

Lesson One (student)
Orientation to the Old Testament
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Background to the Old Testament
The Canon: How We Got the Old Testament
Introduction to the Pentateuch
Covenants and Dispensations

BACKGROUND TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

1A Basic Facts

The Old Testament was written between _____.

The Old Testament is comprised of _____.

The Old Testament was written by over 25 authors, over a period of 1000 years.

The Old Testament is divided in English into five sections: _____

_____ “Old Testament” refers to the _____.

2A Reason to Study the Old Testament (OT)

1B Key Verses: _____.

2B You can't really understand _____ without the Old Testament.

3B The Bible used by Jesus and the apostles was the _____.

4B When the New Testament refers to the “scriptures” it is almost always referring to the _____.

5B For the first generation after Christ, when the church rapidly spread throughout the known world, the basis for preaching was the _____.

6B Jesus and the Old Testament.

1C Jesus taught the Old Testament was _____; Matt. 4:1-14

2C And that it was the _____, John 10:35

3C And that _____ of the Old Testament
extended to the smallest part of a _____,
Matt 5:17

7B Paul's use of the Old Testament

1C Quotes: _____

2C Types: _____

3C Conclusion:

3A The Literature of the Old Testament

1B The Old Testament was written in _____
_____.

2B These are part of the _____ language family.

3B The Old Testament was written on _____, _____, and
_____.

4B About _____, the _____ added vowel
symbols.

5B Thus, the most used Hebrew Bible is from the
_____.

6B The types of literature in the OT include:

Historical Narrative
Poetry
Wisdom
Allegory
Prophecy
Law

THE CANON: HOW WE GOT THE OLD TESTAMENT

1A Introduction

How do we know we have the Word of God, How do we know it is accurate?
Who made this the canon? Is this the Word of [from] God, the word of [from]
man, or is this a word of man about God?

1B Canon

1C Canon derives from the Hebrew term *qāneh* and the Greek term *kanōn*, meaning _____

2C Reeds were used as measuring sticks; *Canon* came to mean something that was a _____, a _____, or _____.

3C When applied to Scripture the canon refers to those books which are _____ because they were revealed by God and are inerrant and the authoritative source of doctrine.

4C Through the years the authority of specific books was _____ by Jewish authorities.

5C False Claims

1D That a body of men met and imposed this collection on the Jews. This is usually attributed to the _____.

2D In the post-modern era there is a rejection of any kind of universal authority and thus a rejection of an _____ canon for any subject, including the Bible.

6C. **Definition of the canon:** those books which authoritatively reveal the plan, purposes, and priorities of God for the human race.

2B New Testament Recognition of a Canon

1C Scriptures: 2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21

2C Jesus affirmed a canon from “Abel to Zechariah” Matt 23:35, Luke 1:51. Abel was murdered in the first book, Gen. 4, and Zechariah in the last book in the Hebrew canon, 2 Chron 24.

3B Old Testament recognition of authoritative writings.

1C Scriptures: Ex. 24:4; Josh 8:30-35, Deut 31:26; 1 Sam 10:25

2C _____ was attested as Scripture by Daniel, Dan 9:2

3C _____ was attested as Scripture by Nehemiah, Neh 9:14

4C _____ sources are quoted, Josh 10:13; Num 21:14

4B The Extent of the Canon

1C. What is the extent of the canon? How do we know what books go into the canon? How do we know it is these books and not others? There is a disagreement on this among Christians.

1D. Differences:

Roman Catholics, also include the apocrypha (14 or 15 books). Eastern Orthodox, and Syrian churches have slightly different canons, as well.

1E **The Apocrypha** (meaning

_____.

Tobit, Judith, [after Nehemiah] the (six) additions to the Book of *Esther*, the *Wisdom of Solomon*, the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) [after Song of Solomon], Baruch, the Letter of Jeremiah (as ch. 6) [after Lamentations], the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men (one work) [between Daniel 3:23, 24], Susanna, Bel and the Dragon [at the beginning of Daniel or at the end as ch. 13], and 1 and 2 Macabees [at the end].

