

# GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

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## GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

### **List of Assignments:**

This course is designed to help the student discover his / her level of general Bible knowledge. Assignments are given in the form of worksheets and tests. Each student is expected to complete the worksheets and tests on schedule. By reading all assigned books and Bible passages, the student will come to a better general understanding of the Word of God.

**Memorize II Timothy 2:15** - This verse is the foundation of the General Bible Knowledge course. Know this verse like you know your name.

**Write, in your own words, what you believe II Timothy 2:15 really means.** Explain each phrase or clause in the verse. You may break the verse down word for word if you prefer.

During the nine week course of study in General Bible Knowledge, each student is required to hand in **four sermon outlines** from their pastor, preacher, or chaplain's messages.

Answer all questions at the end of each lesson study worksheet.

Areas of study during the course are listed below:

The Old Testament  
History between the Testaments  
The Four Gospels  
New Testament History

### **Memorize the Twelve sons of Jacob:**

A good method to help in memorizing these names is to use the following words: RINGS, BALD, JJZ

<b>R</b> euben	<b>B</b> enjamin	<b>J</b> udah
<b>I</b> ssachar	<b>A</b> sher	<b>J</b> oseph
<b>N</b> aphtali	<b>L</b> evi	<b>Z</b> ebulon
<b>G</b> ad	<b>D</b> an	
<b>S</b> imeon		

### **Memorize the Twelve Apostles - Matthew 10**

**Write the list of events that cover New Testament History, give approximate dates as well**

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### Lesson Study 1

**Memory Verses**                    II Peter 1:19-21  
    Luke 16:16, 17

**Key Phrase**                        "Preparation for the Coming of Christ"

**Key Verse**                         Galatians 3:24

The Old Testament is directly declared to be the Word of God. In it we get no less than 1,904 expressions such as, "Thus saith the Lord", "God spake", "God said".

#### **Bible Readings:**

- Summary of Creation Gen. 2:1-9
- Abraham Made Father of Chosen People Gen. 17:1-8
- United Kingdom Set Up I Sam. 10:17-26
- Begins the Divided Kingdom  
I Kings 12:16-24
- Jews Carried Away Into Captivity  
II Kings 25:1-11
- A Remnant of the Jews Return  
Ezra 1:1-11

**NAME** - The Old Testament is God's record of the creation of man; of His covenant to save him, and of the religious preparations He gave the world for the coming of Christ.

**BOOKS** - There are 39 books that comprise the Old Testament. These were written by about 40 different authors over a period of about 1,500 years. The major divisions of the Old Testament are:

Gen. - Deut.	Books of the Law (5)
Joshua - Esther	Books of History (12)
Job - Song of Sol.	Books of Poetry (5)
Isa. - Daniel	Major Prophets (5)
Hosea - Malachi	Minor Prophets (12)

**UNITY OF THE BOOKS** - Dr. G. Campbell Morgan said, "*It was out of a deep sense of perplexity that I turned from books about the Bible to the Bible itself. The result was as discovery of unity which to me is the final proof*

*of its divinity. Beginning with the Old Testament and moving systematically forward I saw that each book demanded another, and that when Malachi was reached the whole collection*

*demanded more. In other words, I found that step by step I had proceeded through history and through teaching, all of which pointed to a Coming One. Then turning to the New testament, I found the answer to all expectations created in reading the Old!"*

### **Great Periods of the Old Testament**

#### **Creation / etc. Gen. 1-8**

This period of the Old Testament can be summarized in three words: **Creation / Fall / Flood**  
**Read the chapters above and underline important verses that identify these events.**

#### **Replenishing the Earth Gen. 9-11**

After the Flood, Noah was the head of a new phase (race) in the plan of God. Through Noah and his three sons - Shem, Ham, and Japheth - and their descendants God repopulated and replenished the earth. As a result of the failure of man to spread over the earth, God confused the languages / tongues of the people at the Tower of Babel. This gave rise to the beginnings of the many different nations of the world.

#### **Patriarchs Gen. 12-50**

As a result of man having given himself over to idolatry, God called Abraham to witness for Him and to live a life of faith. By covenant and promise God bound Abraham and his seed to Himself. Abraham's faith is seen, in that he was willing to offer up his well beloved son. Isaac is noted for being willing to fulfill his father's will. Jacob's life is vividly portrayed and taught the lessons of the life of faith. Jacob had his name changed to "Israel" for his faith and power in prayer. Joseph, when down in Egypt, became the savior of his people and of all the children of Abraham.

### **THE PATRIARCHS**

Israel's founding fathers, included Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the twelve sons of Jacob (Israel). The word patriarch comes from a combination of the Latin word pater, "father," and the Greek verb archo, "to rule." A patriarch is thus a ruling ancestor who may have been the founding father of a family, a clan, or a nation.

The idea of a binding agreement between God and humankind antedated the patriarchs, being first expressed in the time of Noah (Gen. 6:18; 9:8-17). The growth of the Hebrew nation was promised specifically to Abraham in the patriarchal covenant (Gen. 15; 17), along with the provision of a land in which Abraham's offspring would dwell. Since several generations elapsed before this situation developed, the covenant with Abraham must be regarded as promissory. The promises made to Abraham established the concept of a people descended through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who would be in a special historical and spiritual relationship with God.

Abraham, or Abram as he was called in the earlier chapters of Genesis, was a ninth-generation descendant of Shem, son of Noah. Abram's father Terah was born in Ur of the Chaldees, as were his brothers Nahor and Haran (Gen. 11:26,28).

Just why Terah left Ur with his family is not stated, but it may have been to seek new pastures for the flocks and herds. They journeyed to Haran, several hundred miles northwest. After living there for some time, Terah died. Abram was 75 at the time, and responded to God's

call to migrate to Canaan, where he would become the founder of a great nation. God's promises were not fulfilled immediately.

As Abram moved along the trading routes leading to Shechem, Bethel, and the Hebron area and mingled with the pagan Canaanites, God's promise that the childless Sarai would bear a son could only be accepted by faith. Yet God was with them, and saved Sarai from the amorous attentions of Pharaoh (Gen. 12:15-20) and Abimelech (Gen. 20:1-18). During this period Abram managed to retain his dignity and his position as a wealthy owner of flocks. When Lot was taken prisoner by a number of local rulers, Abram mustered a rescue party and was recognized for his leadership (Gen. 14:14-19) by the kings of Sodom and Salem.

When Abram proposed to appoint Eliezer of Damascus as his heir (Gen. 15:2), God entered into a formal covenant with Abram and promised him vast amounts of land for his descendants. Then Abram, apparently impatient for an heir, took Sarai's handmaid Hagar as a concubine, following Mesopotamian custom, because Sarai continued childless. From this union came Ishmael, who was born when Abram was 86. See Ishmael. Later God renewed His covenant with Abram and instituted the sign of circumcision for Abram's household. He promised Abraham and Sarah a son.

Before the baby was conceived, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Sarah subsequently bore Abraham the promised son: Isaac. To test Abraham's faith, God ordered him to sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering on a mountain in Moriah, some distance from Beersheba. Whatever his own misgivings, Abraham obeyed God's instructions, and at the last moment a sacrificial ram was provided, while God's angel praised Abraham for his obedience and faith. Sometime later Sarah died and was buried on land belonging to a group of Hittites' living at Mamre in Hebron (Gen. 23).

Although advanced in years, Abraham married a woman named Keturah, who bore him six children. Before his death Abraham gave gifts to his concubine's sons, and sent them away from Canaan. The aged patriarch died aged 175 years, and was buried in the cave of Machpelah purchased originally for Sarah's interment (Gen. 25:9).

At an early period, Abraham had testified that God was the Most High God (Gen. 14:22), the righteous Judge of humankind (Gen. 15:14), and the Guarantor of the covenant of promise. He experienced close communion with God (Gen. 18:33; 24:40) and worshipped Him consistently to the exclusion of all other gods. His fidelity and obedience were characteristic features of his personality and made this renowned forefather of Israel (compare Rom. 4:1-4) an example of the way in which men and women are justified before God.

The line of descent by which the covenant was to be perpetuated consisted solely of Abraham's son Isaac; through him the covenant promises were continued. Isaac's name is generally thought to mean "laughter," but it possibly also conveys the more subtle sense of "joker." It commemorated the occasion when both Abraham and Sarah laughed at God's promise to provide them with a son in their old age (Gen. 17:17-19; 18:9-15).

