
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 - 1. Israel's sin is exposed. 4:1-19
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 - b. The priests rejected the knowledge of God. 4:4-10
 - 1) The people's rebellion 4:4-5
 - 2) The priest's rejection of the Law 4:6

- 3) The proliferation of priestly sin 4:7-8
 - 4) The punishment upon the priests 4:9-10
 - c. The people sought after idols. 4:11-19
 - 1) Their straying through idolatry 4:11-13
 - 2) The participation of both sexes 4:14
 - 3) The warning to Judah 4:15-16
 - 4) The confirmation of Israel's idolatry 4:17-19
 - 2. Israel's judgment is announced. 5:1-14
 - a. Judgment is announced because of sin. 5:1-7
 - 1) Their sin is openly seen by God. 5:1-3
 - 2) They turned away from God. 5:4-5
 - 3) God has withdrawn from them. 5:6-7
 - b. Judgment is described. 5:8-14
 - 1) Ephraim will be desolate. 5:8-9
 - 2) Judah will be judged with Ephraim. 5:10-12
 - 3) They can not be rescued. 5:13-14
 - 3. Israel's return is envisioned. 5:15-6:3
 - a. All Israel will seek God. 5:15
 - b. Israel is called to repentance. 6:1-3
- B. The refusal of Israel to repent 6:4-8:14
- 1. They willfully transgressed the covenant. 6:4-11
 - a. God laments Israel's faithlessness. 6:4-5
 - b. Israel transgressed the covenant. 6:6-7
 - c. Israel's violence defiles them. 6:8-9
 - d. Israel's breach of covenant is horrible. 6:10-11
 - 2. They refuse to return to God. 7:1-16
 - a. Israel's sins are too blatant to heal. 7:1-3
 - b. Israel is compared to an oven. 7:4-7
 - c. Israel's alliances are rebuked. 7:8-12
 - 1) The weakening effect of the alliances 7:8-9
 - 2) Their refusal to return to God 7:10
 - 3) Their vacillation between allies 7:11
 - 4) Their punishment 7:12
 - d. Israel's destruction is announced. 7:13-16
 - 1) The announcement 7:13
 - 2) Their refusal to return to God 7:14-16
 - 3. They are punished for persistent idolatry. 8:1-14
 - a. Israel will be judged by an enemy. 8:1-3
 - b. Israel honored idols instead of God. 8:4-6
 - c. Israel will be taken captive. 8:7-10

- d. Israel's idolatry will lead to captivity. 8:11-13
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 - 1) The fact of exile 9:3
 - 2) The cessation of offerings 9:4
 - 3) The cessation of feast days 9:5-6
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 - a. She corrupted herself through idolatry. 9:10
 - b. Her children will be killed. 9:11-13
 - c. There will be no fruit of the womb. 9:14-16
 - d. She will be cast among the nations. 9:17
 3. Israel's sin brings her destruction. 10:1-15
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 - b. Her king will be removed. 10:3-8
 - 1) Their failure to revere God 10:3-4
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 - 3) The removal of their king 10:7-8
 - c. She is punished for her history of sin. 10:9-11
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 - 1) He brought them out of Egypt. 11:1-2
 - 2) He cared for them with love. 11:3-4
 - b. God will punish Israel with captivity. 11:5-7
 - c. God loves Israel in the present. 11:8-11
 - 1) His love withholds total destruction. 11:8-9
 - 2) Israel will follow God. 11:10-11
 2. God is angry with Israel's sin. 11:12-13:16
 - a. Israel was relentless in unfaithfulness. 11:12-12:14
 - 1) They practiced deceit. 11:12-12:2
 - 2) They need to repent as Jacob did. 12:3-6
 - 3) They practiced oppression. 12:7-8
 - 4) Their idols will be destroyed. 12:9-11
 - 5) They will be repaid for their evil. 12:12-14

- b. God will be relentless in judgment. 13:1-16
 - 1) He will do away with idolators. 13:1-3
 - 2) He reminds that He is their Savior. 13:4-6
 - 3) He promises their destruction. 13:7-9
 - 4) He reminds that He is their King. 13:10-11
 - 5) He will have no pity on their sin. 13:12-14
 - 6) He will bring them great destruction. 13:15-16
- 3. God promises to restore Israel. 14:1-9
 - a. Israel is called to repentance. 14:1-3
 - 1) They should ask for pardon. 14:1-2
 - 2) Israel will no longer trust in Assyria. 14:3
 - b. Israel will be healed. 14:4-7
 - 1) God's anger will be removed. 14:4
 - 2) God will make Israel grow like a tree. 14:5-6
 - 3) People will flourish in Israel. 14:7
 - c. Israel will have nothing to do with idols. 14:8
 - d. God's covenant demands are declared to the wise. 14:9

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Introduction

The Author

Very little can be said about the author Joel. He was the son of Pethuel (1:1) and may have been a priest, a fact inferred from his references to priests (1:13-14; 2:17). Frequent mention of Zion and the temple indicate he was a prophet to Judah and Jerusalem (1:9,13-14; 2:15-17,23,32; 3:1,5-6,16-17,20-21).

The Date

The question of the date of Joel's ministry and the writing of his prophecy must first be determined as whether they are preexilic or postexilic. A postexilic dating is least preferable as seen in the arguments and answers below.

The first argument for a postexilic date is the absence of any mention of the northern kingdom which was taken captive in 722 B.C. But Joel was a prophet to Judah and needn't mention Israel. Second, Joel mentions priests and elders but not kings, which would fit the circumstances after the captivity. In answer, it is noted that other prophets never mention a king (Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, and Habakkuk). Also, Joel omits any reference to Assyria and Babylon which shows they have been overthrown. But then one would expect mention of Persia. Besides, if the prophecy is from the ninth century, as some suppose, then Assyria and Babylon had not yet risen to prominence. Instead, Joel mentions Tyre, Sidon, Philistia, Edom, and Egypt which were all Judah's enemies before the exile, especially in the ninth century. Another argument for a late date supposes 3:2 refers to the Babylonian captivity as history, but in context it may be considered history from the perspective of the future day of the Lord. Finally, it is argued that a late date is indicated by mention of Greek slave trade (3:6), but records show that this activity existed at least as early as the seventh century.

The next question concerns whether Joel wrote at an early or a late preexilic date. An earlier date of the ninth century is favored by many for several reasons. First, is the position of Joel in the Hebrew canon between Hosea and Amos. Also, as already mentioned, is the reference to Israel's ninth century enemies. Moreover, it is noted that the mention of priests but no king aptly fits the circumstances after the execution of Queen Athaliah when Jehoiada the high priest set up six-year old Jehoash as king but actually exercised the rule himself (835 B.C.). Finally it is claimed that Joel was more likely quoted by later preexilic prophets than vice versa (cf. 3:10 and Isa. 2:4 and Micah 4:3; 3:16 and Amos 1:2; 3:18 and Amos 9:13).

Proponents of a later preexilic date (597-587 B.C.) claim these are not conclusive arguments for a ninth century date. They go on to argue that 3:2 refers to the Babylonian invasion of 597 B.C. which saw many Jews deported. Thus 1:15 and 2:1-11 anticipate the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, an event referred to here as the "day of the Lord," a term used by other late preexilic prophets (Lam. 1:12; 2:1,21-22; Eze. 7:19; 13:5; Zeph. 2:2-3). Also, it is argued that Greek slave trade (3:6) better described this period than the ninth century period. A problem with this dating is 2:18-19 which may depict Judah's repentance and God's blessing in Joel's day, something not true in Judah's last days.

Though impossible to be dogmatic, a ninth century date has many of the better arguments. Also, if Joel was written about 825 B.C. there is demonstrable consistency in the argument of the book.

The Historical Background

Much has already been said of the historical circumstances if a ninth century date is assumed. This period was characterized by rebuilding after the evil rule of Athaliah (841-835 B.C.) and by religious indifference: the temple was in disrepair until the twenty-third year of Jehoash (813 B.C.). Joel's ministry would have been contemporary with Elisha's in the North.

The Purpose

The purpose of Joel's prophecy is to call Judah to repentance in the face of the approaching judgment of the day of the Lord. This repentance would bring Judah blessing and deliverance. The prophetic significance of Joel is debated, but he probably uses a past or present locust invasion to describe both a near future and far future day of judgment for Judah.

Argument

Joel begins with a description of a near past or present locust plague and its devastating effect on the people (1:1-20). The plague is used to call the people to repentance (1:13-14) and to prefigure a future day of judgment which will also consume the land (1:15-20).

Joel then predicts an imminent invasion of Judah called "the day of the Lord" (2:1-27). Its announcement as a certain event (2:1-2) and the description of the power, destruction, and magnitude of the army (2:1-11) is a terrifying prospect for Judah and issues in another invitation to repentance personally and nationally (2:12-17). As if to assume their repentance in the future, God declares His forgiveness and restoration for the nation (2:18-27). He will bless them agriculturally, restore what the invaders destroyed, and renew His relationship with them (2:21-27). Though the invasion refers to a present foreign threat, this restoration may refer to the Judah in the last days.

The prophecy intensifies and broadens in scope as Joel describes the ultimate, or eschatological, day of the Lord (2:28-3:21). The locust invasion and the imminent invasion prefigure a far greater judgment to come. Before the great day of the Lord, some last events are described (2:28-32): God will pour out His Spirit, show cosmic wonders, and deliver the remnant of Israel. God will then judge the nations which persecuted Israel (3:1-16a). After this, Judah will be restored (3:16b-21). In contrast to the desolated enemies, Judah and Jerusalem will be blessed and will abide with God forever fully forgiven. The prophetic elements of Joel may be blurred, but the purpose of God's pronouncements of future judgment are clear: He wants Judah to come to repentance that He might pour His blessing on them.

Outline of Joel

- I. The Locust Plague 1:1-20
 - A. Introduction 1:1
 - B. The devastation of the locust plague 1:2-4
 - 1. It is a unique event. 1:2-3
 - 2. It is a thorough devastation. 1:4
 - C. The effect of the locust plague on the people 1:5-12
 - 1. Wine drinkers are distressed. 1:5-7
 - a. They are called upon to mourn. 1:5
 - b. The locust plague is explained. 1:6-7
 - 2. The priests are distressed. 1:8-9
 - a. There is a call to lament. 1:8
 - b. There is a lack of offerings. 1:9
 - 3. The farmers are distressed. 1:10-12
 - a. The produce of the fields is ruined. 1:10
 - b. The farmers are called to mourn. 1:11
 - c. The fruit of the trees is ruined. 1:12
 - D. The call for repentance 1:13-14
 - 1. The priests are called to repent. 1:13
 - 2. The people are called to cry out to God. 1:14
 - E. The significance of the locust plague. 1:15-20
 - 1. It prefigures a coming Day of the Lord. 1:15
 - 2. It devastates all agriculture. 1:16-18
 - a. Food is cut off. 1:16
 - b. Grain crops are ruined. 1:17
 - c. Livestock suffers. 1:18
 - 3. It consumes the land with drought. 1:19-20
- II. The Imminent Day of the Lord 2:1-27
 - A. The prophecy of the imminent invasion of Judah 2:1-11
 - 1. The imminent Day of the Lord is announced. 2:1-2
 - a. The announcement of its arrival 2:1
 - b. The awfulness of its judgment 2:2
 - 2. The power of the Lord's army is described. 2:3-9
 - a. Nothing escapes their desolation. 2:3
 - b. They advance rapidly. 2:4-5
 - c. Their victims agonize in pain and fear. 2:6
 - d. The soldiers advance relentlessly. 2:7-9
 - 3. The magnitude of the Lord's army is described. 2:10-11
 - a. It has cosmic effects. 2:10