2D Problems with accepting the Apocrypha

- 1E. These were written predominantly in Greek (exception are Tobit, Judith, Ecclesiasticus, part of Baruch and 1 Maccabees written in either Heb or Aramaic.
- 2E. Written during last 2 centuries BC or first century AD. Long after the Jewish canon was closed.
- 3E. These books abound in _____, _____
_____ inaccuracies:
- 4E. False doctrines: prayers and offerings for the dead (2 Macc 12:43-45); giving money makes atonement for sin and justifies cruelty to slaves (Eccles 3:36, 38, 30); preexistence of souls (Wisdom of Solomon (8:18-20); emanation from God (7:25). Also supports purgatory and other doctrines.
- 3D. The Jewish community consistently recognized _____
_____.
- 1E _____ affirmed the canon in 200 AD (probably went back much earlier) as indicated in *Baba Bathra.*,
- 2E _____, an example of a Palestinian tradition, affirms 22 books
- 3E _____ (from the Egyptian tradition contemporary with Jesus.) Alexandrian Jew recognizes these 22 books
- 4E _____ 14:44-46 lists these same books again. 80 AD.
- 4D. Jesus and the Disciples accept this Old Testament canon without question.

- 1E They presuppose an authoritative canon of Scripture by the way they referred to the Old Testament (“It is written”, “the Scriptures” the Holy Scripture, the Holy Writings, the Sacred Writings) that was the same one accepted by the Jewish community

- 2E Jesus recognized the same threefold division in Luke 24:34, the Law, Prophets, Psalms, (Writings);

- 3E “From Abel to Zechariah” **Matt. 23:35**

- 4E The New Testament writers never quote from the disputed books (Enoch in Jude, was never a possibility for inclusion, thus it was not disputed or questioned.)

5B. The Transmission of the Canon:

- 1C Until the _____ were found (1948) the earliest extant text was the Ben Asher Codex in the Public Library at Leningrad dating to about AD 1008.

- 2C The last Old Testament book was about 440 BC. The DSS were written between 250 BC and 100 AD.

- 3C The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran in 1948 revealed the accuracy of the transmission of the text. Suddenly we had copies of Old Testament books that were 900 to 1200 years earlier than what we already had. So this showed that in many instances

the traditional, Masoretic text is really superior to the text at Qumran.

- 4C The discovery of the DSS is important because:
- 1D. They show in the history of the transmission of the text that both a liberal and a conservative philosophy existed, but the conservative philosophy won out, and
 - 2D. They authenticate the text that grows out of this. So now we can say on firm data that this text has been accurately preserved.
 - 3D By the first century BC the conservative philosophy was adopted by all three as the basis for Old Testament transmission.

Note: In recent years a couple of mathematicians have popularized a notion known as the Bible Code. This book has become very popular, especially for the gullible, the uninformed, and the mystic. It is based on the idea of a sequential code, or number skip code. That you can find every fourth letter, or fifth letter or ever 1,579 letter and these spell out peoples names or historical events. The idea here was to take all the spaces out of the Hebrew Bible and just run the names together and then use a computer to look for certain names, events, places, dates, in Hebrew of course. The trouble is that this assumes a precise, unchanged and unvarying text. And that just isn't the case. First of all as seen in the St. Marks scroll there are 200 variances. So if you have one it messes up the skip code., what about 10, 20, 30 or even 500 spelling and orthography changes. Impossible.

- 5C. Further Evidence of Old Testament canonicity from Qumran
- 1D 175 of 500 manuscripts are biblical texts.
 - 2D. All Old Testament books are represented except Esther
 - 3D Commentaries deal only with the biblical canon; no commentaries are written on apocrypha, disputed, or noncanonical books.
 - 4D 20 of the 39 Old Testament books are quoted as Scripture.
 - 5D Conclusion: No evidence existed among the Essenes to classify apocryphal books as Scripture.

6C. Evidence the canon was closed before the Incarnation

- 1D _____, a book in the Apocrypha, written about 125 BC confirms a three-fold division of the canon and that the canon was closed.
- 2D _____ (164 BC) compiled a list of canonical books and recognized the gift of prophecy had ceased (1 Macc 9:27 cf., 4:46, 14:41)
- 3D _____ (written around 200-300 AD but reports oral tradition from much earlier): *Baba Bathra* 14b reports a three-fold division which indicates that by the time of Christ or at least first century there was a recognized canon in Judaism.
- 4D _____ did not meet to determine the canon, but recognized the existing canon.

5B The Books of the Old Testament

1C. Arrangement of the 39 books in the Old Testament (English)

- 1D. **Hebrew Canon** – Old Testament originally written in _____ and a small portion in _____ (Dan. 2:4-7) and Ezra (4-6 plus a couple of odd verses here and there). TANAKH
- 2D. **English Canon** – divided according to the Vulgate (Latin) and Septuagint (LXX-Greek) translations—5 divisions. The English Canon is divided according to subject matter. to _____ (Law), _____ (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah), _____ (Job, Psalms, Proverb, Ecc., Sof S), _____,

2C. Hebrew Canon: the arrangement of the Hebrew Bible

- 1D. _____, (Law) written by Moses, a unique, distinctive office.
- 2D. _____, which is the Hebrew for prophet. 8 books in the prophets Divided into 4 and 4, the former prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings) and the latter prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve).