We have very little information about the maturing years of Isaac except that he was used as the supreme test of Abraham's faith in the covenant promises. Under the patriarchal system, the father had the power of life or death over every living person and thing in his household. At the very moment that Isaac's life was about to be taken, his position as covenant heir was safeguarded by the provision of an alternative sacrificial offering (Gen. 22:9-13). The

circumstances attending his marriage to Rebekah afforded Isaac great comfort after the death of his mother (Gen. 24:67). Isaac prayed earnestly to God for covenant heirs, and in due time Rebekah became pregnant with twins when Isaac was 60 years old. Esau grew up to be a hunter, while Jacob followed the more sedentary life-style of his father by supervising the family's flocks and herds, moving with them when it was necessary to find fresh pasture (Gen. 25:27). Isaac unfortunately provoked sibling rivalry by favoring Esau above Jacob. The former brought his father tasty venison, whereas Jacob's culinary expertise seems only to have extended to preparing lentil soup (Gen. 25:28-29). In a moment of desperate hunger, Esau traded his birthright for some of Jacob's soup, thereby transferring to his brother a double portion of Isaac's estate as well as other rights.

In old age, Isaac's sight failed; and, when it became apparent that Esau might inherit the extra birthright provision after all, Rebekah conspired with her favorite son Jacob to deceive Isaac into blessing him rather than Esau. The success of the scheme made Esau extremely angry. To escape his vengeance Jacob fled to Mesopotamia on his father's instructions. Before he arrived he received a revelation from God which confirmed his inheritance in the covenant. Jacob later encountered the family of Laban, son of Nahor, and in due course married two of Laban's daughters. After some years absence Jacob finally returned to Mamre, where his father was living, and along with Esau buried him when he died aged 180 years.

Isaac's life, though less spectacular than Abraham's, was nevertheless marked by divine favor. He was circumcised as a sign of covenant membership, and owed his life to timely divine intervention when a youth (Gen. 22:12-14). He was obedient to God's will (Gen. 22:6,9), a man of devotion and prayer (Gen. 26:25), and a follower of peace (Gen. 26:20-23). He fulfilled his role as a child of promise (Gal. 4:22-23).

The life of Jacob, the last of the three great patriarchs, was marked by migrations, as had been the case with his ancestors. Although he lived successively at Shechem (Gen. 33:18-20), Bethel (35:6-7), and Hebron (Gen. 35:27), Jacob was basically a resident alien who did not have a capital city. His experience of God at Bethel caused him to dedicate the site to the Lord, and on his return he erected an altar there (Gen. 35:6-15).

Jacob's title as supplanter was fulfilled most noticeably in his dealings with his twin brother Esau. Yet in other respects he was described commendably by comparison with Esau, the semi-nomadic skilled hunter. The fact that Jacob was described as a "plain" man means one who has all sides of his personality developed, and is the Hebrew equivalent of the "perfect" person which Christ urged His followers to be (Matt. 5:48).

The deception which Jacob perpetrated upon his father and Esau made Jacob afraid of his brother for many years. Ironically, Jacob himself was the victim of deception by Laban of Nahor, a stubborn and greedy man.

Jacob's relationships with his wives were complicated when Leah gave birth to a total of six sons and a daughter (Gen. 30:20-21), whereas Rachel remained childless for years. The situation improved slightly for Rachel when Jacob, following Abraham's example, had two sons by Bilhah, Rachel's maid (Gen. 30:3-8). Not to be outdone, Leah also gave her handmaid Zilpah to Jacob, and she bore him two sons. Finally, Rachel conceived and bore Jacob a son named Joseph, who as a son of Jacob's old age was to become his favorite.

By this time Jacob's flocks had increased as well as his family. Meanwhile Laban's two daughters felt that they, as well as their husband Jacob, were being treated badly by Laban (Gen. 31:15), and all of them plotted to leave Paddan-Aram quietly. Laban pursued them, hoping to regain what he rightfully regarded as his own property. God intervened in a night vision, and a restrained Laban made a covenant of peace with Jacob.

Perhaps the greatest crisis in Jacob's adult life was that of his reconciliation with Esau (Gen. 32). When Jacob finally met his brother, he observed all the traditional courtesies and was reunited with Esau in a tearful greeting. Esau accepted Jacob's gift after the usual denial of need and offered to escort Jacob home. Jacob declined and moved to Succoth, an ancient settlement in Transjordan where he stayed for a time before moving to more permanent quarters in Shechem (Gen. 33:18).

Just before Isaac's death, God appeared again to Jacob (Gen. 35:9) and renewed the promise of his new name. Jacob resided in Canaan thereafter, and only left when a famine overtook the land. Jacob and his sons were invited to live in Egypt by Joseph. As his life drew to a close Jacob, like his father Isaac, became blind; but he blessed his sons by means of a spoken last will and testament, after which he died peacefully. His body was embalmed in the Egyptian manner, and he was buried subsequently in the cave of Machpelah along with his ancestors (Gen. 49:30-50:13). Despite his apparent materialism, Jacob was a person of deep spirituality who, like Abraham, was esteemed highly by his pagan neighbors. Despite his fears, he behaved honorably and correctly in dealing with his avaricious father-in-law Laban and was equally consistent in fulfilling his vow to return to Bethel. Jacob trusted the God whom he had seen at Peniel to implement the covenant promises through him; and when he died, he left behind a clearly burgeoning nation.

Archaeological discoveries at certain Near Eastern sites have helped to illumine the background of the patriarchal narratives. The date of the patriarchal period has been much discussed. A time before 2000 B.C. (Early Bronze Age) seems too early and cannot be supported easily by reference to current archaeological evidence. The Middle Bronze period (2000-1500 B.C.) seems more promising because of contemporary archaeological parallels and also because many of the Negeb irrigation systems date from that period. Some scholars have suggested the Amarna period (1500-1300 B.C.) as the one in which the patriarchs lived, but this presents problems for any dating for the Exodus. The same objection applies to a Late Bronze Age (1500-1200 B.C.) period for the patriarchs. The least likely date is in the Judges period or the time of king David. All such dates do not allow time for the patriarchal traditions to have developed and make it impossible for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to be fitted realistically into an already-known chronology. A date in the Middle Bronze Age seems to offer the most suitable solution to a complex problem of dating.

### ***Bondage and Exodus Exodus, Leviticus., Numbers, Deut.***

Israel's escape from slavery in Egypt and journey towards the Promised Land under Moses. The most important event in the Old Testament historically and theologically is Israel's Exodus from Egypt. More than a hundred times in all parts of the Old Testament except the Wisdom

Literature, Jehovah is proclaimed as "the one who brought you up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Israel remembered the Exodus as God's mighty redemptive act. She celebrated it in her creeds (Deut. 26:5-9; 1 Sam. 12:6-8). She sang of it in worship (Ps. 78; 105; 106; 114; 135; 136). The prophets constantly reminded Israel that election and covenant were closely related to the Exodus (Isa. 11:16; Jer. 2:6; 7:22-25; Ezek. 20:6,10; Hos. 2:15; 11:1; Amos 2:10; 3:1; Mic. 6:4; Hag. 2:5).

The Exodus in the Old Testament was to Israel what the death and resurrection of Christ was to Christians in the New Testament. Just as Israel commemorated her deliverance from Egyptian bondage in the feast of Passover, Christians celebrate their redemption from sin in the observance of the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:1-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

### ***Historicity***

The only explicit account of the Exodus we have is the biblical account (Ex. 1-15). No extra-biblical witnesses directly speak of the sojourn of Israel's ancestors in the land of the Nile. However, Egyptian sources do confirm the general situation that we find in the end of Genesis and the beginning of the Book of Exodus. There are many reports in Egyptian sources of nomadic people called Habiru coming into Egypt from the east fleeing from famine. Extra-biblical evidence from Egypt indicates that Egypt used slave labor in building projects (Ex. 1:11). At one time the land in Egypt was owned by many landholders; but after the reign of the Hyksos kings the Pharaoh owned most of the land, and the people were serfs of the king (Gen. 47:20). Old Testament scholars accept the essential historicity of the Exodus.