- b. It is too terrible to endure. 2:11
 - B. The renewed call to repentance 2:12-17
 - 1. God appeals for a sincere change of heart. 2:12-14
 - a. The appeal is for true repentance. 2:12-13a
 - b. The motivation is God's graciousness. 2:13b-14
 - 2. God appeals for national repentance. 2:15-17
 - a. God desires a national assembly. 2:15-16
 - b. God desires priestly prayers for mercy. 2:17
 - C. God's forgiveness and restoration 2:18-27
 - 1. God declares His restored favor. 2:18-19
 - 2. God declares deliverance from the northern army. 2:20
 - 3. God declares restored agricultural blessing. 2:21-27
 - a. He calls for rejoicing. 2:21
 - b. There will be an abundance of produce. 2:22-24
 - c. He promises to restore what the army destroyed. 2:25
 - d. He promises a restored relationship to Israel. 2:26-27
- III. The Ultimate Day of the Lord 2:28-3:21
 - A. The last events before the terrible Day of the Lord 2:28-32
 - 1. God will pour out His Spirit on all people. 2:28-29
 - 2. God will show cosmic wonders. 2:30-31
 - 3. God will deliver the remnant of Israel. 2:32
 - B. The judgment of the nations in the Day of the Lord 3:1-16a
 - 1. The judgment is announced. 3:1-2a
 - 2. The reasons for judgment are given. 3:2b-8
 - a. The nations persecuted Israel. 3:2b-3
 - b. Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia are indicted. 3:4-8
 - 1) God threatens them with retaliation. 3:4
 - 2) They sold Israelites into slavery. 3:5-6
 - 3) God will sell them into slavery. 3:7-8
 - 3. The judgment is executed. 3:9-16a
 - a. God tells the nations to prepare for war. 3:9-10
 - b. God calls the nations to assemble together. 3:11-12a
 - c. God commences His judgment. 3:12b-16a
 - 1) He proclaims judgment on the wicked. 3:12b-13
 - 2) He proclaims the imminence of His judgment. 3:14
 - 3) He judges from Zion. 3:15-16a
 - C. The restoration of Judah in the Day of the Lord 3:16b-21
 - 1. God will be a refuge for Israel. 3:16b-17
 - 2. Israel will be abundantly blessed. 3:18
 - 3. Judah and her enemies are contrasted. 3:19-21

- a. Egypt and Edom will be desolate. 3:19
- b. Judah and Jerusalem will abide forever. 3:20
- c. Judah and Jerusalem will be forgiven. 3:21

Summary and Outline of Amos

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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D.	Israel's people will be returned. 9:14-15	9

Introduction

The Author

The authorship of Amos is seldom questioned. He is named first in 1:1 and consistently throughout the book as the originator of the prophecy. The first verse discloses he was from Tekoa, a rural area in Judah ten miles south of Jerusalem. There he was a herdsman or cattleman (cf. 7:14) and a farmer of sycamore figs. The word used in 1:1 is a rare word used only once more in the Old Testament (2 Kings 3:4) and has the sense of "sheep breeders." Amos was evidently responsible for large herds of livestock. His rural roots and knowledge of the wilderness is evident in the book (3:4-5,12; 5:8,19; 9:9). Though he had no training or heritage as a prophet, God commissioned him to be a missionary prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel (7:14-15). Amos is noted for his courage and deep sense of social justice.

The Date

According to the first verse, Amos ministered during the reigns of Uzziah in Judah (767-739 B.C.) and Jeroboam II in Israel (782-753 B.C.). In 7:11 Amos anticipates the Assyrian captivity of 722 B.C. and indicates that Jeroboam is not yet dead. Another clue in 1:1 is that he wrote "two years before the earthquake" (cf. Zech. 14:5). Josephus connects the quake to the events of 2 Chronicles 26:16-20 and archeological evidence has uncovered evidence of a violent quake about 760 B.C. Amos probably ministered no more than one year and wrote the prophecy about the same time, or about 760 B.C.

The Historical Background

During the reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II the territory of Palestine enjoyed a "golden age" of peace and prosperity. The two kingdoms, which had fought one another were at peace. With the relatively weakened conditions of Assyria, Babylon, Syria, and Egypt commerce thrived and borders expanded. Uzziah in Judah was able to subdue the Philistines, Ammonites, and Edomites and in Israel Jeroboam II occupied Damascus. Israel's prosperity in particular is the focus of Amos' preaching for with it came immorality, materialism, and social injustice (2:6-8; 3:10; 4:1; 5:10-12; 8:4-6). Amos preached his messages in Bethel, the residence of the king and the center of Israel's calf worship. It was located 22 miles north of Tekoa, only two miles north of Judah's border.

Though Baal worship had been purged previously by Jehu (c. 841 B.C.), calf worship flourished as the religion of Israel (4:4-5; 5:5,21,23; 8:3,10). Corruption had taken over the religious leaders with prophets and priests serving for the sake of material gain. Amos' ministry in Bethel, the home of the high priest Amaziah, was a direct confrontation and accusation against the king and high priest as the source of Israel's corruption (7:8,17). With the prevailing atmosphere of peace, Israel felt immune to disaster or invasion. Yet Amos sought to awaken the nation to their sins and God's righteous requirements.

The Purpose

Amos wrote to warn Israel of the impending judgment of God caused by the oppressive sins of the upper class and call them to repentance. God's righteousness required punishment for their violation of the covenant, yet His faithfulness would bring final restoration.

Argument

The written prophecy of Amos is mainly composed of three series of messages. The first series pronounces judgment on eight nations (Chs. 1-2). The second series is three sermons of judgment on Israel (chs.3-6). The final series consists of five visions of judgment for Israel (chs. 7:1-9:10). The book ends, however, with the positive promise of restoration (9:11-15). Besides giving the historical and biographical background, the introduction (1:1-2) also discloses the theme of God's wrath in judgment (1:2) developed in the messages.

In each of the eight prophecies of judgment on the nations (1:3-2:16) Amos follows a simple pattern: 1) a general proclamation of irrevocable judgment, 2) the specific sin that brings judgment, and 3) a description of God's specific judgment. The nations are also addressed in a tightening circle according to their relationship to Israel so that the noose of judgment closes on Israel in the end. This demonstrates that God is just and impartial in His judgment.

All judgments of the nations involve mention of fire and destruction except Israel's, which seems to picture an invasion. The first nation, Damascus, is condemned for their persecution of Gilead (1:3-5). The second, Philistia, engaged in slave trade (1:6-8) as did the third, Tyre (1:9-10). Edom is next condemned for persecution of their "brother", perhaps a reference to their close relationship to Israel (1:11-12). The fifth nation, Ammon, murdered innocent people in Gilead (1:13-15). The sixth nation, Moab, was related to Israel by blood, but sinned by disrespectfully desecrating Edom's royal graves (2:1-3). Judah, Israel's true brother, sinned by despising the covenant of law (2:4-5). Finally, Israel is given extended treatment (2:6-16). Their sins were great: They transgressed the covenant by acts of injustice, immorality, and hypocritical worship, and they perverted the leaders God provided them (2:6-12). Therefore God's judgment of an apparent invasion is inescapable (2:13-16).

Amos continues his focus on Israel with the three sermons of judgment (3:1-6:14). The theme of the first is the destruction of Israel (3:1-15). It is deserved because they abused God's special favor and ignored His warnings (3:1-10). His destruction is therefore described as thorough and specifically devastating to their idolatry and prosperity (3:11-15). The second sermon addresses the depravity of the nation (4:1-13) listing specifically the oppression of the poor by the rich and their hypocritical worship (4:1-5). Their judgment is well deserved (4:12-13) because they refused to repent when God sent various calamities upon them in the past (4:6-11). The final sermon is a dirge over the demise of Israel (5:1-6:14). There is mourning because of God's judgment (5:1-3) and a final call to repentance from their many sins (5:4-15). This sermon ends with a pronouncement of woes on Israel (5:18-6:14). The woes are upon those who practice false religion (5:18-27) and those who are boastfully complacent (6:1-14). All are rebuked for their false security which will be shattered by the coming invasion (5:18-20; 6:1-3, 7-14).

The five visions also convey the message of judgment on Israel (7:1-9:10). In the first, Amos sees a swarm of locusts, pleads for mercy, and God relents (7:1-3). In the second, the same happens after a vision of consuming fire (7:4-6). The third vision is of a plumbline which indicates that Israel does not measure up to God's standards and therefore deserves judgment (7:7-9). At this point there is a historical interlude describing the high priest Amaziah's opposition of Amos (7:10-17). Though Amos is told to leave Israel, he answers with

the prediction of Amaziah's fate together with the destruction of the nation. This event highlights Israel's rejection of God's warnings.

In the fourth vision, Amos sees a basket of summer fruit (8:1-14) used to picture the end of Israel. Again, the sins of the rich are listed and judgment is described. The final vision is of God standing at the altar in Bethel (9:1-10) which indicates the end of their calf worship. None in Israel will escape His judgment, but they will be judged as certainly as the other nations. Their destruction will be total as God disperses them among the nation.

The book ends with a promise of Israel's restoration (9:11-15) which demonstrates God's graciousness and faithfulness to His eternal covenant with Israel. This promise includes the restoration of the Davidic dynasty, triumph over enemies, productive land, and a return of the exiles to dwell in the land forever. Though Israel's sin has brought irrevocable judgment, it will not prevent God from fulfilling His covenant to ultimately bless His people.

Outline of Amos

- I. Introduction 1:1-2
 - A. The author and occasion 1:1
 - B. The theme of judgment 1:2
- II. Eight Prophecies of Judgment on the Nations 1:3-2:16
 - A. The judgment on Damascus 1:3-5
 - 1. Because they persecuted Gilead 1:3
 - 2. God will send fire and captivity. 1:4-5
 - B. The judgment on Philistia 1:6-8
 - 1. Because they enslaved people 1:6
 - 2. God will send fire and destruction. 1:7-8
 - C. The judgment on Tyre 1:9-10
 - 1. Because they delivered slaves to Edom 1:9
 - 2. God will send fire. 1:10
 - D. The judgment on Edom 1:11-12
 - 1. Because they persecuted their brother 1:11
 - 2. God will send fire. 1:12
 - E. The judgment on Ammon 1:13-15
 - 1. Because they murdered in Gilead 1:13
 - 2. God will send fire and captivity. 1:14-15
 - F. The judgment on Moab 2:1-3
 - 1. Because they desecrated Edom's royal graves 2:1
 - 2. God will send fire and destroy their leaders. 2:2-3
 - G. The judgment on Judah 2:4-5
 - 1. Because they despised the Law 2:4
 - 2. God will send fire. 2:5
 - H. The judgment on Israel 2:6-16
 - 1. Because they committed many sins 2:6-12
 - a. They transgressed the covenant. 2:6-8
 - 1) Injustice to the poor 2:6-7a
 - 2) Immorality 2:7b
 - 3) Hypocritical worship 2:8
 - b. They abused God's gracious leadership. 2:9-12
 - 1) God deliverance from their enemies 2:9-10
 - 2) God's provision of leaders 2:11
 - 3) Israel's perversion of God's leaders 2:12
 - 2. God will judge them. 2:13-16
 - a. Their sins burden God. 2:13
 - b. They will not escape the coming judgment. 2:14-16

- III. Three Sermons of Judgment on Israel 3:1-6:14
 - A. The destruction of Israel 3:1-15
 - 1. Israel's destruction is deserved. 3:1-10
 - a. They enjoyed God's special favor. 3:1-2
 - b. They ignored God's warnings. 3:3-8
 - 1) Examples of cause preceding effect 3:3-6
 - 2) God's previous warning 3:7-8
 - c. They do not do right. 3:9-10
 - 2. Israel's destruction is described. 3:11-15
 - a. God promises a plundering adversary. 3:11
 - b. God promises a thorough destruction. 3:12
 - c. God promises specific judgment. 3:13-15
 - 1) On idolatry 3:13-14
 - 2) On prosperity 3:15
 - B. The depravity of Israel 4:1-13
 - 1. Their sins 4:1-5
 - a. The rich women oppress the poor. 4:1-3
 - 1) Their oppression 4:1
 - 2) Their judgment 4:2-3
 - b. The Israelites practice hypocritical worship. 4:4-5
 - 2. Their refusal to repent 4:6-11
 - a. They did not repent after famine. 4:6
 - b. They did not repent after drought. 4:7-8
 - c. They did not repent after destroyed crops. 4:9
 - d. They did not repent after bloodshed. 4:10
 - e. They did not repent after near destruction. 4:11
 - 3. Their deserved judgment 4:12-13
 - a. They are told to prepare for judgment. 4:12
 - b. They are reminded of God's sovereignty. 4:13
 - C. The dirge over Israel 5:1-6:14
 - 1. The mourning because of God's judgment 5:1-3
 - a. The nation is destroyed. 5:1-2
 - b. The army is decimated. 5:3
 - 2. The call to repentance 5:4-15
 - a. Repent because of His coming judgment. 5:4-9
 - 1) Israel's cultic worship 5:4-5
 - 2) God's coming judgment 5:6-7
 - 3) God's sovereignty in judgment 5:8-9
 - b. Repent because of Israel's great evil. 5:10-13
 - 1) Their hatred of justice 5:10