- 3D. _____: These comprise all the other books, from the wisdom literature of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, to the book of Daniel, and Chronicles. In the Hebrew arrangement the last book of the Bible is Chronicles.
- 4D. Groupings: If Ruth and Lamentation grouped, then you have either 22 or 24 books depending on how Ruth/Judges and Lamentations/Jeremiah are viewed.
- 5D **Versions Including English** – 39 books (1,2 Samuel, 1,2 Kings, Chronicles into 1, 2 Chron, and the Twelve are then divided up, but the content is exactly the same).

INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH

1A General

- 1B Pentateuch means _____ (Gr. *pentateuchos*) and refers to the first five books of the Old Testament known also as the Torah (Heb.) or the Law.
- 2B These books are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.
- 3B The Unity of the Pentateuch
- 1C These five books are not independent self-contained entity but were written as part of a larger unity.
- 2C The purpose of the Pentateuch is to establish the foundation for God's choice of Israel.
- 3C The Pentateuch is not just history, but historical events chosen by God to teach Israel about
- God, His nature, plans, and his purposes for Israel.
- Man, his nature, purpose, fall, failure, salvation and responsibilities
- Society, its institutions, organization, and obligations.
- Nature: its original design, flaws, judgment and relation to man and God.

2A Authorship

1B. Background

- 1C The Documentary Hypothesis focuses on the authorship of the Pentateuch.
- 2C. **Mosaic authorship** was universally accepted until questioned by _____ in the 18th century.
- 2C This was the product of a worldview called **Naturalism** which presuppositionally rejected anything supernatural.
- This is the presupposition of “antisupernaturalism.” The assumption that God either cannot, will not, or would not if He existed, communicate to man.
- 3C If Moses did not write the Pentateuch, and it was written 1,000 years later, then the authority of the Mosaic Law, the ten commandments, and the miracles and prophecy are destroyed.
- 4C. Discrediting Mosaic authorship
- Demonstrating that the Bible was a collection of religious mythology, no different than any other ANE text
- 5C The claim was that at least four different authors wrote portions of the Pentateuch and a fifth, editor or redactor, put it together in the fifth century BC.
- 6C The documentary hypothesis was developed in the late 19th century by two German scholars, _____
- 7C They identified 4 sources were identified.
- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| J, for <u>YHWH or JHVH</u> | 850 BC ; personal biography, character, ethics, theology. |
| E for <u>Elohim</u> | 750 BC , origin of places names and customs. |
| D for <u>Deuteronomic</u> , | 621 BC , written to encourage destruction of false worship and idolatry and to centralize worship in Jerusalem. |

P for **Priestly**, **570 BC**. Origins and institutions of the theocracy, details of sacrifice and ritual.

Later developments moved these dates up even more so that most liberal scholarship placed the writing of all these sources after the return from Babylon, into the second Temple period.

“Nowhere in the Ancient Orient is there anything which is definitely known to parallel the elaborate history of fragmentary composition and conflation of Hebrew literature as the documentary hypotheses would postulate. And conversely, any attempt to apply the criteria of the documentary theorists to Ancient Oriental compositions that have known histories but exhibit the same literary phenomena results in manifest absurdities.” K. A. Kitchen, *AOOT*, 115

8C The alleged proof was:

1D. Writing wasn't known in Israel in Moses time; this argument soon fell out of use due to archaeological discoveries.

Evidence: The discoveries at **Ugarit** in Northwest Canaan date to the same period as Moses. This was discovered in **1929**.

Egyptian letters, the **Amarna** correspondence dates from about **1350 BC**.

2D. No known law codes existed that early. Though the code of Hammurabi, Babylon (date 1700-1200 BC) predated this, as did the Lipit-Ishtar Code of Mesopotamia, about 1800 BC, and the law code of Eshnunna, ca 2200 BC, discovered in 1945.

3D. Various names for God indicate different authors.

No other ANE text is thought to be compiled in this way. It is ridiculous to even think about applying this to Enuma Elish (where three deities have double name) or the Gilgamesh Epic. The only similar attempt was made on Homer, and it parallels in time the development of this surgical approach to the Bible. It has fallen out of favor now, but this view hangs on with the Bible.

Conclusion: There is no reason or evidence that the different names for God indicate different authors, but they

are used to bring to bear different emphases on the person and character of God.

- 4D. Different styles and vocabulary indicate different authors
- 5D. The alleged duplication of accounts.