### ***The Nature of the Event***

The Exodus was the miraculous deliverance of the people of God from the grip of Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea. The Bible stresses that the Exodus was the work of God. God brought the plagues on Egypt (Ex. 7:1-5). The miracle at the sea was never treated merely as a natural event or as Israel's victory alone. In the earliest recorded response to the event Miriam sang, "Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea" (Ex. 15:21).

Elements of the wonderful and the ordinary contributed to the greatest Old Testament events. The natural and supernatural combined to produce God's deliverance. The Exodus was both miraculous and historical. An air of mystery surrounds this event as all miraculous events. We are not told when the Exodus occurred. We do not know who or how many may have been involved. The record makes it clear that God delivered Israel from bondage because of His covenant with the patriarchs and because He desired to redeem His people (Ex. 6:2-8).

### ***The Date of the Exodus***

The Bible does not give an incontrovertible date for the Exodus. First Kings 6:1 says, "In the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." But this verse refers primarily to the beginning of the building of Solomon's Temple and only in a general way to the time of the Exodus. We do not know the precise dates of Solomon's reign. If we use 961 B.C. as the

beginning of Solomon's reign, his fourth year would be 957 B.C. If we take the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1 literally, the Exodus would be dated in 1437 B.C. Exodus 1:11 says, however, that the Israelites in Egypt built the store cities of Pithom and Raamses for Pharaoh. Evidently the name Raamses was not used in Egypt before 1300 B.C. If one of the store cities was named for a king by that name, the Exodus could not have happened before 1300 B.C. Thus some scholars believe the Exodus must have taken place after 1300 B.C.

Another difficulty in dating these events is that although the term "pharaoh" is used over a hundred times in the first fifteen chapters of Exodus to refer to the king of Egypt, the title is always anonymous. No personal name of any individual pharaoh is used. The text does not indicate the identity of the pharaoh of the oppression nor the one of the Exodus. Old Testament scholars have generally agreed that the Exodus occurred either during the eighteenth (1570-1310 B.C.) or nineteenth (1310-1200 B.C.) dynasties.

It has been the opinion of most scholars since the rise of modern Egyptology that the Exodus likely occurred during the reign of Ramses II in the nineteenth dynasty about 1270 B.C., although many Bible students attempt to date it in the earlier eighteenth dynasty about 1447 B.C. Several variations of these dates have been suggested, ranging all the way back to 2000 B.C. None of these attempts to redate the Exodus has gained widespread acceptance. Perhaps the best estimate of the date for the Exodus remains about 1270 B.C., but this is far from a proven fact.

We may not know the exact date, route, or exact number of people in the Exodus. But the significant thing is we know and believe that such an event happened and that we interpret it as a miraculous, saving act of God. The Exodus was the work of God. It was also a historical event involving a superpower nation and an oppressed people. God acted redemptively in power, freedom, and love. When the kingdom of God did not come, the later prophets began to look for a second Exodus. That expectation was fulfilled spiritually in Christ's redemptive act.

### **Conquest**

#### ***Joshua, Judges, Ruth***

The Book of Joshua and the first chapter of the book of Judges describe the conquest of Canaan, which resulted in Israel's settlement in the land of promise. The book of Ruth gives insight into the life of Israel during the days of the Judges, as well as vividly portraying the redemption of God through the lives of Boaz and Ruth.

### **Historical Setting**

The Israelite conquest came at a time when Egyptian control of Canaan was weakened. Historians have not been able to pinpoint the time when the conquest of Canaan occurred. The difficulty lies in the fact that the date of the Exodus is uncertain. Scholars have proposed quite a number of dates for this important event. The most commonly accepted period for the Exodus is around 1280 B.C. Such a date would place the conquest at about 1240-1190 B.C.

Other scholars prefer to date the Exodus around 1445 B.C., which would suggest that the conquest occurred about 1400-1350 B.C.

While it is not possible to be definitive about the date of the conquest, it is possible to draw some general conclusions regarding the situation of Canaan in the approximate time frame of the conquest. Shortly after 1500 B.C., Egypt subdued Canaan. Canaanite society operated according to a feudal system whereby the kings of city states paid tribute to their Egyptian overlords. The city states were numerous in the heavily-populated Palestinian coastal plain; the mountainous regions were lightly populated. From about 1400 B.C. onward, Egyptian control of Canaan weakened, opening the land up for possible invasion by an outside force.

### *Joshua's Strategy*

Joshua led a three-campaign invasion of Canaan. At the close of the wilderness wanderings the Israelites arrived on the plains of Moab in the Transjordan ("beyond the Jordan"). There they subdued two local kings, Sihon and Og (Num. 21:21-35). Some of the Israelite tribes-- Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh--chose to settle in this newly conquered territory (Num. 32).

After Moses died, Joshua became the new leader of the Israelites. As God instructed him, Joshua led the people across the Jordan River into Canaan. The crossing was made possible by a supernatural separation of the water of the Jordan (Josh. 3-4). After crossing the river the Israelites camped at Gilgal. From there Joshua led the first military campaign against the Canaanites in the sparsely-populated central highlands, northwest of the Dead Sea. The initial object of the attack was the ancient stronghold of Jericho. The Israelite force marched around the city once a day for six days. On the seventh day they marched around it seven times, then blasted trumpets and shouted. In response the walls of Jericho collapsed, allowing the invaders to destroy the city (Josh. 6). The Israelites then attempted to conquer the nearby city of Ai, where they met with their first defeat. The reason for the failure was that Achan, one of the Israelite soldiers, had kept some booty from the invasion of Jericho--an action which violated God's orders to destroy everything in the city. After Achan was executed, the Israelites were able to destroy Ai (Josh. 7-8).

Not all of the Canaanites tried to resist Israel's invasion. One group, the Gibeonites, avoided destruction by deceiving the Israelites into making a covenant of peace with them (Josh. 9). Alarmed by the defection of the Gibeonites to Israel, a group of southern Canaanite kings, led by Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem, formed a coalition against the invading force. The kings threatened to attack the Gibeonites, causing Joshua to come to the defense of his new allies. Because of supernatural intervention, the Israelites were able to defeat the coalition. Joshua then launched a southern campaign which resulted in the capture of numerous Canaanite cities (Josh. 10).

Joshua's third and last military campaign was in northern Canaan. In that region King Jabin of Hazor formed a coalition of neighboring kings to battle with the Israelites. Joshua made a surprise attack upon them at the waters of Merom, utterly defeating his foe (Josh. 11:1-15).

The invasion of Canaan met with phenomenal success; large portions of the land fell to the Israelites (Josh. 11:16-12:24). However, some areas still remained outside their control, such as

the heavily-populated land along the coast and several major Canaanite cities like Jerusalem (Josh. 13:1-5; 15:63; Judg. 1). The Israelites struggled for centuries to control these areas.

### ***Israelite Settlement***

The Israelite tribes slowly settled Canaan without completely removing the native population. Even though some sections of the land remained to be conquered, God instructed Joshua to apportion Canaan to the tribes which had not yet received territory (Josh. 13:7). Following the land allotments, Israel began to occupy its territory. Judges 1 describes the settlement as a slow process whereby individual tribes struggled to remove the Canaanites. In the final analysis the tribes had limited success in driving out the native population (Judg. 1). As a result, Israel was plagued for centuries by the infiltration of Canaanite elements into its religion (Judg. 2:1-5).

For a period of approximately two centuries, the Israelites were centrally joined as autonomous tribes around the ark of the covenant, a loose relationship centering in common worship commitments. Over them divinely designated Judges emerged, men like Gideon and Samson, and one woman, Deborah. Gradually, any sense of unity broke down until "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25).

### ***United Kingdom***

#### ***I, II Sam., I Kings, I, II Chronicles***

The period of the Judges presented problems for the Israelites, however, in that they could not assert centralized economic, political, or military strength in this disjointed condition. This situation, plus other factors such as the emergence of the Philistine threat, caused a clamoring for the establishment of kingship. Thus, about 1020, the Israelites moved politically into a monarchy. This was the golden age of Israel's history.

Saul (1020-1000) was Israel's first king, although he often acted more as a Judge. Like the Judges, he understood himself designated by God to rule because of having received the Spirit of God. He fought valiantly against the Philistines, dying ultimately in the struggle. More importantly, he helped to pave the way for David, who fully lifted the nation into monarchical status.