- 2) Their oppression of the poor 5:11
 - 3) Their perversion of justice 5:12
 - 4) Their overall evil 5:13
 - c. Repent because of God's graciousness. 5:14-15
 - 3. The mourning because of God's coming 5:16-17
 - 4. The pronouncement of woes on Israel 5:18-6:14
 - a. Woe to those who practice false religion. 5:18-27
 - 1) False security in the Day of the Lord 5:18-20
 - 2) God's hatred of false religion 5:21-27
 - a) Their present hypocrisy 5:21-23
 - b) God's preference of justice 5:24
 - c) Israel's past idolatry 5:25-26
 - d) God's punishment of captivity 5:27
 - b. Woe to those who are boastfully complacent. 6:1-14
 - 1) False security of wealth 6:1-6
 - a) Their complacency in the face of doom 6:1-3
 - b) Their luxurious carnality 6:4-6
 - 2) God's hatred of boastful complacency 6:7-14
 - a) The captivity of the city 6:7-8
 - b) The destruction of the people 6:9-11
 - c) The end of boasting 6:12-14
- IV. Five Visions of Judgment on Israel 7:1-9:10
 - A. The vision of the locusts 7:1-3
 - 1. Amos sees swarming locusts 7:1
 - 2. Amos pleads for mercy for Israel. 7:2
 - 3. God relents from judgment. 7:3
 - B. The vision of the fire 7:4-6
 - 1. Amos sees a consuming fire. 7:4
 - 2. Amos pleads for mercy for Israel. 7:5
 - 3. God relents from judgment. 7:6
 - C. The vision of the plumbline 7:7-9
 - 1. Amos sees the Lord with a plumbline. 7:7
 - 2. God predicts judgment on Israel. 7:8-9
 - D. The interlude of Amaziah's opposition 7:10-17
 - 1. Amaziah opposes Amos. 7:10-13
 - a. He complains to the king about Amos's message. 7:10-11
 - b. He tells Amos to leave Judah. 7:12-13
 - 2. Amos answers Amaziah. 7:14-17
 - a. He defends his prophetic call. 7:14-15
 - b. He predicts Amaziah's and Israel's judgment. 7:16-17

- E. The vision of the basket of summer fruit 8:1-14
 - 1. Amos sees a basket of summer fruit. 8:1-2a
 - 2. God predicts judgment on Israel. 8:2b-14
 - a. God predicts the end of Israel. 8:2b-3
 - b. God explains the reasons for judgment. 8:4-6
 - 1) Oppression of the poor 8:4
 - 2) Violation of religious regulations 8:5a
 - 3) Dishonest trading 8:5b-6
 - c. God promises retribution. 8:7-8
 - d. God describes judgment. 8:9-14
 - 1) Darkness and mourning 8:9-10
 - 2) Famine of hearing God's word 8:11-12
 - 3) Failing of strength 8:13-14
- F. The vision of God at the altar 9:1-10
 - 1. Amos sees God standing at the altar. 9:1a
 - 2. God predicts judgment on Israel. 9:1b-10
 - a. None will escape judgment. 9:1b-4
 - 1) Worshipers are killed in the temple. 9:1b
 - 2) Escapees are hunted by the Lord. 9:2-4
 - a) In Sheol and heaven 9:2
 - b) On Carmel and the sea 9:3
 - c) In captivity 9:4
 - b. God is the sovereign Judge. 9:5-6
 - c. God describes judgment. 9:7-10
 - 1) Israel will be judged like other nations. 9:7
 - 2) Israel will not be totally destroyed. 9:8
 - 3) Israel will be dispersed among the nations. 9:9
 - 4) Israel's sinners will be slain. 9:10
- V. A Promise of Restoration for Israel 9:11-15
 - A. David's dynasty will be restored. 9:11
 - B. Israel's enemies will be overcome. 9:12
 - C. Israel's land will be productive. 9:13
 - D. Israel's people will be returned. 9:14-15
 - 1. They will rebuild and restore. 9:14
 - 2. They will remain in the land forever. 9:15

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Introduction

The Author

Nothing is known of the author except that his name means "Servant of YHWH." Twelve men have the same name in the Old Testament. Obadiah was probably from Judah since he mentions events relevant to Jerusalem.

The Date

The invasion of Jerusalem (10-14) is the only historical clue for dating Obadiah. The three best possibilities are: 1) During the reign of Jehoram (848-841 B.C.) when the Philistines and Arabians invaded Judah (2 Chr. 21:16-17) and Edom revolted against Judah (2 Kings 8:20-22; 2 Chr. 21:8-20); 2) The invasion by Jehoash of Israel in 790 B.C. (2 Kings 14; 2 Chr. 25); and 3) The final destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 586 B.C. (2 Kings 24-25). The second view is least probable, partly because verse 11 calls the invaders "strangers," an odd term for those of the northern kingdom.

The date of the earliest invasion (845 B.C.) is preferred mainly because Obadiah does not mention the complete destruction of Jerusalem or the Babylonians as do other prophets who speak of the event in 586 B.C. Besides, Nebuchadnezzar would not have "cast lots" for Jerusalem (11). Also, Obadiah is quoted by Jeremiah (Jer.49: 7-22). Since his prophecy is called "a vision of Obadiah" (1) it is improbable that he copied Jeremiah. Thus 845 B.C. is the likely date of writing.

The Historical Background

Animosity between Edom and Israel dates back to the conflict between Jacob and Esau, the father of the Edomites. Esau migrated to the mountains of Seir and later refused to let the Israelites pass through on their way to Canaan. Notable conflicts occurred between the Edomites and Saul, David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Amaziah, and Ahaz. They were later controlled by Assyria and Babylon and forced to move to Idumea by the Nabateans in the fifth century. The Idumeans faded from history after defending Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

The Edomites were a hardy and proud people who lived in the natural refuge of the rugged mountains southeast of Judah beyond the Dead Sea. Their chief city, Seir, was virtually invulnerable. The Edomites probably participated in the invasion of Judah which God allowed as punishment for the wickedness of the reign of Jehoram (2 Chr. 21:16ff.). Elijah and Elisha were contemporaries of Obadiah.

The Purpose

Obadiah was written to announce the final destruction of Edom because of their arrogance and violence toward God's people, Israel. In contrast, it also reaffirms the restoration of Israel in the future.

Argument

The prophecy announces the destruction of Edom (1-14) and the future Day of the Lord (15-21). The judgment of Edom will humble their pride and be a complete destruction (1-9). The cause of judgment is their violence against Judah exhibited by their rejoicing, looting, and taking of captives when Judah was invaded (10-14).

In the Day of the Lord (15-21), God will judge all nations (15-16) and deliver Israel (17-21). Though Edom will be destroyed, Israel will be established forever and possess the lands around them in the kingdom (17-21). In this way, God will ultimately avenge and bless His people.

Outline of Obadiah

- I. The Destruction of Edom 1-14
 - A. The certainty of Edom's destruction 1-9
 - 1. God summons the nations for destruction. 1
 - 2. God will bring down Edom's pride. 2-4
 - a. Edom will be least among the nations. 2
 - b. Edom's pride deceived her. 3
 - c. God will humble Edom. 4
 - 3. Edom's destruction will be thorough. 5-6
 - a. The illustrations of complete destruction. 5
 - 1) More thorough than robbers at night 5a
 - 2) More thorough than grape gatherers 5b
 - b. The statement of complete destruction. 6
 - 4. Edom will be deceived by her allies. 7
 - 5. God will destroy Edom's wise and mighty men. 8-9
 - a. God will destroy the wise men. 8
 - b. God will destroy the mighty men. 9
 - B. The reasons for Edom's destruction 10-14
 - 1. The main reason is violence against Judah. 10
 - 2. God condemns Edom's specific actions against Judah. 11-14
 - a. Edom was indifferent to Judah's troubles. 11
 - b. Edom rejoiced over Judah's destruction. 12
 - c. Edom looted Judah's possessions. 13
 - d. Edom apprehended Judah's survivors. 14
- II. The Day of the Lord 15-21
 - A. God's judgment of the nations. 15-16
 - 1. It is a day of retribution. 15
 - 2. It is a day of thorough judgment. 16
 - B. God's deliverance of Israel 17-21
 - 1. The remnant will be established on Mount Zion. 17
 - 2. The house of Esau will be destroyed. 18
 - 3. The remnant will possess the land. 19-20
 - a. They will possess Edom. 19a
 - b. They will possess Philistia. 19b
 - c. They will possess Samaria. 19c
 - d. They will possess Gilead. 19d
 - e. They will possess Canaan as far as Zarephath. 20a
 - f. They will possess the Negev. 20b
 - 4. God will establish His kingdom. 21

Summary and Outline of Jonah

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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C. God responds to the Ninevites' repentance. 3:10	5
D. Jonah becomes angry with God. 4:1-11	5

Introduction

The Author

Jonah was the son of Amittai (1:1) and referred to in 2 Kings 14:23-25 as a prophet from Gath Hopher under Jeroboam II of Israel (782-753 B.C.). Gath Hopher was in the territory of Zebulun in lower Galilee three miles northeast of Nazareth.

Modern critics claim Jonah was written much later (fifth to third century B.C.) to counter a narrow nationalism under Ezra and Nehemiah with universalistic ideas. However, the universalistic design of God's program is found in many other Scriptures (e.g. Gen. 9:27; 12:3; Lev. 19:33-34; 1 Sam. 2:10; Isa. 2:2; Joel 2:28-32). In addition, critics cite the presence of Aramaic words as proof of a late date, but Aramaic is found in Near Eastern texts as early as 1500 B.C. They also claim Jonah was written as allegory not history. They point to the use of third person and the lack of an explicit claim that Jonah was the author. But other prophets also wrote in third person (e.g. Moses, Isaiah, Daniel) and the lack of mention of Jonah is an argument from silence. That Jonah was a historical figure was already noted from 2 Kings and is also verified by Christ (Matt. 12:40-42; 16:4; Luke 11:29-32). Moreover, Jewish tradition and the presentation of the story complete with historical details about people and places confirms its historicity. What appears to be the motivation for denying historicity is an antisupernatural bias that cannot accept the miracle of the fish.

The Date

Since Jonah ministered during the reign of Jeroboam II (782-753 B.C.; 2 Kings 14:23-25), a good date for his writing is about 765 B.C.

The Historical Background

From the death of Adadnirari III in 782 B.C. until the coming of Tiglath-pileser III in 745 B.C., Assyria had declined in power but remained a threat to Israel. Ninevah, the capital, was located on the northeast side of the Tigris river 600 miles from Israel (a three month journey). Though the suburbs sprawled over twenty miles in diameter, the inner city of Ninevah was only three miles in diameter. Around the inner city was a wall 50 feet wide and 100 feet high. Assyria was experiencing a trend toward monotheism when Jonah preached to them. His visit to Ninevah and their repentance probably happened under Ashurdan III (773-755 B.C.) and may have been preceded by two plagues in 765 and 759 B.C. and a solar eclipse in 763 B.C. Assyria was known for their cruel treatment of enemies and captives, which was probably why Jonah resisted offering God's salvation to them.

At home, Jonah lived in the time of prosperity under Jeroboam II. This king had thrown off the yoke of Assyria and extended the borders of the northern kingdom. However, the prosperity and peace led Israel into selfish disregard for God's universal concerns.

The Purpose

Jonah was written to emphasize the universality of God's grace and judgment. Israel had become selfish and neglected God's concern for the Gentiles, and thus were blind to His purpose and program for the world. God will save all who turn to Him for "Salvation is of the LORD" (2:9).