Gen. 1,2

1E Duplication where you have a general overview followed by specifics is common in ANE literature

2E Alleged contradictions.

1F In the day, *beyom*, not a definite article, an idiom for at the time or when, (Num 3:1; Psalm 18:1; 2 Sam. 22:1)

2F In Gen 1:27 male and female are created, this is a summary, both on the same day. In Gen 2 we have the details of how, first the man, then the woman.

3F Ge 2:5 before any plant [*tsiach*] of the field was in the earth and before any herb [*etzeb*]of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man to till the ground;

1G. This doesn't refer to all plants or herbs, but only those related to the Garden,

2G. Ge 3:18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.

Here the identical expression is found, thorn and thistles are synonymous with the *tsiach* of the field, those species missing in 2, developed later, after the curse. Before the fall these were not part of the diet, after the fall they become part of the diet.

3G. Alleged contradiction: In Gen. 37 first Joseph is sold to the Ishmaelites,

and then to the Midianites.

However, the terms Midianites and Ishmaelites overlap and describe the same people. These do not indicate two separate accounts or stories.

About this allegation of duplication famed Egyptologist Kenneth Kitchen writes:

“There is no incompatible duplication here at all. Failure to recognize the complementary nature of the subject-distinction between a skeleton outline of all creation on the one hand, and the concentration in detail on man and his immediate environment on the other, borders on obscurantism.”

He cites the following examples:

On the Karnack Poetical Stela, Amun address King Tuthmosis III generally at first, then with more detail

On the Gebel Barkal stela there is the same general description and then a narrative of specific triumphs.

Numerous royal inscriptions from Urartu show an initial summary paragraph followed by a detail account.

The General then specific pattern is typical of ANE literature of this period.

6D. Monotheism had not yet evolved.

Ex: Egypt has cycles of development in the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms, as do the Sumerian civilizations and Babylonian kingdoms.

A fantastic 6 vol work in the French on the history of Monotheism by the Jesuit Scholar Wilhelm Schmidt clearly documents that all culture of the world and all known religions began with a monotheistic god.

- 7D. Different names for the same thing: Mt. Sinai and Mt. Horeb; Canaanites and Amorites; Ishmaelites and Midianites.

The problem with this proof was that during the next 100 years archeological discoveries would destroy this proof, but the damage was already done.

9C Biblical Evidence

*Did Moses write every word, no, see his death account DT 34:1-8

Internal:

- 1D. Reflects an intimate knowledge of the customs that would not have been known 500 years later. In fact, the very literary structure of the Pentateuch was unknown 500 years later, much less 1,000 years later.
- 2D. He knew Egypt, the Desert, the language, etc. The writer was intimate with the geographical locations he describes.
- 3D. Wrote in a 2nd millennium form

External:

- 4D. The Pentateuch claims Mosaic Authorship - Josh. 1:7,8; Exod 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Num 33:1,2; Dt 31:9
- 5D. Other Old Testament books taught Mosaic Authorship
- Jos 1:7 Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.
- 6D. Christ taught this Mk 12:26; Jn 5:46-47
- 7D. Internal Evidence: Knowledge of second millennium customs, literary forms, language, idioms, and the unity of the book of Genesis, based on the *toledot* sections.
- 8D. Both Jews and **Samaritans** believed this.. As seen in the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Palestinian Talmud, Ecclus 45:5; 2 Mac 7:3; Philo in the Life of Moses 3:39; Josephus, Anti 4:8:45
- 9D. Multiple accounts typical of ANE literature.

- 10D. Different Divine names emphasizes different aspects of his character.

TWO APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING THE OLD TESTAMENT:
DISPENSATIONALISM VS REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY

1A Basic Definitions

- 1B. Dispensationalism, which understands that God will ultimately and literally fulfill all of His covenants, promises, and prophecies to Israel.
- 2B Replacement theology: the covenants and promises originally made to Israel have been transferred to the Church.

Covenant theology is the most dominant form, but Lutheran, Methodist, and Roman Catholic theology all use the same passages and arguments in more or less the same ways.

2A Dispensationalism

- 1B ***Dispensation: A distinct and identifiable administration in the development of God's plan and purposes for human history (Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25-26).***

- 2B Greek: *oikonomia*, from whence we get ecumenical, economy, to manage, regulate, administer, to plan.

A combination of *oikos* and *vomos*, house law, house rule.

To manage, or to administer the affairs of a house.

- 3B *Oikonomia* appears about twenty times in the New Testament (Luke 16:2,3,4; 1 Cor 9:17; Eph. 1:10, 3:2,9; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4; also translated stewardship, administration.

