

# Old Testament Survey

## Lesson 3

### Overview of the Books of History, part 1 (Joshua through 1 Kings)

- There are 12 historical books found in the Old Testament, which cover a broad span of time: from the beginning of the conquest of Canaan led by Joshua (1405 BC) to the 3<sup>rd</sup> return from captivity under the leadership of Nehemiah (444-420 BC).
- **Joshua**
  - Covers the period from Moses' death and the beginning of the conquest of Canaan (1405 BC) to the conquering the death of Joshua (1390 BC).
  - Joshua's name means ("Yahweh is salvation"), which is the Hebrew equivalent to the Greek name "Jesus". Joshua takes the mantle of leadership after the death of Moses and leads the people in battle in the land of Canaan.
  - The book is divided into 2 sections: the conquest of Canaan (ch. 1-12) and the settlement in Canaan and the assignment of land to each tribe (ch. 13-24).
  - Some notable events / people in Joshua are:
    - Rahab the harlot who hid the Israelite spies. She is saved from the destruction of Jericho, and ends up becoming an ancestor of Jesus (Josh. 2; Matt. 1:5)
    - The walls of Jericho falling down and Jericho being taken (Josh. 6).
  - The "land" promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:13-21) was fulfilled (Josh. 21:43-45).
- **Judges**
  - The book of Judges covers from the death of Joshua (1390 BC) to just before the birth of Samuel (1105 BC; 1 Samuel 1).
  - After the death of Joshua, the people went into a continuous cycle of sin, punishment, repentance, deliverance, faithfulness, and then back again (Judges 2:11-19).
  - The theme of the book is summed up in the last verse of Judges, "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).
  - Some judges that stand out in this book are: Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson.
- **Ruth**
  - Ruth 1:1 says that these events took place "in the days when the judges ruled."
  - In this beautiful and touching account of heartache, redemption and romance, Ruth the Moabite marries into a Jewish family, and becomes the great-grandmother of David, and an ancestor of Jesus the Christ (Ruth 4:17; Matt. 1:5).
- **1 Samuel**
  - Covers the period from the birth of Samuel (1105 BC) to the death Saul (1011 BC).
  - As Samuel (the last judge) ages, Israel rejects God as their king and wants to have a king over them like all the other nations (1 Samuel 8). Samuel appoints Saul to be the 1<sup>st</sup> king over Israel. ***This begins the period in OT history called the United Kingdom.***
  - Saul becomes very unfaithful, so God chose David, a "man after God's own heart", to be the next king of Israel (1 Samuel 13).
  - The remaining chapters of 1 Samuel deal with Saul's decline in power as his jealousy and hatred of David drives him to seek to destroy David. David, during this same time, is being prepared by God in order to the throne. ***Some of the Psalms are written here.***

- **2 Samuel**
  - Covers the period of David’s reign as king (1011-971 BC).
    - **David composed around 70 of the 150 Psalms, and many of those were written during this period of David’s life.**
    - **1 Chronicles also covers the life and reign of David.**
  - David reigned 7 ½ years as king of Judah (in Hebron), and for 33 years as king over all Israel and Judah (2 Samuel 5:4-5).
  - David was promised that the Messiah / Christ would come from his seed and would sit on the throne forever (2 Sam. 7:12-17; Psalm 2, 16; Acts 2:29-36).
  - David’s sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11-12) set his kingdom on a collision course with disaster. Nathan told him, the “sword would never depart” from his house.
  - The latter half of 2 Samuel records a great deal of pain that came from within David’s own sons (Amnon and Absalom). Also add another son, Adonijah (1 Kings 1-2).
- **1 Kings**
  - Covers a period of approximately 120 years: from David’s death (971 BC) through the end of Ahaziah’s reign (852 BC).
  - David died, and his son Solomon ascended to the throne over all Israel and Judah.
  - Solomon was granted wisdom exceeding any who ever lived (1 Kings 3).
    - **During Solomon’s life he wrote Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.**
  - Solomon constructed the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 5-8). Until this time the people of Israel had worshipped at the tabernacle, which was the temporary, movable place of worship constructed by Moses.
  - Later in life, Solomon became unfaithful to God by marrying hundreds of women from idolatrous nations (1 Kings 11). The kingdom, God declared, would be divided after his death, and most would be taken from the lineage of David and given to another.
  - **In 1 Kings 12, we begin the period of the Divided Kingdom (931 BC).**
    - 10 tribes form the northern kingdom called “Israel.” The first king of the northern kingdom was Jeroboam (1 Kings 12-14). He introduced several sinful practices that continued in that nation until the end.
    - 2 tribes form the southern kingdom called “Judah.” This is the kingdom that David’s sons continued to rule over until the Babylonian captivity.
  - **1 Kings 17-22** we read about one of the greatest prophets ever, Elijah, and one of the most wicked king / queen combinations ever to sit on the throne, Ahab and Jezebel.
  - **2 Chronicles 1-20 covers this time period also.**

<b>Samuel / Kings</b>	<b>Chronicles</b>
Prophetic Perspective	Priestly Perspective
Political History	Religious History
Wars Prominent	Temple Prominent
Record of Both Nations	Record of Judah
Continuing History of Nation	Continuity of David’s Line
Man’s Failure	God’s Faithfulness

*From Nelson’s Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts, pg. 144.*