Argument

The book narrates the story of Jonah who first ran from God in disobedience to His command (chs. 1-2), but later obeyed a second command (chs. 3-4). The first command is for Jonah to go and preach to Ninevah, but the prophet disobeys by heading west toward Tarshish (1:1-3). Jonah cannot escape God's chastening at sea, however (1:4-16). The Gentile mariners evidence more fear of God than Jonah when they rebuke him, toss him into the sea, and worship (1:6-16).

God delivers Jonah by miraculously providing a fish which swallows him (1:17-2:10). This prompts Jonah to pray from the fish's belly (2:1-9). Here he recognizes God's sovereignty and grace in salvation and vows to sacrifice to God (2:1-9). Jonah is then vomited onto the land (2:10).

When God commands Jonah a second time, the prophet quickly obeys and goes to Ninevah (3:1-4:11). There he preaches judgment and repentance and the king and the whole city repent (3:5-10). God thus relents from judgment (3:10) and Jonah becomes angry with God (4:1-11). God questions Jonah's right to be angry (4:1-4) and teaches him by way of an object lesson (4:5-8). The plant that shaded him was an act of God's kindness, but Jonah took it for granted and became angry when it was destroyed. Thus God rebukes him and defends His own right to pity and save Ninevah (4:9-11).

Jonah evidenced a myopic view of God's character and program. In this way he represented the selfish nation Israel and their lack of regard for God's concern of salvation for Gentiles.

Outline of Jonah

- I. Jonah disobeys God's first command. 1:1-2:10
 - A. God commissions Jonah. 1:1-3
 1. God commands Jonah to go to Ninevah. 1:1-2
 2. Jonah disobeys by heading for Tarshish. 1:3
 - B. God chastens Jonah at sea. 1:4-16
 1. God sends a great wind. 1:4-5
 2. Jonah's disobedience is rebuked by the mariners. 1:6-9
 - a. The captain appeals to Jonah to pray to God. 1:6
 - b. The mariners cast lots. 1:7
 - c. The mariners interrogate Jonah. 1:8-9
 3. Jonah is thrown into the sea. 1:10-16
 - a. The mariners seek Jonah's solution. 1:10-11
 - b. Jonah suggests they throw him overboard. 1:12-13
 - c. The mariners throw Jonah overboard. 1:14-15
 - d. The mariners worship God. 1:16
 - C. God delivers Jonah. 1:17-2:10
 1. God prepares a fish which swallows Jonah. 1:17
 2. Jonah prays to God from the fish's belly. 2:1-9
 3. He explains the origin of his prayer. 2:1-2
 4. He reviews his perilous predicament. 2:3-6a
 - 1) He was cast into the midst of the sea. 2:3
 - 2) He realized his separation from God. 2:4
 - 3) He faced imminent death. 2:5-6a
 - b. He rehearses God's salvation. 2:6b-7
 - c. He declares a vow to God. 2:8-9
 - 1) He declares the futility of idolatry. 2:8
 - 2) He declares he will fulfill his vows. 2:9
 - 3) He declares that salvation is of Yahweh. 2:10
 5. Jonah is vomited up by the fish. 2:10
- II. Jonah Obeys God's Second Command. 3:1-4:11
 - A. God commissions Jonah again. 3:1-4
 1. God commands Jonah to go to Ninevah. 3:1-2
 2. Jonah obeys by going to Ninevah and preaching. 3:3-4
 - B. The Ninevites respond to Jonah's preaching. 3:5-10
 1. The people repent. 3:5
 2. The king repents. 3:6
 3. The king commands repentance of everyone. 3:7-9
 - a. The content of the proclamation. 3:7-8

- b. The motivation behind the proclamation. 3:9
- C. God responds to the Ninevites' repentance. 3:10
- D. Jonah becomes angry with God. 4:1-11
 - 1. Jonah expresses his anger over God's kindness. 4:1-4
 - a. Jonah explains his former disobedience. 4:1-2
 - b. Jonah asks God to take his life. 4:3
 - c. God questions Jonah's right to be angry. 4:4
 - 2. God prepares an object lesson for Jonah. 4:5-8
 - a. God prepares a plant to shade Jonah. 4:5-6
 - b. God prepares a worm to destroy the plant. 4:7
 - c. God prepares an east wind to heat Jonah. 4:8a
 - d. Jonah again expresses his desire to die. 4:8b
 - 3. God rebukes Jonah. 4:9-11
 - a. Jonah defends his right to be angry over the plant. 4:9
 - b. God defends His right to pity Ninevah. 4:10-11

Summary and Outline of Micah

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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C. The Lord's complaint about Israel's wickedness 6:9-16.....	6
D. Micah's pleading with the Lord 7:1-20	6

Introduction

The Author

Few have argued against Micah's authorship of the book. He was a Judean from Moresheth Gath (1:1,14), a rural community on the border of Philistia and Judah about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. It is thus assumed he had a humble background. He is quoted in Jeremiah 26:18 as a respected prophet of Judah during the reign of Hezekiah. He also ministered under the two preceding kings, Jotham and Ahaz (1:1). His preaching evidenced a strong concern for the sufferings of his people.

The Date

The ministry under Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah could have stretched from 740 to 697 B.C. Evidently, the main thrust of his ministry came under Ahaz (731-715) and Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.). Micah's prophecy was probably written before the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. which he predicts (1:6). The prevalent immorality he mentions indicates a time shortly before Hezekiah's reforms, thus a probable date for his writing is about 730-725 B.C.

The Historical Background

Though Micah mentioned the fall of Samaria to the north, he was primarily a prophet to Judah. He endured the reigns of Jotham who was relatively good, Ahaz who was evil; and Hezekiah who led Judah in religious reforms. Micah was the rural counterpart to his Judean contemporary, Isaiah, while Hosea ministered in the north. Assyria had reached its zenith of power and posed a constant threat to Judah, especially after the downfall of Samaria in 722 B.C.

The Purpose

Micah indicts Judah for the sins of injustice, violence, and breach of the Mosaic covenant and predicts the righteous judgment of God as deserved discipline. While designed to warn the nation and bring them to repentance, the prophecy also encourages them with the hope of true justice and peace which will come to the remnant when the Messiah comes to reign in His kingdom.

Argument

This book is composed of three messages (chs. 1-2; 3-5; 6-7). Each message consists of an indictment of Judah's sins, a prediction of judgment, and a promise of restoration in the future.

The first message announces the judgment to come on Judah (1:1-2:13). The prediction of coming judgment for Judah (1:2-7) is assured by the imminent destruction of Samaria (1:6). Because of the terrible nature of the judgment and captivity, the prophet laments for his people (1:8-16). Next, he describes the specific sins of the nation that warrant God's discipline (2:1-11). The people practiced evil (2:1-5) while the false prophets prohibited true prophecy and misled the people (2:6-11). The first message then ends with a promise of the future regathering of Israel under the Messianic King (2:12-13).

The second message also announces judgment but focuses more on the blessing to follow (3:1-5:15). Judgment here concerns the nation's leaders (3:1-12). God will judge them because they abuse the people by injustice (3:1-4), give them a false sense of security (3:5-8), and practice all kinds of moral corruption (3:9-12). But here Micah turns his attention to the "latter days" (4:1) and the blessing Judah will experience in the coming kingdom (4:1-5:15). He first describes the kingdom as characterized by peace for all nations and the centrality of the restored nation of Israel (4:1-8). He then relates the necessary events preceding the kingdom (4:9-5:1): Israel must first be taken captive to Babylon, but they will be delivered and will triumph over all enemies. He also describes the future Ruler of Israel who will lead them into the kingdom of blessing (5:2-15). He will be born in Bethlehem (5:2) and work on Israel's behalf by restoring the nation, destroying the enemies, protecting the remnant, and destroying idolatry (5:3-15).

The third message is an interchange of God's complaints against Israel and Micah's pleas in response (6:1-7:20). God first complains about Israel's neglect of Him in spite of His past acts of deliverance and protection (6:1-5). Micah responds by confessing the need for forgiveness and telling the nation what God desires of them (6:6-8). God then complains about Israel's wickedness and predicts their judgment (6:9-16). In response, Micah pleads with the Lord (7:1-20) bemoaning the nation's sins and expressing confidence in God's justice. God responds to Micah with a promise of marvelous things ahead for Israel (7:15-17). Finally, Micah affirms God's blessing on Israel by declaring His mercy, forgiveness, and covenant faithfulness (7:18-20).

Micah announces the inevitable judgment of Judah because of their sins against God. However, the bad news of judgment recedes into a picture of Israel's blessing in the future kingdom because God is faithful to His covenant with Abraham.

Outline of Micah

- I. First Message: An Announcement of Judgment 1:1-2:13
 - A. Introduction 1:1
 - B. The prediction of coming judgment 1:2-7
 - 1. God calls the people to listen. 1:2
 - 2. God announces His coming in judgment. 1:3-4
 - 3. God explains the reason for judgment. 1:5
 - 4. God describes the results of judgment. 1:6-7
 - a. Samaria will be ruined. 1:6
 - b. Samaria's idols will be destroyed. 1:7
 - C. The lament for the people 1:8-16
 - 1. Micah laments for his people. 1:8-9
 - 2. Micah calls others to lament. 1:10-16
 - a. The prohibition in Gath 1:10
 - b. The mourning of Shaphir, Zaanan, and Beth Ezel 1:11
 - c. The distress of Maroth and Lachish 1:12-13
 - d. The shame of captivity 1:14-16
 - D. The sins of the nation 2:1-11
 - 1. The sins of the people 2:1-5
 - a. They plotted and practiced evil. 2:1-2
 - b. God will bring judgment. 2:3-5
 - 1) God is planning their ruin. 2:3
 - 2) Others will mock their ruin. 2:4
 - 3) They will lose their fields. 2:5
 - 2. The sins of the false prophets 2:6-11
 - a. They forbade true prophecy. 2:6-7
 - b. They misled the people. 2:8-9
 - c. The people are given over to false prophets. 2:10-11
 - E. The promise of future regathering 2:12-13
 - 1. Israel will be regathered. 2:12
 - 2. Israel will be led by the King. 2:13
- II. Second Message: The Blessing Following Judgment 3:1-5:15
 - A. Judgment on the nation's leaders 3:1-12
 - 1. God will judge the rulers. 3:1-4
 - a. Their responsibility is justice. 3:1
 - b. They abuse the people with injustice. 3:2-3
 - c. They will not find mercy with God. 3:4
 - 2. God will judge the false prophets. 3:5-8
 - a. They lead the people astray. 3:5

- b. They shall be made ashamed. 3:6-7
 - c. God is able to proclaim judgment. 3:8
 - 3. God will judge because of all corrupt leaders. 3:9-12
 - a. He addresses all corrupt leaders. 3:9-10
 - b. He describes their sins. 3:11
 - c. He pronounces judgment on Jerusalem. 3:12
 - B. The blessing of the coming kingdom 4:1-5:15
 - 1. The characteristics of the kingdom 4:1-8
 - a. Jerusalem will be the center of instruction. 4:1-2
 - b. The nations will experience peace. 4:3-5
 - 1) God will judge the nations. 4:3a
 - 2) Nations will war no more. 4:3b
 - 3) People will dwell securely. 4:4
 - 4) People will follow God. 4:5
 - c. Israel will be restored. 4:6-8
 - 1) Israel will be regathered. 4:6
 - 2) Israel will be strengthened. 4:7
 - 3) Jerusalem will have dominion. 4:8
 - 2. The events preceding the kingdom 4:9-5:1
 - a. Israel will be exiled to Babylon. 4:9-10
 - b. Israel will be delivered from Babylon. 4:10b
 - c. Nations will gather against Israel. 4:11-13
 - 1) They intend to defile Israel. 4:11
 - 2) They are ignorant of God's plans. 4:12
 - 3) Israel will defeat the nations. 4:13
 - d. Israel's ruler will be humiliated. 5:1
 - 3. The Ruler of the kingdom 5:2-15
 - a. The birth of Israel's Ruler 5:2
 - b. The work of Israel's Ruler 5:3-15
 - 1) He will restore the nation. 5:3
 - 2) He will care for His people. 5:4
 - 3) He will destroy Israel's enemies. 5:5-9
 - a) The destruction of Assyria 5:5-6
 - b) The protection of the remnant 5:7-9
 - 4) He will destroy Israel's military power. 5:10-11
 - 5) He will destroy Israel's idolatry. 5:12-14
 - 6) He will judge opposing nations. 5:1
- III. Third Message: The Lord's Complaint and Micah's Pleading 6:1-7:20
 - A. The Lord's complaint about Israel's neglect 6:1-5
 - 1. God calls for witnesses to hear His case. 6:1-2