David (1000-965) is credited with uniting the people, however tenuous that relationship (2 Sam. 5:4-5); and he lifted Israel to the full flower of monarchical establishment. Having united the north and the south, he established Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom, contained the Philistines, expanded Israel's borders and her trade, and established a monarchical line that ruled in uninterrupted fashion, save one exception (Athaliah, 842-837), until the fall of Judah to Babylonia in 587.

David's son and successor was Solomon (965-922). Solomon inherited all that David had amassed, but he was able neither to build upon nor to maintain David's kingdom. He did temporarily intensify trade, but he is remembered primarily for building the Temple in Jerusalem. Nonetheless, when Solomon died, his legacy was a division in the kingdom, so that, henceforth, we speak of Israel in the north and Judah in the south.

## *Divided Kingdom* *II Kings, II Chronicles*

The north was contextually tied into international politics more than was the south, in part because the primary east-west trade route traversed Israel at the Valley of Jezreel. Israel was both the larger country and the more populous area. Her involvement in the larger world of nations meant that Israel was destined to fall politically more quickly than Judah. Israel fell to Assyria in 721, while Judah was conquered by Babylonia initially in 597.

Israel emerged as a separate power under Jeroboam I (922-901 B.C.), the initial king over what became a rather turbulent nation. Nineteen kings ruled during the country's two centuries of existence, and coup attempts brought eight succession crises. Jeroboam is most remembered, however, for his establishment of rival shrines at Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12). These shrines were in the form of bull images and were constructed as a conscious attempt to compete with Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem.

During the ninth century the Omride dynasty was established in Israel, beginning with Omri (876-869) and concluding with Jehoram (849-842). Perhaps the central issue during this period resulted from the emergence of overt Baalism with the clarification that true worship of Jehovah could not coexist with Baalism, the worship surrounding the indigenous Canaanite god of fertility, Baal. This issue was addressed particularly during the reign of King Ahab (869-850) and under the auspices of the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 18-19). The worshiper of Jehovah could not worship both Jehovah and Baal.

Jehu (842-815) took up the struggle against Baalism. He successfully overthrew King Jehoram (ending the Omride dynasty) and instigated a violent anti-Baalistic purge in Israel. Not only did Jehoram of Israel die; so, too, did Queen Jezebel, many of the Baal worshipers, and King Ahaziah of Judah, who just happened to visit his kin in Israel during the year of his coronation!

This struggle against Baalism was a key factor in the emergence of Israel and Judah's prophetic movement during the second half of the eighth century. During an approximate fifty-year period, two primary prophets spoke in the south--Isaiah (742-701) and Micah (724-701)--while two prophets spoke in the north--Amos (about 750) and Hosea (about 745).

Amos emphasized especially social justice (Amos 5:24). He was particularly concerned that Israel recognize her covenantal responsibility before God (Amos 3:1-2). He was convinced that judgment was inevitable for Israel. (See especially the five visions recorded in Amos 7-9).

Hosea, the only northern prophet whose message is recorded in a book bearing his name, was Israel's eighth-century proponent of covenant theology. On the analogy of his relationship with his wife Gomer (Hos. 1-3), he exhorted Israel to be faithful to God. While assuring Israel of God's love, Hosea warned her of impending judgment resulting from her abuse of the covenant relationship.

The dangers the prophets saw materialized for Israel in the first quarter of the eighth century. King Hoshea (732-721) of Israel staged an anti-Assyrian revolt in anticipation of Egypt's coming to Israel's defense. Instead, the Assyrian troops under Shalmaneser V came to Israel and took the area around Samaria quickly. A siege of Samaria lasted for three years.

During the siege Shalmaneser V died. Sargon II assumed the Assyrian throne and felled Samaria in 721. As per Assyrian policy, large numbers of the people of Samaria were deported to an unknown area, while peoples from another conquered area were imported into Samaria (2 Kings 17). This policy was intended to break down nationalism and to prevent political uprisings. In Israel's case it ultimately precipitated the emergence of the hybrid people despised by the "pure" Jew. Later history designated these people as "Samaritans." The fall of Samaria in 721 marked the end of Israel as a part of the United Monarchy.

The death of Solomon in 922 marked the beginning of Judah as the separated Southern Kingdom also. Solomon left the throne in Judah to his son, Rehoboam (922-915). Rehoboam ruled over a more stable country than Israel in that a consistent line of Davidic rulers governed the country from 922 until 587, with the one exception noted. During the ninth century crisis in Israel precipitated by Jehu's revolt in 842, King Ahaziah (842) of Judah was killed. Ahaziah's death resulted in the usurpation of Judah's throne by the Queen Mother, Athaliah (842-837). Her five-year rule constituted the only non-Davidic break in the succession. More importantly, during this period a systematic attempt was made to establish Baalism also in Judah. The Southern Kingdom, in part because it housed the Jerusalem Temple and was thus the focus of Judah's worship, did not embrace Baalism in the fashion of the north. Thus, when priests placed the young King Jehoash (837-800) on the throne, progress made by Baalism in displacing true worship was rapidly reversed.

As indicated above, Judah shared in the flowering of the prophetic spirit in the eighth century. Isaiah of Jerusalem, who experienced his commission (see Isa. 6) to be God's prophet at the death of King Uzziah (742), was a prophetic spokesman during three political crises. During the rule of King Ahaz (735-715), he spoke in 735 at the time of the Syro-Israelite crisis (Isa. 7). During the rule of King Hezekiah (715-687), Isaiah was a spokesman during two political crises. In 711 he warned against an Egyptian-led revolt against Assyria (Isa. 20), and in 701 he was God's spokesman when Sennacherib of Assyria laid siege to Jerusalem (Isa. 36-37; see also 2 Kings 18-19). Isaiah is primarily remembered as the proponent of faith in the Lord God, letting God struggle against those who would oppress. This God of Isaiah was One who was best described by the concept of holiness (Isa. 6:3).

Micah of Moresheth (724-701) was the other eighth-century prophet in Judah. In many ways, Micah seemed to lack the original spirit of the other eighth century prophets. Micah 6:1-8, however, is an excellent description of a courtroom scene where God's people are brought to trial for their constant rejection and transgression of the covenant. The climax to that passage, verse 8, is perhaps the best definition of eighth century prophetic religion available to the modern interpreter.

Israel having fallen in the eighth century, Judah continued into the seventh and early sixth centuries. The seventh century was both dismal and exalted. In the lengthy rule of Manasseh (687-642), Judah jettisoned much of the concern for exclusive worship of Jehovah God. Prophets were persecuted; Baalism was encouraged; activities associated with the Assyrian astrological rites were incorporated; and the practice of human sacrifice was revived. This was, indeed, a dark period in Judah's history.

Very soon after Manasseh, however, King Josiah (640-609) reversed the decline Manasseh had set in motion. Under Josiah, and at least as early as 621, the Deuteronomic Reformation

was instituted. This reform movement had a dual focus. On the one hand, Josiah sought to take advantage of the weakened conditions of both the Mesopotamian and Egyptian powers to unite anew the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. This political aspiration was coupled with a religious fervor for combating Baalism. Even the mandate that all sacrificial worship take place in the Jerusalem Temple was partially motivated by his desire to prevent the use of Baalistic "high places" and to keep all sacrificial activity where it could be carefully monitored to prevent Baalistic assimilation. This reform had long-range repercussions on the development of Judaism, but the primary impetus for the reform was removed with Josiah's death in 609 as he fought against Pharaoh Necho of Egypt at Megiddo (2 Kings 23:29).

Following Josiah's death, the nation no longer had the leadership to sustain an effective reformation. Jehoiakim (609-598) waged a revolt against the nation's Babylonian overlordship. Before Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon arrived, however, Jehoiakim died, bringing his son Jehoiachin (598-597) to the throne. Thus, Jehoiachin was taken into Exile in 597 when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem. In his place Nebuchadnezzar placed Zedekiah (597-587). His revolt against Babylon in 588 led to the ultimate fall of Jerusalem, including the razing of the Jerusalem Temple by Nebuchadnezzar in 587. Thus the kingdom of Judah was ended, and the Babylonian Exile (597/587-539/538) initiated.

### ***Captivity Daniel, Ezekiel, etc.***

### ***History of the Exile of Judah***

More than a hundred years before the Babylon Exile, Isaiah, the prophet, had predicted Judah's fall (Isa. 6:11, 12; 8:14; 10:11). In addition, the prophets Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Ezekiel agreed that Judah would fall.