- 4B The history of man is seen as a household administered by God in connection with several stages of revelation that distinguish different economies in the outworking of God's plan.

- 5B Definitions

C. I. Scofield: A dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God. *The Scofield Reference Bible*

W. Graham Scroggie The word *oikonomia* bears one significance, and means "an administration," whether of a house, or property, of a state, or a

nation, or as in the present study, the administration of the human race or any part of it, at any given time. Just as a parent would govern his household in different ways, according to varying necessity, yet ever for one good end, so God has at different times dealt with men in different ways, according to the necessity of the case, but throughout for one great, grand end.

Charles C. Ryrie “A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God’s purposes.” *Dispensationalism*

Robert Dean, Jr. A dispensation therefore is a distinct and identifiable administration in the development of God’s plan and purposes for human history (Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25-26). A closely connected but not interchangeable word is age (Greek *aion*), which introduces the time element. God manages the entirety of human history as a household, moving humanity through sequential stages of His administration, determined by the level of revelation He has provided up to that time in history. Each administrative period is characterized by revelation that specifies responsibilities, a test in relation to those responsibilities, failure to pass the test, and God’s gracious provision of a solution when failure occurs. *Tim LaHaye Prophecy Study Bible*

- 6B Dispensationalism is built on three distinctives.
 - 1C A consistent, literal hermeneutic or interpretation of Scripture
 - 2C A consistent distinction between God’s Plan for Israel and God’s plan for the church
 - 3C The unifying theme of the Scripture is the glory of God.
- 3A The Church and Israel
 - 1B The hallmark of Dispensationalism is the distinction between Israel and the Church.
 - 2B They are viewed as distinct people with different responsibilities and destinies.
 - 3B God has more goals for human history than the outworking of redemption in the guise of the covenant of grace.
 - 4B Redemption is too narrow a purpose which leaves out God’s plan for the angels.

5B The Church and Israel have the same salvation, faith in Christ, but different destinies and responsibilities.

4A Interpretation

The basic dispensational position is to interpret the Bible literally unless something in the context indicates differently.

When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, make no other sense, therefore take every word at its ordinary, usual, literal meaning, unless the facts of the immediate context studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths indicates clearly otherwise.

This means that the Bible should be interpreted in the same way you interpret any other literature. Some call this the historical, grammatical interpretation. We take the grammar literally, we know the Bible must be interpreted in the time in which it was written.

Also can be simply normal interpretation. Third, called plain, or simple interpretation. Using the standard norms of interpreting everyday speech.

5A Covenants

1B God advances the dispensations or His administration through covenants.

2B A covenant is a contract between two people or groups.

“Covenant” (בְּרִיתָהּ [bâriyth /ber-eeth/]) means a contract, a testimony, or a treaty.

3B There are two types of covenants in the Bible: unconditional (unilateral) and conditional (bilateral).

4B. An unconditional covenant is based on God’s character not human behavior. An unconditional covenant is permanent and everlasting.

5B. A conditional covenant is based on human behavior and is temporary. The only conditional covenant is the Mosaic Covenant.

6B In the Old Testament, there are 6 unconditional or unilateral covenants:

Creation or Edenic Covenant

Adamic Covenant

Noahic Covenant

Abrahamic Covenant

Land Covenant

Davidic Covenant

New Covenant

- 7B In the Old Testament there is 1 bilateral or conditional covenant: the Mosaic Covenant.
- 8B The first three covenants are modifications of the first and for all human beings without distinction.
- 9B The Abrahamic Covenant is for Israel only, and the Land, Davidic, New, and Mosaic Covenants are for Israel only.
- 10B The Covenants stipulate the terms for how God administers human history.
- 6A Replacement Theology
- 1B Replacement theology: the covenants and promises originally made to Israel have been transferred to the Church.
- 2B Covenant Theology is the most common form of Replacement Theology
- 3B Covenant Theology: Salvation of the elect or humanity. The one and ultimate purpose of God. Yet this fails to account for the angels and the rest of creation.
- 4B The covenants in Covenant Theology are not biblical covenants but theologically deduced covenants.
- 5B Covenant Theology holds to two, sometimes three covenants: the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Grace, the third option is the Covenant of Redemption.
- 6B In Covenant Theology the Old Testament is interpreted in light of the New Testament. This means that Old Testament believers had a different understanding of OT revelation than covenant theology has today.
- 7B In covenant theology there is only one people of God.
- 8B Thus the church is an outgrowth of Israel.
- 9B The church is spiritual Israel
- 10B There is no future for national Israel in God's plan.
- 11B The Covenants to Israel apply to the church now.