2. God reminds them about His goodness. 6:3-5
 - a. He challenges them to find fault in Him. 6:3
 - b. He reminds of His deliverance from Egypt. 6:4
 - c. He reminds of His protection from Balak. 6:5
- B. Micah's response in behalf of the nation 6:6-8
 1. Micah confesses the nation's need of forgiveness. 6:6-7
 2. Micah tells the nation what God desires of them. 6:8
- C. The Lord's complaint about Israel's wickedness 6:9-16
 1. God accuses them of wickedness. 6:9-12
 - a. He calls attention to His judgment. 6:9
 - b. He accuses them of deceitful practice. 6:10-11
 - c. He accuses them of violence and lies. 6:12
 2. God predicts their judgment. 6:13-16
 - a. He will judge because of sins. 6:13
 - b. They will not be able to satisfy their needs. 6:14-15
 - c. He will judge because they followed evil ways. 6:16
- D. Micah's pleading with the Lord 7:1-20
 1. Micah bemoans the nation's sins. 7:1-6
 - a. He bemoans the lack of good men. 7:1-2
 - b. He acknowledges the corruption of the leaders. 7:3-4
 - c. He acknowledges lack of trust within families. 7:5-6
 2. Micah expresses confidence in God's justice. 7:7-14
 - a. He waits for God's salvation. 7:7
 - b. He is confident of God's justice. 7:8-13
 - 1) Enemies will not gloat. 7:8-10
 - 2) Israel will be honored. 7:11-12
 - 3) Enemies will be judged. 7:13
 - c. He asks God to be a Shepherd to Israel. 7:14
 3. God promises marvelous things. 7:15-17
 - a. The promise is made. 7:15
 - b. The nations will be ashamed. 7:16
 - c. The nations will fear. 7:17
 4. Micah affirms God's blessing on Israel. 7:18-20
 - a. He affirms God's delight in mercy. 7:18
 - b. He affirms God's forgiveness of Israel's sins. 7:19
 - c. He affirms God's covenant faithfulness. 7:20

Summary and Outline of Nahum

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Introduction

The Author

Nothing is known about Nahum except that he is called an Elkoshite (1:1) and thus was from Elkosh, wherever that was. Four locations have been suggested: 1) North of Ninevah on the Tigris river; 2) According to Jerome, Elkesi near Ramah in Galilee; 3) Capernaum, which means "City of Nahum;" and 4) A city in southern Judah. The latter seems probable, given the prophet's interest in Judah (1:15).

The Date

Though some conservative scholars believe Nahum wrote about 710 B.C. because Assyria was at peak strength and Manasseh's evil reign would merit no words of consolation, a date of about 660 B.C. remains the better choice. The mention of the fall of Thebes in 663 B.C. (3:8) and the destruction of Ninevah in 612 B.C. which Nahum predicts, form the chronological parameters. It should not have been later than Ashurbanipal's reign (669-633 B.C.) because the description of Ninevah (1:12; 3:1,4,16) does not match the decline of the nation under his succeeding sons. Nahum indicates that Judah was under the Assyrian yoke (1:13,15; 2:1,3) which fits better with Manasseh (697-642 B.C.) than Josiah (640-609 B.C.). More importantly, the fact that Thebes was restored ten years after its destruction would make the statement of 3:8 of little force unless it was written before 654 B.C.

The Historical Background

The capital of Assyria, Ninevah, probably repented under Jonah about 760 B.C., but the revival didn't last long. They soon returned to the cruel and atrocious behavior they were known for. Sargon II destroyed Samaria and scattered Israel in 722 B.C. Under Sennacherib, the Assyrians almost captured Jerusalem in 701 B.C. during Hezekiah's reign. When Nahum preached, they were at a peak of power under Ashurbanipal, but declined under his sons Ashuretililani (633-629 B.C) and Sinsharishkun (629-612 B.C.). The city was huge and supremely fortified, yet they succumbed to a Babylonian invasion in 612 B.C. and were completely and irrevocably destroyed as Nahum predicted. Nahum's announcement of Ninevah's destruction would be a comforting relief to Judah.

The Purpose

Though the prophecy is addressed primarily to Ninevah to announce their final judgment for their atrocities against the nations, the purpose of the book is to comfort Judah with the demise of their enemy. This would assure them of God's faithfulness to them and His control of their destiny.

Argument

Ninevah's fate is first decreed (ch. 1), then described (ch. 2), and finally it is told why it is deserved (ch. 3). The decree of the city's destruction (1:1-15) begins with an explanation of God's principles of just judgment (1:2-8). Ninevah will no longer be able to conspire against God's people (1:9-11) because they will come to a final end (1:12-15).

The destruction of Ninevah is then described (2:1-13). While Ninevah is told to prepare for an attack, Judah is comforted by a promise of restoration (2:1-2). When the attack does come, it is described as violent and furious (2:3-10). The looting and desolation of the city (2:9-10) is a stark contrast to its former strength and glory (2:11-13).

Nahum lastly explains why Ninevah's destruction is deserved (3:1-19). He notes their sins of violence, lies, robbery, murder, and sorcery (3:1-4). The certainty of their judgment (3:5-11) is seen in the prediction of their total humiliation and in the comparison to the destruction of No Amon (Thebes). It is so certain that efforts to defend the city will be futile (3:12-17). The book then ends with a final assurance of their completed destruction and the consequent rejoicing of their enemies (3:18-19), which would include Judah. Nahum shows that God is just and in sovereign control of the nations. This assurance is a consolation to Judah of God's protection and care for her in the future.

Outline of Nahum

- I. Ninevah's Destruction is Decreed. 1:1-15
 - A. Introduction 1:1
 - B. Principles of divine judgment are explained. 1:2-8
 - 1. God takes vengeance on His enemies. 1:2-3a
 - 2. God is powerful in vengeance. 1:3b-6
 - a. He is powerful over all creation. 1:3b-5
 - b. No one can endure His wrath. 1:6
 - 3. God is just in dealing with men. 1:7-8
 - a. He is a refuge to those who trust Him. 1:7
 - b. He punishes His enemies. 1:8
 - C. Ninevah's plotting against God will end. 1:9-11
 - 1. God will end their conspiracy. 1:9
 - 2. They will be judged instead. 1:10
 - 3. They have one who is a conspirator against God. 1:11
 - D. Ninevah will be removed as Judah's enemy. 1:12-15
 - 1. God promises Judah relief from Ninevah's danger. 1:12-13
 - 2. God decrees Ninevah's final end. 1:14
 - 3. God tells Judah to rejoice at Ninevah's end. 1:15
- II. Ninevah's Destruction is Described. 2:1-13
 - A. The preparation for the attack 2:1-2
 - 1. Ninevah is told to prepare for the attack. 2:1
 - 2. The restoration of Judah is promised. 2:2
 - B. The description of the attack 2:3-10
 - 1. The enemy attacks furiously. 2:3-6
 - a. The advance of the army 2:3a
 - b. The raging of the chariots 2:3b-4
 - c. The defense of the people 2:5
 - d. The diversion of the river 2:6
 - 2. The city is taken captive. 2:7
 - 3. The defenders flee. 2:8
 - 4. The city falls. 2:9-10
 - a. The looting of treasures 2:9
 - b. The report of final desolation 2:10
 - C. The contrast of Ninevah's former strength 2:11-13
 - 1. Ninevah was as a lions' den. 2:11-12
 - a. They dwelt there fearlessly. 2:11
 - b. They victimized others. 2:12
 - 2. God has destroyed their former strength. 2:13

- III. Ninevah's Destruction is Deserved. 3:1-19
 - A. Ninevah's sins 3:1-4
 - 1. They are full of violence, lies, and robbery. 3:1
 - 2. The enemy attacks and leaves countless dead. 3:2-3
 - 3. The punishment is because of Ninevah's seductions. 3:4
 - B. Ninevah's certain judgment 3:5-11
 - 1. God will humiliate Ninevah. 3:5-7
 - a. God will expose her to the nations. 3:5
 - b. God will cast filth upon her. 3:6
 - c. None will lament her distress. 3:7
 - 2. God will judge Ninevah as He did No Amon. 3:8-11
 - a. God infers Ninevah is no different from No Amon. 3:8
 - b. No Amon was taken captive in spite of strength. 3:9-10
 - c. Likewise Ninevah will be taken captive. 3:11
 - C. Ninevah's futile defense 3:12-17
 - 1. Her defense is ineffective. 3:12-13
 - a. Her fortifications are too weak. 3:12
 - b. Her people are weak and defenseless. 3:13
 - 2. She is ironically told to defend herself. 3:14
 - 3. She will be destroyed. 3:15a
 - 4. Her troops are compared to locusts. 3:15b-17
 - a. She is told to multiply troops like locusts. 3:15b
 - b. She had multiplied merchants like locusts. 3:16
 - c. Her military leaders will vanish like locusts. 3:17
 - D. Ninevah's completed destruction 3:18-19
 - 1. Her people are scattered. 3:18
 - 2. Her wound is fatal. 3:19a
 - 3. Her enemies rejoice at her downfall. 3:19b

Summary and Outline of Habakkuk

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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B. He petitions God for mercy. 3:2.....	4
C. He reviews God's power and works. 3:3-15.....	4
D. He expresses his faith in God's salvation. 3:16-19.....	4

Introduction

The Author

The authenticity of Habakkuk is hardly questioned. He is identified as the author and a prophet in 1:1 and 3:1. The musical notation at the close of the book may indicate he was involved in the temple worship at Jerusalem, perhaps as a Levite. He was a prophet to Judah, but not much else is known about him.

The Date

Some clues in the text help in dating this prophecy. First, the Babylonian invasion of Judah is imminent (1:6; 2:1; 3:16) so Habakkuk ministered before the first invasion of 605 B.C. Also, descriptions of the Babylonians indicate they were the world power at the time. Therefore, Habakkuk probably wrote in the later part of Nabopolassar's rule (626-605 B.C.) after the final destruction of Ninevah in 612 B.C. The mention of Judah's sinfulness (1:2-4) would suit the period of Jehoiakim's wicked rule (609-597 B.C.) better than the moral conditions under Josiah (640-609 B.C.). Habakkuk therefore wrote shortly before the invasion of Judah in 605 B.C., or about 607 B.C.

The Historical Background

Habakkuk's prophecy shares the same historical background as Jeremiah's. By the time of Jehoiakim's reign Babylon was the uncontested world power. Though Josiah had instituted many moral reforms, Jehoiakim led Judah quickly back into wickedness. Judah was corrupt and ripe for the judgment which came under Nebuchadnezzar, who rose to power in 605 B.C. and invaded Judah in 605, 597, and 586 B.C.

The Purpose

Habakkuk wrote to emphasize God's holiness and sovereign prerogative in judging Judah, even though He chose to use a more wicked nation, the Babylonians, to do so. He also demonstrates the necessity of trusting God to do right in a world which often appears unjust.

Argument

The first two chapters record Habakkuk's questions and God's answers about divine justice, and the last chapter records the prophet's prayer of faith. Habakkuk questions God about His justice because He appears to allow evil to continue in Judah (1:2-4). But God answers that evil will not continue because He is raising up the Babylonians to come violently against Judah (1:5-11). This does not sit well with Habakkuk, so he questions why God would use an even more wicked, cruel, and idolatrous people to judge Judah (1:12-17). God then answers by declaring the necessity of the righteous to live by faith in His justice and His ways (2:1-20). God will eventually also judge Babylon, as is made clear by the series of woes pronounced on them for their wickedness (2:6-20).