Assyria's last king, Ashurbanipal, died in 630 B.C. His death marked the end of Assyrian dominance of Judah. Both Judah and Egypt sought to take advantage of Assyria's diminishing power. Judah's hopes were dashed when King Josiah (640-609) was killed at the battle of Megiddo (2 Kings 23:29). King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon dashed Egypt's hopes when he defeated the Egyptians at the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. Jehoahaz, one of Josiah's sons, ruled Judah for three months in 609 B.C. before he was deported to Egypt where he died (2 Kings 23:31-34; 2 Chron. 36:4-8).

After defeating the Egyptians, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem, the capital city of Judah, in 598 B.C. Jehoiakim, a second son of Josiah, served as king of Judah for eleven years (609-597 B.C.) before Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city of Jerusalem (2 Kings 23:34-24:6; 2 Chron. 36:4-8). Jehoiakim died in the battle at Jerusalem. His son, Jehoiachin, reigned for three months before he was exiled to Babylon (2 Kings 24:6-16; 2 Chron. 36:9-10; Esther 2:6; Jer. 22:24-30).

Nebuchadnezzar appointed Zedekiah, a third son of Josiah to rule the vassal state of Judah for eleven years (597-586 B.C.) until the fall of Jerusalem when he was blinded and taken into Exile into Babylon (2 Kings 24:17-25:7; 2 Chron. 36:10-21; Jer. 39:1-7; 52:1-11; Ezek. 12:12-13; 17:5-21).

There were three deportations of Jews to Babylon. The first occurred in 598 B.C. (2 Kings 24:12-16). The second deportation took place in 587 B.C. (2 Kings 25:8-21; Jer. 39:8-10; 40:7; 52:12-34). After the second deportation, Gedaliah was appointed governor of Judah by the Babylonians but was assassinated (2 Kings 24:25). A third deportation, a punishment for Gedaliah's assassination, occurred in 582 B.C. (Jer. 52:30).

## ***Babylon***

The center of Jewish life shifted to Babylon under such leaders as Ezekiel. Babylon even recognized the royal family of Judah as seen in 2 Kings 25:27 and in recovered Babylonian records. Exiled Jews based their calendar on the exile of King Jehoiachin in 597 (Ezek. 1:2; 33:21; 40:1). Jehoiachin's grandson, Zerubbabel, led the first exiles back from Babylon in 538 (Ezra 2:2; Hag. 1:1). Most of the exiles in Babylon probably followed normal Near Eastern practice and became farmers on land owned by the government. Babylonian documents show that eventually some Jews became successful merchants in Babylon. Apparently religious leaders like Ezekiel were able to lead religious meetings (Ezek. 8:1; compare Ezra 8:15-23). Correspondence continued between those in Judah and those in Exile (Jer. 29), and Jewish elders gave leadership to the exiles (Jer. 29:1; Ezek. 8:1; 14:1; 20:1). First Chronicles 1-9, Ezra, and Nehemiah show that genealogies and family records became very important points of identity for the exiles. People were economically self-sufficient, some even owning slaves (Ezra 2:65) and having resources to fund the return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:6; 2:69). Still, many longed for Jerusalem and would not sing the Lord's song in Babylon (Ps. 137). They joined prophets like Ezekiel in looking for a rebuilt Temple and a restored Jewish people. They laughed at Babylonian gods as sticks of wood left over from the fire (Isa. 44:9-17; 45:9-10; 46:1-2,6-7; Jer. 1:16; Ezek. 20:29-32). A Babylonian Jewish community was thus established and would exercise strong influence long after Cyrus of Persia permitted Jews to return to Judah. These Jews established their own worship, collected Scriptures, and began interpreting them in the Aramaic paraphrase and explanations which eventually became the Babylonian Talmud, but continued to support Jews in Jerusalem.

## ***RESTORATION***

***Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther***

## ***POST-EXILIC Period***

The time in Israel's history between the return from Exile in Babylon in 538 B.C. and the Roman occupation in 63 B.C. During this period the Jews returned to Jerusalem and Palestine to rebuild what the Assyrians and Babylonians had destroyed.

The Bible story and message is like a great mosaic; each great fact has an important place, and we cannot understand the chapters and verses without a good general knowledge of the Bible as a whole. Therefore, read the notes of this lesson along with the assigned passages of Scripture to keep the lessons and divisions of Old Testament life and history in clear view.

In the Old Testament God is teaching the people their letters (alphabet). In the New Testament He is teaching them to put these letters of the alphabet together and arrange them as we will, they spell "CHRIST" and nothing but the need of the world, which is "CHRIST"!

## GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

### **Questions - Old Testament Period** **Lesson 1**

1. Give the key phrase and the key verse.
2. Show that the Old Testament is declared to be the Word Of God by listing five (5) verses which state "God spake", etc.
3. How many books and writers are there in the Old Testament?
4. Of what is the Old Testament a record?
5. How many books comprise the Old Testament?
6. Explain how one book seems to demand another.
7. Name the nine periods of the Old Testament.
8. List and explain three major events in the Creation period.
9. Name the three sons of Noah.
10. List the Patriarchs, include the twelve sons of Jacob.
11. Write, in your own words, a brief account of the Exodus (1 page).
12. Who led the Conquest of Canaan?
13. Name the three kings of the United Kingdom of Israel.
14. What event led to the division of the kingdom into two nations?
15. Name the tribes of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.
16. How long was the Babylonian Captivity?
17. What Old Testament leader helped in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem?
18. The prophets of the restoration period (post-exilic) were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi - How many chapters does each book contain?
19. What do the "letters" of the Old Testament and New Testament "spell"?
20. Did you read the portions of Scripture that were assigned?

## GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

### ***Lesson Study 2***

#### **Memory Verses**

Daniel 9:15-19

#### **Key Phrase**

"A People Suffering Because of Broken Covenants"

#### **Key Verse**

Daniel 9:16

#### **Key Word**

"Conflict"

This lesson covers the period known as the "The Silent Years", "Inter-Testament Period", "From Malachi to Matthew", "History Between the Testaments", "Intertestamental History", etc. This lesson focuses on this important time in Israel's history of which Daniel prophesied.

#### ***Bible Readings:***

- Cruel World Powers - Daniel 7:15-22
- Persia(Ram), Greece(Rough Goat) - Daniel 8:1-8
- Vision Interpreted - Daniel 8:15-22
- Antiochus Epiphanes - Daniel 8:23-27
- Daniel Prays - Daniel 9:3-9
- Four Persian Kings, then Alexander the Great - Daniel 11:1-5
- Antiochus Epiphanes Turns on the Jews - Daniel 11:21-32

#### ***INTERTESTAMENTAL HISTORY & LITERATURE***

Events and writings originating after the final prophet mentioned in the Old Testament (Malachi, about 450 B.C.) and before the birth of Christ (about 4 B.C.).

Shortly after 600 B.C., the Babylonians captured Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and took away many of the people as captives. After Cyrus overcame the Babylonian Empire, the Jews who desired were allowed to return. The Temple was rebuilt. Under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra, the Jewish religious community established itself, and the worship and life of the people continued. Here Old Testament history ends, and the Intertestamental Period begins.

The history of the Intertestamental Period can be divided into three sections: The Greek Period, 323 B.C. to 167 B.C.; the Period of Independence, 167-63 B.C.; and the Roman Period, 63 B.C. through the time of the New Testament.

#### ***The Greek Period, 323-167 B.C.***

Philip of Macedon sought to consolidate Greece so as to resist attack by the Persian Empire. When he was murdered in 336 B.C., his young son Alexander took up the task. He was only nineteen years of age, but he was highly gifted and educated. Within two years he set out to

destroy Persia. In a series of battles over the next two years he gained control of the territory from Asia Minor to Egypt. This included Palestine and the Jews. Josephus, a Jewish historian who lived about A.D. 37-100, tells of Alexander going to Jerusalem and offering sacrifice in the Temple. Many elements of this story are undoubtedly false, but Alexander did treat the Jews well. When he founded the new city of Alexandria in Egypt, he moved many Jews from Palestine to populate one part of that city. In 331 B.C., Alexander gained full control over the Persian Empire.