Habakkuk was evidently moved to greater faith in God by this dialogue, as seen in his prayer (3:1-19). He petitions God for mercy and remembrance of His people (3:2). He then reviews the great displays of God's power and wrath in His dealings with the earth and the

nations (3:3-15). His faith is finally expressed when he admits that though he is fearful of the coming invasion (3:16), he knows God will also bring salvation (3:17-19). Habakkuk was thus taught to look beyond the injustice and appearances of this world to the final fulfillment of God's promises of salvation for His people.

Outline of Habakkuk

- I. Habakkuk Questions God. 1:1-2:20
 - A. The superscription 1:1
 - B. He questions God about His justice. 1:2-4
 - 1. He questions God's lack of response. 1:2
 - 2. He questions God about the presence of evil. 1:3
 - 3. He asserts there is no justice. 1:4
 - C. God answers that the Babylonians are coming. 1:5-11
 - 1. He announces that He is raising up the Babylonians. 1:5-6
 - 2. He describes their ferocity. 1:7-8
 - 3. He describes their violent purpose. 1:9-11
 - D. He questions God about using the wicked Babylonians. 1:12-17
 - 1. He asks why God uses a wicked people. 1:12-13
 - 2. He asks why God uses a cruel people. 1:14-15
 - 3. He asks why God uses an idolatrous people. 1:16-17
 - E. God answers by explaining faith and justice. 2:1-20
 - 1. Habakkuk waits for an answer. 2:1
 - 2. God tells him to write the vision. 2:2-3
 - 3. God contrasts the faith of the just with the proud. 2:4-5
 - 4. God pronounces woes on the proud wicked. 2:6-20
 - a. Woe to the violent plunderers. 2:6-8
 - b. Woe to the covetous. 2:9-11
 - c. Woe to the murders. 2:12-14
 - d. Woe to the drunkards. 2:15-17
 - e. Woe to the idolators. 2:18-20
- II. Habakkuk Prays in Faith. 3:1-19
 - A. The superscription 3:1
 - B. He petitions God for mercy. 3:2
 - C. He reviews God's power and works. 3:3-15
 - 1. He reviews God's displays of power. 3:3-7
 - a. The glory of His appearance 3:3-5
 - b. The effects of His appearance 3:6-7
 - 2. He reviews God's displays of wrath. 3:8-15
 - a. The question about the object of God's wrath 3:8-11
 - b. The declaration of the purpose of God's wrath 3:12-13
 - c. The description of the effect of God's wrath 3:14-15
 - D. He expresses his faith in God's salvation. 3:16-19
 - 1. He expresses his fear at the news of judgment. 3:16
 - 2. He declares his faith in God's salvation. 3:17-19

Summary and Outline of Zephaniah

by

Dr. Charles Bing

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B. God will destroy all things. 1:2-3.....	4
C. God will judge Judah and Jerusalem. 1:4-2:3	4
D. God will judge the surrounding nations. 2:4-15.....	4
E. God indicts Jerusalem for her wickedness. 3:1-7.....	4
II. The Salvation of the Day of the Lord 3:8-20	4
A. God will destroy the whole earth. 3:8	4
B. God will restore the faithful remnant. 3:9-13.....	4
C. God will rule in His kingdom. 3:14-20	5

Introduction

The Author

Zephaniah was the great-great-grandson of Hezekiah (1:1) which made him a distant cousin of Josiah, under whom he ministered, and the only known prophet of royal descent. He was evidently an inhabitant of Jerusalem (1:4,9-10; 3:1-7) and perhaps enjoyed free access to the royal courts.

The Date

The date of the prophecy is sometime during the reign of Josiah (640-609 B.C) before the fall of Ninevah predicted in 2:13 (612 B.C.). The condemnation of idolatry and immorality leads many to believe he prophesied before the reforms of Josiah in 628 and 622 B.C., but there is evidence for dating the book after the reforms. His contemporary, Jeremiah, also prophesied against the idolatry and immorality of Judah. Also, it appears that Josiah, who began his reign at the age of eight, now has children old enough to be accountable for their actions (1:8). In addition, Zephaniah's frequent use of the Law suggests he was familiar with the Book of the Law discovered by Hilkiah the priest (cf. 1:13 and Deut. 28:30,39; 1:15 and Deut. 4:11; 1:17 and Deut. 28:29; 2:2 and Deut. 28:15-62). Thus his prophecy probably occurred between 622 and 612 B.C. to condemn those who resisted the reforms of Josiah.

The Historical Background

Zephaniah's ministry was contemporary with the early ministry of Jeremiah when Assyria was weakening and Babylon was rising to power. Judah had been considerably weakened under the wicked reign of Manasseh

but his successor, Josiah, led the nation in religious reforms. Josiah began to rule at age eight, turned to God at age sixteen, and began his reforms at age twenty-two. His first reform (628 B.C.) purged the land of Baalism and idolatry. His second reform was prompted by Hilkiah the priest's discovery of the Book of the Law in the temple (622 B.C.). Zephaniah probably had a part in encouraging Josiah's devotion to God and in shaping the reforms later. Josiah was the last good king. After his death Judah reverted to idolatry and thus revealed their inherent sinfulness that merited the judgment Zephaniah preached.

The Purpose

Zephaniah prophesied to warn Judah of the great day of God's wrath brought on by their wickedness and to call them to repentance (2:1-3). He also encouraged the faithful with the other aspect of the Day of the Lord, that is, the blessing that follows judgment and the restoration of the purified remnant.

Argument

The judgment of the Day of the Lord (1:1-3:7) naturally precedes the salvation of the day of the Lord (3:8-20). The initial declaration of judgment is a general statement of the destruction of everything in the world (1:4-2:3). Then God specifically condemns Judah and Jerusalem (1:4-2:3). He will punish every wicked person in the nation (1:4-13) in an inescapable day of great wrath (1:14-18). Therefore, He calls on the nation to repent (2:1-3). The next declaration of judgment (2:4-15) concerns the surrounding nations of Philistia (2:4-7), Moab and Ammon (2:8-11), Ethiopia (2:12), and Assyria (2:13-15). His focus then returns to the wickedness of Jerusalem which merits such judgment (3:1-7).

After the day of judgment, the day of the Lord also includes a time of salvation and blessing (3:8-20). God will restore the faithful and now purified remnant (3:9-13) and establish His personal presence with them in His kingdom (3:14-20). The universality of the day of the Lord is proclaimed by Zephaniah with words of condemnation and blessing as a motivation for Judah to repent and turn back to God, and as a description of the fulfillment of God's required moral justice.

Outline of Zephaniah

- I. The Judgment of the Day of the Lord 1:1-3:7
 - A. The introduction 1:1
 - B. God will destroy all things. 1:2-3
 - C. God will judge Judah and Jerusalem. 1:4-2:3
 - 1. The objects of His judgment 1:4-13
 - a. He will punish the idolators. 1:4-6
 - b. He will punish princes and oppressors. 1:7-9
 - c. He will punish the merchants. 1:10-11
 - d. He will punish the complacent. 1:12-13
 - 2. The description of His judgment 1:14-18
 - a. It is a day of wrath. 1:14-16
 - b. It is a day of distress for men. 1:17
 - c. It is an inescapable day. 1:18
 - 3. The call to repentance 2:1-3
 - a. God summons the nation to repent. 2:1-2
 - b. God summons the humble to seek Him. 2:3
 - D. God will judge the surrounding nations. 2:4-15
 - 1. He will judge Philistia. 2:4-7
 - a. They will be destroyed. 2:4-5
 - b. Their coasts will be for the remnant of Judah. 2:6-7
 - 2. He will judge Moab and Ammon. 2:8-11
 - a. They have reproached His people. 2:8
 - b. They will be destroyed. 2:9-10
 - c. All people will worship God. 2:11
 - 3. He will judge Ethiopia. 2:12
 - 4. He will judge Assyria. 2:13-15
 - a. They will be destroyed. 2:13-14
 - b. Their false security is mocked. 2:15
 - E. God indicts Jerusalem for her wickedness. 3:1-7
 - 1. They have rejected God. 3:1-2
 - 2. Their leaders are corrupt. 3:3-4
 - 3. God has dealt righteously with her. 3:5
 - 4. They did not learn from God's judgments of nations. 3:6-7
- II. The Salvation of the Day of the Lord 3:8-20
 - A. God will destroy the whole earth. 3:8
 - B. God will restore the faithful remnant. 3:9-13
 - 1. He will restore true worshipers. 3:9-10
 - 2. He will establish a humble people. 3:11-12

3. He will purify the remnant. 3:13
- C. God will rule in His kingdom. 3:14-20
1. Israel is to rejoice at the end of her judgments. 3:14-15
 2. Israel is to be encouraged with God's presence. 3:16-17
 3. God will gather the remnant and exalt them. 3:18-20

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C. The exhortation to resume building the temple 1:7-8.....	5
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E. The response to the message 1:12-15.....	5
II. The Second Message: The Promise of Future Glory in the Temple 2:1-9.....	5
A. The historical superscription 2:1-2.....	5
B. The comparison of the present temple with the former 2:3.....	5
C. The assurance from the Lord that He is with them 2:4-5.....	5
D. The proclamation of the future glory of the temple 2:6-9.....	5
III. The Third Message: The Present Blessings of Obedience 2:10-19.....	5
A. The historical superscription 2:10.....	5
B. The infectious nature of sin 2:11-14.....	5
C. God's dealing with the people in the past and future 2:15-19.....	5
IV. The Fourth Message: The Prophecy about Zerubbabel 2:20-23.....	5
A. The historical superscription 2:20-21a.....	5
B. The overthrow of Gentile kingdoms 2:21b-22.....	5

C. The promise of the restoration of the Davidic line 2:23 5

Introduction

The Author

Nine references in this book attribute the prophecy to Haggai. Two references in Ezra (Ezra 5:1-6:14) name him as the prophet who worked alongside Zechariah in encouraging the returned Jews to rebuild the temple. Haggai may have come to Jerusalem with the first group of returnees under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. Jewish tradition says he was born in Babylon and studied under Ezekiel.

The Date

The prophecies of Haggai are precisely dated from the reign of Darius as occurring from September 1 to December 24 520 B.C.

The Historical Background

The ascendancy of the Persians over the Babylonians brought more favorable times for the Jews. In 538 B.C. the Persian king, Cyrus, issued a decree for the exiles to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. The first group to return under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. began the work of the temple, but halted it in 534 B.C. because of Samaritan opposition and threats. The discouraged Jews grew lethargic and the temple project was neglected for selfish concerns. However, work resumed under Darius I (521-486 B.C.) when the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the people to complete the temple. Haggai's message was reinforced by Zechariah so that the temple was finally completed in 515 B.C. It was not as glorious as the former temple (2:3), but at least allowed the renewal of temple worship. The background for Haggai's prophecy is found in the events of Ezra 4-6.

The Purpose

Haggai prophesied to move his people to complete the temple so that God could come and restore His blessing. In doing so, he shows that their failures in other areas of life are a result of neglecting the work of the Lord on the temple.

Argument

Haggai delivers four messages (1:1-15; 2:1-9,10-19,20-23) to the returned Jews as he encourages them to rebuild the temple. In the first, he exhorts the leaders and the people to build the temple (1:1-15). He rebukes their procrastination and indifference (1:2-6) and explains how this neglect is responsible for their present troubles (1:9-11). The response is positive as the leaders and the people obey Haggai and renew work on the temple (1:12-15).

The second message contains the promise of the future glory that will fill the temple (2:1-9). Though it is not as glorious as the former Solomonic temple (2:3), they have the assurance of God's presence and a future glory far greater than the former temple (2:4-9).

The third message declares the blessings available for present obedience (2:10-19). Haggai explains the infectious nature of sin (2:11-14) and reminds them of God's discipline for sin in the past. This was told them to get their attention so He could bless them for obedience in the present and the future (2:15-19).

The fourth message uses the governor, Zerubbabel, to foreshadow the restoration of the Davidic dynasty (2:20-23). After God judges the Gentiles, he will set up the Davidic Messiah, depicted by Zerubbabel, as the Ruler (2:23). Each message of Haggai thus encourages the completion of the temple by promising present and future blessings

Outline of Haggai

- I. The First Message: The Exhortation to Build the Temple 1:1-15
 - A. The historical superscription 1:1
 - B. The rebuke of the people's procrastination 1:2-6
 - 1. The people express their procrastination. 1:2
 - 2. God asks about their indifference. 1:3-4
 - 3. God notes their impoverishment. 1:5-6
 - C. The exhortation to resume building the temple 1:7-8
 - D. The explanation of the people's impoverishment 1:9-11
 - 1. They let the temple lie in ruins. 1:9
 - 2. Therefore God withheld His provision. 1:10-11
 - E. The response to the message 1:12-15
 - 1. The leaders and people respond in fear and obedience. 1:12
 - 2. The Lord reassures them of His presence. 1:13
 - 3. The people are stirred up to begin work. 1:14-15
- II. The Second Message: The Promise of Future Glory in the Temple 2:1-9
 - A. The historical superscription 2:1-2
 - B. The comparison of the present temple with the former 2:3
 - C. The assurance from the Lord that He is with them 2:4-5
 - D. The proclamation of the future glory of the temple 2:6-9
 - 1. God promises to fill the temple with glory. 2:6-7
 - 2. God declares His ownership of building materials. 2:8
 - 3. The glory of the future temple will exceed the former. 2:9
- III. The Third Message: The Present Blessings of Obedience 2:10-19
 - A. The historical superscription 2:10
 - B. The infectious nature of sin 2:11-14
 - 1. The priests are asked two questions. 2:11-13
 - a. Haggai is told to ask the priests. 2:11
 - b. He asks about the nature of holiness. 2:12
 - c. He asks about the nature of uncleanness. 2:13
 - 2. The people are reprov'd for uncleanness 2:14
 - C. God's dealing with the people in the past and future 2:15-19
 - 1. God reminds them of His chastisement in the past. 2:15-17
 - 2. God promises them His blessing in the future. 2:18-19
- IV. The Fourth Message: The Prophecy about Zerubbabel 2:20-23
 - A. The historical superscription 2:20-21a
 - B. The overthrow of Gentile kingdoms 2:21b-22
 - C. The promise of the restoration of the Davidic line 2:23

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A. The horses among the myrtle trees 1:7-17	6
B. The four horns and four craftsmen 1:18-21	6
C. The man with the measuring line 2:1-13.....	6
D. The cleansing of Joshua the High Priest 3:1-10.....	6
E. The gold lampstand and the two olive trees 4:1-14	6
F. The flying scroll 5:1-4.....	6
G. The woman in the basket 5:5-11	6
H. The four chariots 6:1-8.....	7
III. The Crowning of Joshua 6:9-15.....	7
A. The symbolic crowning of Joshua 6:9-11	7
B. The prophecy that the Branch will build the temple 6:12-13.....	7
C. Directions to give the crown to the Babylonian delegation 6:14	7
D. The prophecy of universal help in building the temple 6:15	7

- IV. The Four Messages 7:1-8:23..... 7
 - A. The setting and question that prompted the messages 7:1-3..... 7
 - B. The content of the messages 7:4-8:23..... 7
- V. The Two Oracles 9:1-14:21 7
 - A. The rejection of the Messiah 9:1-11:17 7
 - B. The reign of the Messiah 12:1-14:21 8

Introduction

The Author

Zechariah joins Jeremiah and Ezekiel as one who was both prophet and priest. He was the son of the priest Berechiah and grandson of the priest Iddo (1:1,7). Mention elsewhere omits the name Berechiah possibly suggesting that his father died young (Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Neh. 12:4,16). These same references show that Zechariah was an exile in Babylon until he returned with his grandfather under Zerubbabel. He evidently began prophesying at an early age (2:4) in 520 B.C. alongside Haggai. Matthew 23:35 discloses he was murdered in the temple.

Though unbroken Jewish and Christian tradition affirms Zechariah as the author, some higher critics claim another was the author of chapters 9-14. These critics date this section either as preexilic or late in the Greek and Maccabean periods. However, the main arguments for this can be answered. They claim Matthew 27:9-10 assigns 11:12-13 to Jeremiah, but Matthew merely combines two prophecies (11:12-13; Jer. 32:6-9) and acknowledges the older prophet, Jeremiah. Also, 9:13 mentions Greece, but this could be prophetic and in addition, it was spoken after Greece had become a great power (490 B.C.). Furthermore, the critics want to assign a late date because of the apocalyptic content, but this genre of literature is recognizable in Ezekiel and Daniel. Finally, alleged stylistic differences can be attributed to different subject matter and a later period in Zechariah's life.

The Date

Chapters 1-8 are indisputably dated in the text as occurring at the same time as Haggai's prophecy, 520-518 B.C. Chapters 9-14, however, are undated but were evidently spoken later in Zechariah's life after Greece became prominent (9:13), or about 480 B.C.

The Historical Background

The historical background of chapters 1-8 is the same as for Haggai's prophecy. Zechariah followed him as a younger contemporary and preached his first message two months after Haggai began to preach. He also encouraged the completion of the temple until it was finished in 515 B.C. Chapters 9-14 reflect a later period of Zechariah's life, about 480 B.C. Darius (521-486 B.C.) had been succeeded by Ahasuerus (i.e. Xerxes, Esther's husband, 486-463 B.C.), but both had suffered setbacks by the Greeks. World domination was thus shifting towards Greece which would become the new threat to the Jews in Palestine.

The Purpose

The prophecy of chapters 1-8 was given to urge the completion of the temple in view of God's blessing to return upon the nation. In chapters 9-14 the temple is no longer in view. This part of the prophecy encourages the nation with a revelation of the coming Messiah and His kingdom which for Israel means their salvation and restoration.

Argument

The introduction to this prophecy is a call to repentance based on God's former appeals to the nation's forefathers (1:1-6). This is followed by eight night visions about the temple and God's promises (1:7-6:8). Then a brief historical section (6:9-15) and four messages encourage Israel (7:1-8:23). The last prophecy consists of two oracles revealing God's future plans for Israel under the Messiah (9:1-14:21).

Zechariah's prophecy begins with the description of eight visions he saw by night (1:7-6:8). The first is a vision of four horses standing among the myrtle trees (1:7-17). The message which follows indicates the horses participated in evaluating the situation on the earth (1:10-11). God declares His anger with the nations and His intention of restoring Israel and the temple (1:12-17).

The second vision is of four horns and four craftsmen (1:18-21) which assures Israel that God will judge the nations which had persecuted them. A man with a measuring line is the subject of the third vision (2:1-13). His measuring of Jerusalem evidently indicates the restoration of the city and the nation. God promises to dwell among them personally as all the nations become His people. The fourth vision is of Joshua the high priest being cleansed and Satan being rebuked (3:1-10). This signifies the future cleansing of Israel accomplished through the ministry of the Messianic Branch.

The fifth vision contains some obscure symbols, a gold lampstand and two olive trees (4:1-14), but its basic message is clear. God is explaining how the completion of the temple will be accomplished through His power but by the agency of Zerubbabel. The next vision, a flying scroll, appears to signify the judgment that will come on all wickedness (5:1-4). The seventh vision pictures a woman in a basket taken to Babylon (5:5-11). This probably depicts the national sin of Israel being removed in the future. In the eighth and final vision, Zechariah sees four chariots which disperse to the whole earth (6:1-8). This appears to be a picture of the divine judgment which will come on all the nations of the world. These visions of Israel's present strength and blessed future should motivate them to finish the temple.

The crowning of Joshua the high priest (6:9-15) is a kind of historical interlude between messages. The symbolic crowning anticipates the coming of the priestly and royal Branch who will build the temple. This would also encourage the Jews to finish the temple.

Next are four messages (7:1-8:23) which come in answer to the people's question about continuing their fasts in remembrance of Jerusalem's destruction. The first is a rebuke of their hypocrisy in past fasting (7:4-7). The next message explains how their stubborn disobedience was responsible for their exile in Babylon (7:8-14). In the third message God promises to restore the nation and do good to them in the future (8:1-17). This is used to motivate them to build the temple without fearing their enemies (8:9-13). The fourth and final message promises that fasting will be turned into rejoicing as all the peoples of the earth come to worship in Jerusalem (8:18-23). The hopeful outcome promised for the remnant in the coming kingdom is a powerful incentive to complete the Lord's temple.

The two oracles which comprise chapters 9-14 were evidently written much later and focus not on the temple, but on the coming of the Messiah and His kingdom. The first of these

oracles describes the rejection of the Messiah (9:1-11:17). God begins by assuring the protection of Israel in His judgment of surrounding nations (9:1-8). The background of this prophecy is probably the conflict with Greece and the Maccabean revolt. He then describes the coming of the King (9:9-10:12). The ministry of the King at His coming is to deliver Israel from enemies (9:11-17) and care for His people (10:1-12). A pastoral figure using shepherds is employed to depict the rejection of the Messianic King by the nation and the rise of a false leader (11:1-17). Wicked leaders are thus pictured as responsible for the nation's rejection of their true leader, the Messiah.

The book culminates with a vivid description of the reign of the Messiah (12:1-14:21). This begins with the deliverance of Israel and the destruction of their enemies in an end-time war (12:1-9). After their physical deliverance, the Messianic King will also deliver the remnant spiritually by the effusion of His Spirit, national repentance, cleansing, and the purging of false prophets (12:10-13:9). The coming of the Messianic King in the day of the Lord (14:1-21) takes place as all the nations have gathered against Jerusalem (14:1-3). The Messiah comes to earth, delivers Israel (14:4-5), and establishes the long-awaited kingdom (14:6-21). In this final kingdom, there will be a renovation of physical phenomena. Jerusalem will be prominent and secure, and all nations will worship the King there. Holiness, so long lacking in the nation, will pervade Judah and Jerusalem (14:20-21).

Though Zechariah's prophecy is used to urge the completion of the postexilic temple, the motivation largely remains in the future coming of the Messiah. His description of the triumphant and glorious future of the nation in the kingdom should also motivate them with new hope to devote themselves to God's program.

Outline of Zechariah

- I. The Introductory Call to Repentance 1:1-6
 - A. The historical preface 1:1
 - B. The call to repentance 1:2-3
 - C. The message to the forefathers 1:4-6
- II. The Eight Night Visions 1:7-6:8
 - A. The horses among the myrtle trees 1:7-17
 - 1. The historical preface 1:7
 - 2. The inquiry about the vision 1:8-9
 - 3. The explanation about the horses 1:10-11
 - 4. The inquiry about Jerusalem and Judah 1:12-13
 - 5. The proclamation of future mercy on Jerusalem 1:14-17
 - B. The four horns and four craftsmen 1:18-21
 - 1. The inquiry and explanation of the horns 1:18-19
 - 2. The inquiry and explanation of the craftsmen 1:20-21
 - C. The man with the measuring line 2:1-13
 - 1. The response of the man with the line 2:1-2
 - 2. The message of the second angel 2:3-13
 - a. God will bless Jerusalem personally. 2:3-5
 - b. God calls Zion out of Babylon. 2:6-9
 - c. God promises to dwell among them. 2:10-13
 - D. The cleansing of Joshua the High Priest 3:1-10
 - 1. The Lord's rebuke of Satan 3:1-2
 - 2. The clothing of Joshua with new garments 3:3-5
 - 3. The angel of the Lord's charge 3:6-10
 - a. The promise of position 3:6-7
 - b. The promise of the Branch and His blessings 3:8-10
 - E. The gold lampstand and the two olive trees 4:1-14
 - 1. A description of the vision 4:1-3
 - 2. The inquiry into the vision 4:4-5
 - 3. The explanation of how the temple will be finished 4:6-10
 - a. It will be accomplished by God's power. 4:6-7
 - b. It will be completed by Zerubbabel. 4:8-10
 - 4. The inquiry and explanation of the two olive trees 4:11-14
 - F. The flying scroll 5:1-4
 - 1. A description of the vision 5:1-2
 - 2. The explanation of the vision 5:3-4
 - G. The woman in the basket 5:5-11
 - 1. The inquiry into the vision 5:5-6a