Alexander's conquest had three major results. First, he sought to introduce Greek ideas and culture into the conquered territory. This is called Hellenization. He believed that the way to consolidate his empire was for the people to have a common way of life. However, he did not seek to change the religious practices of the Jews. Second, he founded Greek cities and colonies throughout the conquered territory. Third, he spread the Greek language into all of that region so that it became a universal language during the following centuries. When Alexander died in 323 B.C., chaos resulted in his empire. Five of his prominent generals established themselves over different parts of his empire. Ptolemy chose the land of Egypt. Seleucus took control of Babylonia. Antigonus became ruler of Asia Minor and northern Syria. The other two ruled in Europe and did not have direct influence over events in Palestine.

From the beginning, Ptolemy and Antigonus struggled over the control of Palestine. The battle of Ipsus in 301 B.C. settled the matter for a century. In this battle, the other four generals fought against and killed Antigonus. Seleucus was given the territory of Antigonus, including Palestine. However, Ptolemy did not take part in the battle. Instead he took over control of Palestine. The result was that Palestine continued to be a point of contention between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids.

The Jews fared well under the Ptolemies. They had much self-rule. Their religious practices were not hampered. Greek customs gradually became more common among the people.

Antiochus III (the Great), 223-187 B.C., attempted to take Palestine from the Ptolemies in 217 B.C. without success. At the battle of Panium, 198 B.C., however, he defeated Ptolemy IV, and he and his successors ruled Palestine until 167 B.C. The situation of the Jews changed after Antiochus was defeated by the Romans in the battle of Magnesia, 190 B.C. Antiochus had supported Hannibal of North Africa, Rome's hated enemy. As a result, Antiochus had to give up all of his territory except the province of Cilicia. He had to pay a large sum of money to the Romans for a period of years, and he had to surrender his navy and elephants. To guarantee his compliance, one of his sons was kept as hostage in Rome. So the tax burden of the Jews increased, as did pressure to Hellenize, that is, to adopt Greek practices.

Antiochus was succeeded by his son Seleucus IV, 187-175 B.C. When he was murdered, his younger brother became ruler. Antiochus IV, 175-163 B.C., was called Epiphanes ("manifest" or "splendid"), although some called him Epimenes ("mad"). He was the son who had been a hostage in Rome. During the early years of his reign, the situation of the Jews became worse. Part of it was due to their being divided. Some of their leaders, especially the priests, encouraged Hellenism.

Up to the time of Antiochus IV, the office of high priest had been hereditary and held for life. However, Jason, the brother of the high priest, offered the king a large sum of money to be

appointed high priest. Antiochus needed the money and made the appointment. Jason also offered an additional sum to receive permission to build a gymnasium near the Temple. This shows the pressure toward Hellenism. Within a few years, Menelaus, a priest but not of the high priestly line, offered the king more money to be named high priest in place of Jason. He stole vessels from the Temple to pay what he had promised.

Antiochus sought to add Egypt to his territory. He was proclaimed king of Egypt; but when he returned the following year to take control of the land, the Romans confronted him, and told him to leave Egypt. Knowing the power of Rome, he returned home. When he reached Jerusalem, he found that Jason had driven Menelaus out of the city. He saw this as full revolt. He allowed his troops to kill many of the Jews and determined to put an end to the Jewish religion. He sacrificed a pig on the altar of the Temple. Parents were forbidden to circumcise their children, the Sabbath was not to be observed, and all copies of the law were to be burned. It was a capital offense to be found with a copy of the law. The zeal of Antiochus to destroy Judaism was a major factor in its salvation.

### ***Jewish Independence, 167-63 B.C.***

Resistance was passive at first; but when the Seleucids sent officers throughout the land to compel leading citizens to offer sacrifice to Zeus, open conflict flared. It broke out first at the village of Modein, about halfway between Jerusalem and Joppa. An aged priest named Mattathias was chosen to offer the sacrifice. He refused, but a young Jew volunteered to do it. This angered Mattathias, and he killed both the Jew and the officer. Then he fled to the hills with his five sons and others who supported his action. The revolt had begun.

Leadership fell to Judas, the third son of Mattathias. He was nicknamed Maccabeus, the hammerer. He probably received this title because of his success in battle. He was the ideal guerrilla leader. He fought successful battles against much larger forces. A group called the Hasidim made up the major part of his army. These men were devoutly committed to religious freedom. They were dedicated to obedience to the law and to the worship of God.

Antiochus IV was more concerned with affairs in the eastern part of his empire than with what was taking place in Palestine. Therefore, he did not commit many troops to the revolt at first. Judas was able to gain control of Jerusalem within three years. The Temple was cleansed and rededicated exactly three years after it had been polluted by the king, 164 B.C. (Dates through this period are uncertain and may be a year earlier than indicated.) This is still commemorated by the Jewish feast of Hanukkah. The Hasidim had gained what they were seeking and left the army. Judas had larger goals in mind. He wanted political freedom. He rescued mistreated Jews from Galilee and Gilead and made a treaty of friendship and mutual support with Rome. In 160 B.C. at Elasa, with a force of eight hundred men, he fought a vastly superior Seleucid army and was killed.

Jonathan, another son of Mattathias, took the lead in the quest for independence. He was weak militarily. He was driven out of the cities and only gradually established himself in the countryside. Constant struggle engaged those seeking the Seleucid throne. The rivals offered him gifts to gain his support. In 152 B.C. he gave his support to Alexander Balas, who claimed to be the son of Antiochus IV. In return Jonathan was appointed high priest. For the first time,

Jewish religious and civil rule were centered in one person. Jonathan was taken prisoner and killed in 143 B.C.

Simon, the last surviving son of Mattathias, ruled until he was murdered by his son-in-law in 134 B.C. He secured freedom from taxation for the Jews by 141 B.C. At last they had achieved political freedom. Simon was acclaimed by the people as their leader and high priest forever. The high priesthood was made hereditary with him and his descendants. The Hasmonean dynasty, named after an ancestor of Mattathias, had its beginning.

When Simon was murdered, his son John Hyrcanus became the high priest and civil ruler (134-104 B.C.). For a brief time the Seleucids exercised some power over the Jews, but Hyrcanus broke free and began to expand the territory of the Jews. In the north he destroyed the temple of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim. He moved southeast and conquered the land of the Idumeans, the ancient kingdom of Edom. The residents were forced to emigrate or convert to Judaism. This had great significance for the Jews, for it was from this people that Herod the Great was to come.

The oldest son of Hyrcanus, Aristobulus I (104-103 B.C.), succeeded him. He had his mother and three brothers put in prison. One brother was allowed to remain free, but he was later murdered. He allowed his mother to starve to death in prison. He extended his rule to include part of the territory of Iturea, north of Galilee. He was the first to take the title of king.

Salome Alexandra was the wife of Aristobulus. When he died, she released his brothers from prison and married the oldest of them, Alexander Jannaeus. He became high priest and king (103-76 B.C.). He made many enemies by marrying the widow of his brother. The Old Testament stated that a high priest must marry a virgin (Lev. 21:14). He was an ambitious warrior and conducted campaigns by which he enlarged his kingdom to about the size of the kingdom of David. He used foreign soldiers because he could not trust Jews in his army. As high priest, he did not always follow prescribed ritual. On one occasion, the people reacted to his improper actions by throwing citrons at him. He allowed his soldiers to kill six thousand of them. At another time he had eight hundred of his enemies crucified. As they hung on the crosses, he had their wives and children brought out and slain before their eyes.

Alexandra succeeded her husband as ruler (76-67 B.C.). Of course, she could not serve as high priest, so the two functions were separated. Her oldest son, Hyrcanus II, became high priest. He was not ambitious. Her younger son, Aristobulus II, was just the opposite. He was waiting for his mother to die so he could become king and high priest.

When Salome died, civil war broke out and lasted until 63 B.C. Aristobulus easily defeated Hyrcanus, who was content to retire. This might have been the end of the story were it not for Antipater, an Idumean. He persuaded Hyrcanus to seek the help of the king of Nabatea to regain his position. Aristobulus was driven back to Jerusalem. At this point Rome arrived on the scene. Both Aristobulus and Hyrcanus appealed to Scourus, the Roman general charged with the administration of Palestine. He sided with Aristobulus. When the Roman commander Pompey arrived later, both appealed to him. Aristobulus ended up trying to fight against the Romans. He was defeated and taken as a prisoner to Rome. The Romans took control over Palestine.

### ***The Roman Period, 63 B.C.-A.D. 70***

Under the Romans, the Jews paid heavy taxes; but their religious practices were not changed. Roman power was exercised through Antipater, who was named governor of Palestine. Hyrcanus was made high priest. The situation in Palestine was confused due to the efforts of Aristobulus and his sons to lead revolts against Rome. While Palestine was successively under the control of various Roman officials, Antipater was the stabilizing force. He had one son, Phasaël, named governor of Judea, and a second son, Herod, made governor of Galilee. Herod sought to bring order to his area. He arrested Hezekiah, a Jewish robber or rebel, and had him executed. The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem summoned Herod to give an account of his action. He went, dressed in royal purple and with a bodyguard. The Sanhedrin could do nothing.

Antipater was murdered in 43 B.C. Antony became the Roman commander in the East in 42 B.C. In 40 B.C. the Parthians invaded Palestine and made Antigonus, the last surviving son of Aristobulus, king of Palestine. Hyrcanus was mutilated by having his ears cut or bitten off so he could not serve as high priest again. Phasaël was captured and committed suicide in prison. Herod barely escaped with his family. He went to Rome to have his future brother-in-law, Aristobulus, made king, hoping to rule through him as his father had ruled through Antipater. However, the Roman Senate, at the urging of Antony and Octavian (Augustus), made Herod king (40 B.C.). It took him three years to drive the Parthians out of the country and establish his rule. He was king until his death in 4 B.C.

The years of Herod's rule were a time of turmoil for the Jewish people. He was an Idumean. Of course, his ancestors had been forced to convert to Judaism, but the people never accepted him. He was the representative of a foreign power. No matter how well he served Rome, he could never satisfy the Jews. Even his marriage to Mariamne, the granddaughter of Aristobulus II, gave no legitimacy to his rule in their sight. The most spectacular of his building achievements, the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple, did not win the loyalty of the Jews.

Herod had many problems which grew out of his jealousy and fears. He had Aristobulus, his brother-in-law, executed. Later Mariamne, her mother, and her two sons were killed. Just five days before his own death, Herod had his oldest son Antipater put to death. His relations with Rome were sometimes troubled due to the unsettled conditions in the empire. Herod was a strong supporter of Antony even though he could not tolerate Cleopatra with whom Antony had become enamored. When Antony was defeated by Octavian in 31 B.C., Herod went to Octavian and pledged his full support. This support was accepted. Herod proved himself an efficient administrator on behalf of Rome. He kept the peace among a people who were hard to rule. To be sure, he was a cruel and merciless man. Yet he was generous, using his own funds to feed the people during a time of famine. He never got over the execution of Mariamne, the wife he loved above all others. His grief led to mental and emotional problems.

During the reign of Herod, Jesus was born (Matt. 2:1-18; Luke 1:5). Herod was the king who ordered the execution of the male babies in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16-18).

At his death, Herod left a will leaving his kingdom to three of his sons. Antipas was to be tetrarch ("ruler of a fourth") of Galilee and Perea (4 B.C.--A.D. 39). Philip was to be tetrarch of Gentile regions to the northeast of the Sea of Galilee (4 B.C.--A.D. 34). Archelaus was to be king of Judea and Samaria. Rome honored the will except that Archelaus was not given the title of king. He was ethnarch ("ruler of the people") of these two territories. He proved to be a poor

ruler and was deposed in A.D. 6. His territories were placed under the direct rule of Roman procurators under the control of the governor of Syria.

### **Literature**

The Jews produced many writings during the Intertestamental Period. These writings can be divided into three groups.

*The Apocrypha* meaning "things that are hidden," is applied to a collection of fifteen books written between about 200 B.C. and A.D. 100. These are not a part of the Old Testament but are valued by some for private study. The word "apocrypha" is not found in the Bible. Some are historical books. First Maccabees is our chief source for the history of the period from Antiochus Epiphanes to John Hyrcanus. Other books are Wisdom Literature. Others are historical romances. One is apocalyptic, giving attention to the end of time and God's intervention in history. One writing is devotional in nature. These writings are not a part of the canon of Holy Scripture and are, therefore, not inerrant as is the Word of God.

*A second group of writings is known as the Pseudepigrapha.* It is a larger collection than the Apocrypha, but there is no final agreement as to which writings should be included in it. Fifty-two writings are included in the two volumes, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James H. Charlesworth. These cover the range of Jewish thought from apocalyptic to wisdom to devotional. Their title indicates that they are attributed to noted people of ancient times, such as Adam, Abraham, Enoch, Ezra, and Baruch. For the most part they were written in the last centuries before the birth of Jesus, although some of them are from the first century A.D.

*The final group of writings from this period are the Qumran scrolls, popularly known as the Dead Sea Scrolls.* The first knowledge of these came with the discovery of manuscripts in a cave above the Dead Sea in 1947. During subsequent years, fragments of manuscripts have been found in at least eleven caves in the area. These writings include Old Testament manuscripts, writings of the Qumran sect, and writings copied and used by the sect which came from other sources. These writings show us something of the life and beliefs of one group of Jews in the last two centuries before Jesus.

## GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

### Questions - Lesson 2 Intertestamental Period and Literature

Fill in the blanks:

1. Events and writings originating after the final prophet mentioned in the Old Testament (\_\_\_\_\_, about 450 B.C.) and before \_\_\_\_\_ (about 4 B.C.).
2. The history of the Intertestamental Period can be divided into three sections: \_\_\_\_\_, 323 B.C. to 167 B.C.; the Period of \_\_\_\_\_, 167-63 B.C.; and the \_\_\_\_\_ Period, 63 B.C. through the time of the New Testament.
3. Key Phrase " \_\_\_\_\_ "
4. Key Verse " \_\_\_\_\_ "
5. Key Word " \_\_\_\_\_ "
6. Philip of Macedon sought to consolidate Greece so as to resist attack by the Persian Empire. When he was murdered in 336 B.C., his young son \_\_\_\_\_ took up the task.
7. Antiochus IV, 175-163 B.C., was called \_\_\_\_\_ ("manifest" or "splendid"), although some called him \_\_\_\_\_ ("mad").
8. Antiochus sought to add \_\_\_\_\_ to his territory. He was proclaimed king of \_\_\_\_\_; but when he returned the following year to take control of the land, the Romans confronted him, and told him to leave Egypt. Knowing the power of Rome, he returned home. When he reached \_\_\_\_\_, he found that Jason had driven Menelaus out of the city. He saw this as full revolt. He allowed his troops to kill many of the Jews and determined to put an end to the Jewish religion. He sacrificed a \_\_\_\_\_ on the altar of the Temple. Parents were forbidden to \_\_\_\_\_ their children, the \_\_\_\_\_ was not to be observed, and all copies of the law were to be burned. It was a capital offense to be found with a copy of the \_\_\_\_\_. The zeal of Antiochus to destroy \_\_\_\_\_ was a major factor in its salvation.
9. Leadership fell to Judas, the third son of Mattathias. He was nicknamed \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_. He probably received this title because of his success in battle
10. What does the Jewish feast of Hanukkah commemorate?

11. During the reign of \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus was born (Matt. 2:1-18; Luke 1:5). Herod was the king who ordered the execution of the male babies in \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 2:16-18).
12. The Jews produced many writings during the Intertestamental Period. These writings can be divided into three groups. Name them.

## GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

### Lesson 3 - The Four Gospels

**Memory Verse**                      Luke 2:41-52

**Key Phrase** - "A Four-Fold Picture of Christ"

**Key Verse**                      John 20:31

**Key Word**                      "Christ"

#### **Bible Readings:**

Jesus Christ, the Child	Luke 2:41-52
Jesus Christ, the Master	Matt. 4:18-25
Jesus Christ, the Prophet	Matt. 21:1-11
Jesus Christ, the Priest	John 17:7-21
Jesus Christ, the Sin-Bearer	Matt. 27:27-34
Jesus Christ, the Lord over Death	Mark 16:1-8
Jesus Christ, the Divine One	John 1:1-14

The four Gospels present a total and complete picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without all of the Gospels we have an incomplete photograph or portrait. Each writer present the Lord Jesus in a different light and from a different perspective. Notice the following outline that indicates this:

- Matthew                      Presents Christ as Sovereign King of the Jews
- Mark                              Presents Christ as the Servant of Jehovah
- Luke                              Present Christ as the Son of Man
- John                              Presents Christ as the Son of God

Our Lord is all of these and more. Yet without the full picture much would be missed.