2. The explanation that it is Israel's wickedness 5:6b-8
3. The removal of the basket to Babylon 5:9-11
- H. The four chariots 6:1-8
 1. A description of the vision 6:1-3
 2. The inquiry into the vision 6:4
 3. The explanation of the vision 6:5-6
 4. The dispersal of the chariots to the whole earth 6:7-8
- III. The Crowning of Joshua 6:9-15
 - A. The symbolic crowning of Joshua 6:9-11
 - B. The prophecy that the Branch will build the temple 6:12-13
 - C. Directions to give the crown to the Babylonian delegation 6:14
 - D. The prophecy of universal help in building the temple 6:15
- IV. The Four Messages 7:1-8:23
 - A. The setting and question that prompted the messages 7:1-3
 - B. The content of the messages 7:4-8:23
 1. A rebuke of hypocritical fasting 7:4-7
 2. An explanation for Israel's dispersion 7:8-14
 - a. God had told them to do righteous works. 7:8-10
 - b. Israel stubbornly disobeyed. 7:11-12
 - c. God punished their sin by dispersing them. 7:13-14
 3. A promise of restoration and word of encouragement 8:1-17
 - a. God declares His jealousy for Jerusalem. 8:1-2
 - b. The promise of Israel's future restoration 8:3-8
 - 1) God promises to return and dwell in Jerusalem. 8:3
 - 2) God promises future peace in Jerusalem. 8:4-5
 - 3) The remnant will marvel. 8:6
 - 4) God will gather the people back to Jerusalem. 8:7-8
 - c. The word of encouragement to build the temple 8:9-17
 - 1) God encourages them to begin building. 8:9
 - 2) God tells them not to fear their enemies. 8:10-13
 - 3) God promises to do good to them. 8:14-15
 - 4) God instructs them in righteousness. 8:16-17
 4. The promise of rejoicing for Israel 8:18-23
 - a. God will turn fasting to joyful feasting. 8:18-19
 - b. All peoples will come worship in Jerusalem. 8:20-23
- V. The Two Oracles 9:1-14:21
 - A. The rejection of the Messiah 9:1-11:17
 1. The judgment on surrounding nations 9:1-8
 - a. The judgment of cities to the north and west 9:1-2
 - b. The judgment of Tyre 9:3-4

- c. The judgment of Philistine cities 9:5-7
 - d. The protection of Jerusalem 9:8
 - 2. The coming of the King 9:9-10:12
 - a. The King's appearance 9:9-10
 - b. The King's deliverance of Israel 9:11-17
 - 1) He will deliver them from dispersion. 9:11-12
 - 2) He will deliver them from Greece. 9:13
 - 3) He will deliver them from their enemies. 9:14-15
 - 4) Israel will be beautiful after deliverance. 9:16-17
 - c. The King's care for Judah 10:1-12
 - 1) He will punish the false shepherds. 10:1-3
 - 2) He will strengthen Judah. 10:4-7
 - 3) He will regather Israel. 10:8-10
 - 4) He will deliver them from their enemies. 10:11-12
 - 3. The rejection of the good shepherd 11:1-17
 - a. The lament over the destruction of Israel 11:1-3
 - b. The command to portray a good shepherd. 11:4-6
 - c. The mutual rejection of shepherd and flock 11:7-14
 - 1) The shepherd rejects the flock. 11:7-9
 - 2) The shepherd revokes His covenant. 11:10-11
 - 3) The flock rejects the shepherd. 11:12-13
 - 4) The shepherd breaks the nation's unity. 11:14
 - d. The command to portray a foolish shepherd. 11:15-17
- B. The reign of the Messiah 12:1-14:21
 - 1. The deliverance of Israel 12:1-13:9
 - a. The physical deliverance of Israel 12:1-9
 - 1) Jerusalem will be besieged by enemy nations. 12:1-2
 - 2) God will make Jerusalem prevail. 12:3-6
 - 3) God will save Judah first. 12:7-8
 - 4) God will destroy all the enemy nations. 12:9
 - b. The spiritual deliverance of Israel 12:10-13:9
 - 1) God will pour out His Spirit on Israel. 12:10a
 - 2) Israel will mourn for the pierced one. 12b:10b-14
 - 3) Israel will be cleansed from sin. 13:1
 - 4) Israel will be purged of false prophets. 13:2-6
 - 5) God will preserve a remnant. 13:7-9
 - 2. The coming reign of the Messiah 14:1-21
 - a. The final siege of Jerusalem 14:1-3
 - b. The return of the Messiah to deliver 14:4-5
 - c. The establishment of the messianic kingdom 14:6-21

- 1) There will be new physical features. 14:6-8
- 2) Jerusalem will be prominent and secure. 14:9-11
- 3) Enemy nations will be destroyed. 14:12-15
- 4) The nations will worship the King. 14:16-19
- 5) Holiness will pervade Judah and Jerusalem. 14:20-21

Summary and Outline of Malachi

by

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Introduction

The Author

The authorship and unity of Malachi has not been seriously challenged. However, some assert that the designation "Malachi" in 1:1 is a title ("My Messenger"), not a proper name, because no parentage is listed and in 3:1 it is used as a title. But no other Old Testament book gives only the title with no name in the introduction, and in 3:1 a word play is probably employed. Moreover, a number of other books omit mention of parentage (Daniel, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Haggai). Still, nothing is known about Malachi, which may explain why the Talmud and Targums claim Ezra wrote under this title.

The Date

There are good reasons to date this prophecy at about 430 B.C. First, a Persian term for "governor" is used, indicating a time in the Persian period (539-333 B.C.). Also, it is evident the remnant has returned to Jerusalem, the temple is built, and sacrifices are being offered (1:6ff.). Furthermore, the neglect and decay seen in temple worship (1:8) indicates a substantial amount of time has passed from the completion of the temple (515 B.C.). There are present many of the same problems Ezra and Nehemiah contended with (2:1 and Ezra 10:2ff; 2:10-11 and Ezra 9:1-2 and Neh. 13:1-3,23-28; 3:5,9 and Neh. 13:15), but Nehemiah is not the present governor since this one accepts bribes (1:8). Therefore it is reasonable to assume Malachi prophesied during the time when Nehemiah had gone back to Persia (432 B.C.) and before he returned to correct the problems mentioned (425 B.C.).

The Historical Background

The general background for Malachi is the same as for Ezra and Nehemiah. King Artaxerxes I (465-424 B.C.) represented the Persian rule of the period and Nehemiah governed the returned remnant from about 444 B.C. until he returned to Persia in 432 B.C. Though the temple was rebuilt (515 B.C.), worship was restored (457 B.C.), and Jerusalem's walls were reconstructed (444 B.C.), the nation had grown discouraged and skeptical towards God because His full blessing had not yet been experienced. This led to sinful behavior in the neglect of proper worship, neglect of marriage vows, social sins, and material selfishness that robbed God.

The Purpose

Malachi wrote to arouse the remnant from their spiritual stagnation so that God could continue to bless them. He blames their lack of God's blessing on covenant unfaithfulness and assures that God responds to obedience to the covenant. He also attempts to renew their hope in the faithfulness of God to establish a kingdom, but warns that a day of judgment will precede it.

Argument

Malachi follows an interesting pattern of representative dialogue between the nation and God. He begins with a declaration of God's great love for His people who have grown skeptical about God's concern for them (1:1-5). Then a section follows of rebuke for various practices (1:6-2:16) and also a section of assurance of God's faithfulness to Israel (2:17-4:3). The concluding section concerns the preparation of Israel for the Lord's coming (4:4-6).

After the declaration of love, God rebukes the nation for unfaithfulness in their covenant relationship with God (1:6-2:16). The priests are rebuked first (1:6-2:9) for offering unacceptable blemished sacrifices (1:6-14). He also rebukes them for breaking their covenant obligations and reminds them of the standards established for priests in the Mosaic covenant (2:1-9). Next, God rebukes the people for unfaithfulness (2:10-16). They also violated the covenant as evidenced by their marriages to foreign women and the prevalence of divorce (2:13-16). Malachi is reminding the nation that the covenant is the standard by which God measures their faithfulness, and by which He determines to bestow blessings or curses.

In contrast to their unfaithfulness, God declares in the following section that He will be faithful to Israel (2:17-4:3). Part of His faithfulness to His promises is the coming judgment of the wicked (2:17-3:5). Through this judgment Israel will be purified (3:2-4) and the way will be open for God to bless the repentant remnant (3:6-12). One evidence of their repentance would be the renewal of the practice of tithing (3:7b-10). In addition, God answers the complaint of the disillusioned Jews that there is no reward for serving God by assuring them of His future judgment between the righteous and the wicked that guarantees a reward for faithfulness (3:13-4:3). The book closes with a final admonition to remember the Mosaic law and an announcement of the coming of the Lord's forerunner who will prepare the nation for the Messiah (4:4-6).

Malachi's appeal for the nation's faithfulness to the covenant is based on God's faithfulness to His people. Though He has demonstrated faithfulness and love in the past, the greatest display is yet to come when He judges the wicked and establishes the nation in righteousness.

Outline of Malachi

- I. God Declares his Faithful Love for Israel. 1:1-5
 - A. The superscription 1:1
 - B. God declares his love for Israel. 1:2
 - C. God proved His love by destroying Esau. 1:3-4
 - D. Israel will testify to God's love. 1:5
- II. God Rebukes Israel for Being Unfaithful in Devotion. 1:6-2:16
 - A. The priests are rebuked for their unfaithfulness. 1:6-2:9
 - 1. They offered blemished sacrifices. 1:6-14
 - a. God charges them with dishonoring His name. 1:6-7
 - b. The offerers are unacceptable. 1:8-9
 - 1) The governor would not accept them. 1:8
 - 2) God will not accept them. 1:9
 - c. The offerings are unacceptable. 1:10-13
 - 1) God is not pleased with false worship. 1:10
 - 2) God will receive true worship in the future. 1:11
 - 3) God accuses the priests of willful neglect. 1:12-13
 - d. Those who offer blemished sacrifices are cursed. 1:14
 - 2. They broke their covenant obligations. 2:1-9
 - a. God warns of a curse on those who break covenant. 2:1-4
 - 1) God has already cursed the priests. 2:1-2
 - 2) God will curse their descendants. 2:3
 - 3) They will remember the covenant with Levi. 2:4
 - b. God reminds of covenant standards for priests. 2:5-7
 - 1) Levi performed uprightly as a priest. 2:5-6
 - 2) Every priest should perform uprightly. 2:7
 - c. God rebukes the present priests. 2:8-9
 - 1) They have violated the covenantal standards. 2:8
 - 2) God has therefore brought them dishonor. 2:9
 - B. The people are rebuked for their unfaithfulness. 2:10-16
 - 1. God accuses them of breaking the covenant. 2:10
 - 2. They were marrying foreign women with their gods. 2:11-12
 - 3. They were divorcing their wives. 2:13-16
 - a. Therefore God did not accept their offerings. 2:13-14
 - b. God ordained marriage for godly offspring. 2:15
 - c. Therefore God hates divorce. 2:16
- III. God Declares He Will be Faithful to Israel. 2:17-4:3
 - A. He will faithfully judge the wicked. 2:17-3:5
 - 1. The people charge God with injustice. 2:17

2. God will send a messenger preceding the Lord's coming. 3:1
 3. The Lord will purify Israel for acceptable offerings. 3:2-4
 4. The Lord will judge the wicked. 3:5
- B. He will faithfully bless the repentant. 3:6-12
1. God declares his unchanging faithfulness. 3:6-7a
 2. God calls for repentance in regards to tithing. 3:7b-10
 - a. He accuses them of robbery. 3:7b-8
 - b. Therefore they are under a curse. 3:9
 - c. He directs them to test Him by tithing properly. 3:10
 3. God describes the blessings that follow repentance. 3:11-12
- C. He will faithfully reward those who serve Him. 3:13-4:3
1. The people complain that it is futile to serve God. 3:13-15
 2. God answers He will remember the faithful remnant. 3:16-17
 3. God assures judgment between the righteous and wicked. 3:18
 4. God contrasts the fates of the righteous and wicked. 4:1-3
 - a. The wicked will burn. 4:1
 - b. The righteous will triumph over the wicked. 4:2-3
- IV. God Prepares Israel for the Lord's Coming. 4:4-6
- A. He commands them to remember the Law of Moses. 4:4
 - B. He announces the Lord's forerunner. 4:5-6