The Gospels present the history of the life of Christ on earth. They tell of His genealogy, birth, boyhood, ministry, betrayal, crucifixion, death, resurrection, and ascension.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the Synoptic Gospels. They are called this because they present the same general view of the life of Christ. John's Gospel is known as the Autoptic Gospel

Each of the Gospels was written by the man whose name they bear. They were probably written in a different order than they occur in Scripture. Mark may have been the first one written, yet Matthew could have been first. We do not know for certain. It does not really matter as God put them in the order He wanted.

The Old Testament assured the Jews that a Messiah was coming that would be their King. This King of the Jews was portrayed in the book of Matthew so completely that even the simplest mind can understand.

**Matthew** proves that Jesus was indeed this "King of the Jews". Note the following reasons:

- While Luke traces the descent of Christ from Adam to link Him up with man, Matthew traces Him back only to David and Abraham to show His royal descent.
- Only Matthew records the visit of the Wise Men to see the Christ-child that they called "King of the Jews". They further offered to Him royal gifts thus identifying Him as king.
- The Sermon on the Mount is given fully in Matthew as the King unfolds the government of His future kingdom and reign.
- "The Kingdom of Heaven" is mentioned as a key phrase in Matthew. It occurs 32 times here and nowhere else in the New Testament. It means the rule of the Heavens over the earth, through the presence of the King.
- When Christ is crucified, the inscription over the cross is noted as "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS"
- The key verse of Matthew is Matthew 2:2.

**Mark's Gospel** shows Jesus as the "Servant of Jehovah". Mark pictures His lowliness and humility as the ultimate Servant.

- No line of descent is given in Mark as no one needs to know the family tree of a servant, but they do in the case of a King.
- He is never called Lord in Mark until after the Resurrection.
- The four parables of Mark are parables of service.
- The key word is "straightway", the word of a servant.
- The key verse of the book is Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

**Luke's Gospel** traces the lineage of Christ back to Adam, the father of the human race. This connects Jesus to all humanity, all races, creeds, etc. and not just for the Jews.

- Luke portrays Christ as the Son of Man.
- The key verse is found in chapter 19, verse 10, " For the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost."
- Luke offers a unique insight into the events leading up to the birth of Christ.

**The Gospel of John** present Jesus as the Son of God.

- Christ's line of descent is traced to God.
- Christ is God in the flesh.
- The Eternal Word is the Lord Jesus Christ and He became flesh and dwelt among us.
- The key verse of the book is John 1:1.

## GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

### *Lesson 3 - Questions*

1. Give the key phrase and verse of this lesson.
2. Please list the four Gospels.
3. Give the names of the pictures of Christ as they are presented in the four Gospels, respectively.
4. What is the key verse of Matthew's Gospel?
5. What is the key verse of Mark's Gospel?
6. What is the key verse of Luke's Gospel?
7. What is the key verse of John's Gospel?
8. Give at least two reasons why Matthew is considered to be the Gospel of the King.
9. Give at least two reasons why Mark is considered to be the Gospel of the Servant.
10. Give at least two reasons why Luke is considered to be the Gospel of the Son of Man.
11. Give at least two reasons why John is considered to be the Gospel of the Son of God.
12. What phrase occurs only in the Gospel of Matthew?
13. What are the only two Gospels which trace the genealogy of Christ and record His birth?
14. Which Gospel records the visit of the Wise Men?
15. Who wrote each of the four Gospels?
16. Have you read the Bible reading assignments?



Paul's Conversion

The Conversion of Cornelius

**48 - 68 A.D.**

The Church at Antioch

The First Missionary Journey - Paul &  
Barnabas

The Second Missionary Journey -  
Paul & Silas

The Third Missionary Journey - Paul  
& Timothy

Paul's Closing Ministry

**30 - 100 A.D.**

The Other Apostles

## GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

### ***Lesson 4 - New Testament History - Questions***

1. Give the Key phrase of this lesson.
2. Give the Key verses of this lesson.
3. List the names of the Twelve Original Apostles as they are found in Matthew 10.
4. Which disciple betrayed our Lord?
5. Which man was chosen in Acts 1 to take the place of the betrayer?
6. List 10 events during the ministry of Jesus, such as "The Healing of the Lepers"
7. Where was Peter used so mightily for God in the book of Acts - (name two occasions)?
8. Who did Paul take with him on his Second Missionary Journey?
9. List the writings of the Apostle Paul (14 books counting Hebrews).
10. What great Christian became the first Christian martyr?
11. List the first Deacons and their proposed duties.
12. Where was Paul saved - on what road?
13. What name did Paul use at that time?
14. In what church was Paul an outstanding member?
15. In what church was Peter an outstanding member?
16. Who were the people killed in church services by God in the book of Acts?
17. Write the last words we have from Paul that are recorded in the Bible.
18. What warning did John, the Apostle give at the end of the book of Revelation?
19. Can you finish the final prayer of the Scriptures, "Even.....\_\_\_\_\_"
20. Have you read the Bible readings?

# GENERAL BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

## ***Final Exam***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Write, in your own words, what you believe II Timothy 2:15 really means.** Explain each phrase or clause in the verse. You may break the verse down word for word if you prefer.

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### **List the Twelve Sons of Jacob:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

### **List the Twelve Apostles:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_

**BIBLE BOOKS** - There are \_\_\_\_ books that comprise the Old Testament. These were written by about 40 different authors over a period of about 1,500 years. The major divisions of the Old Testament are:

Gen. - Deut.	Books of the _____(5)
Joshua - Esther	Books of _____(12)
Job - Song of Sol.	Books of _____(5)
Isa. - Daniel	_____ Prophets(5)
Hosea - Malachi	_____ Prophets(12)

1. Name the nine periods of the Old Testament.
2. List and explain three major events in the Creation period.
3. Name the three sons of Noah.
4. Name the three kings of the United Kingdom of Israel.
5. What event led to the division of the kingdom into two nations?
6. Name the tribes of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.
7. How long was the Babylonian Captivity?
8. What Old Testament leader helped in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem?
9. Philip of Macedon sought to consolidate Greece so as to resist attack by the Persian Empire. When he was murdered in 336 B.C., his young son \_\_\_\_\_ took up the task.
10. During this period the translation of the Old Testament into Greek began during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, 285-246 B.C. This translation is known as the \_\_\_\_\_, a word meaning "seventy", because \_\_\_\_\_ elders were sent from Jerusalem to Alexandria to do the translating, it is often abbreviated \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Antiochus IV, 175-163 B.C., was called \_\_\_\_\_ ("manifest" or "splendid"), although some called him \_\_\_\_\_ ("mad").
12. Antiochus sought to add \_\_\_\_\_ to his territory. He was proclaimed king of \_\_\_\_\_; but when he returned the following year to take control of the land, the Romans confronted him, and told him to leave Egypt. Knowing the power of Rome, he returned home. When he reached \_\_\_\_\_, he found that Jason had driven Menelaus out of the city. He saw this as full revolt. He allowed his troops to kill many of the Jews and determined to put an end to the Jewish religion. He sacrificed a \_\_\_\_\_ on the altar of the Temple. Parents were forbidden to \_\_\_\_\_ their children, the \_\_\_\_\_ was not to be observed, and all copies of the law were to be burned. It was a capital offense

to be found with a copy of the \_\_\_\_\_. The zeal of Antiochus to destroy \_\_\_\_\_ was a major factor in its salvation.

13. Leadership fell to Judas, the third son of Mattathias. He was nicknamed \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_. He probably received this title because of his success in battle
14. What does the Jewish feast of Hanukkah commemorate?
15. During the reign of \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus was born (Matt. 2:1-18; Luke 1:5). Herod was the king who ordered the execution of the male babies in \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 2:16-18).
16. The Jews produced many writings during the Intertestamental Period. These writings can be divided into three groups. Name them.
17. Please list the four Gospels.
18. Give the names of the pictures of Christ as they are presented in the four Gospels, respectively.
19. Give at least two reasons why Matthew is considered to be the Gospel of the King.
20. Give at least two reasons why Mark is considered to be the Gospel of the Servant.
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33. Who were the people killed in church services by God in the book of Acts?

34. What warning did John, the Apostle give at the end of the book of Revelation?

35. Can you finish the final prayer of the Scriptures, "Even.....\_\_\_\_\_"

36. Have you read the Bible readings?