

ABOV- Session 6: The Divided Kingdom

Script Facilitator

Slide: A Bible Overview – Session 6: The Divided Kingdom

Slide- Summary Session 5

- Israelites finally entered the Promised Land
- 300-year “sin cycle” & God sent “judges”
- God sent Prophets to speak for Him to the people
- 3 Kings: Saul, David, Solomon

Start Video- SR-06a The Divided Kingdom

Welcome to Session 6 of A Bible OverView called: The Divided Kingdom

As we start in the book of 1 Kings, Israel is a United Kingdom. Solomon is now the third king of Israel and he began his reign in a positive manner. **1 Kings 3:5-14 says-***

5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

6 Solomon answered, “You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. “Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. 8 Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number.9 So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?”

10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. 11 So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, 12 I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. 13 Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. 14 And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.”

- God honored Solomon because he had a heart open to God's will.

Solomon built a beautiful palace and people came from all over the world to see it and to seek the counsel of Solomon. One person who visited him was the Queen of Sheba.

Solomon also built a magnificent temple for God. Today, the Wailing Wall in Israel is on the site of this former temple.

Solomon received the same promises and warnings of the Covenant that his father David had received. **1 Kings 9:4-9** says-

4 As for you, if you walk before me faithfully with integrity of heart and uprightness, as David your father did, and do all I command and observe my decrees and laws, 5 I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, 'You shall never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.'

6 "But if you or your descendants turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, 7 then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. 8 This temple will become a heap of rubble. All who pass by will be appalled and will scoff and say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?' 9 People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD their God, who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why the LORD brought all this disaster on them.'

- In verse 5, when God says, "You shall never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel," He is saying the Line of Promise was to be through David's line and will happen because of the sovereignty of God.
- Note: God's warning of judgment is God's way of offering grace. God desires obedience from His people so they can live in a right relationship with Him and others.

Solomon began his reign well but we read in **1 Kings 11:1-6-**

11 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. 2 They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods."

Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 5 He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. 6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.

- This is very sad when we consider that Solomon was once the wisest man who ever lived.
 - He even wrote the book of Proverbs which is filled with great advice for daily living. Thus, he didn't follow his own advice.
 - Solomon also wrote the book of Ecclesiastes which revealed how miserable his life was when he wasn't in relationship with God. But he ended up coming to the right conclusion in which he writes in **Ecclesiastes 12:13,14-**

13 Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. 14 For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

- To fear God means to honor & respect God- to be in awe of His sovereign majesty & power.

Let's look at our Line of Promise once again. We are skipping generations as we go and only highlighting certain men in the line: We started with Adam. Then God called Abraham to go to the Promised Land, Canaan, and establish a nation. This nation was born through Isaac, then through his son Jacob and through one of Jacob's twelve sons: Judah. Jesse, David's father, was in the line of Judah. David's son was Solomon and now we are to his son: Rehoboam.

When Solomon's son Rehoboam, became king, he sought advice from two groups of men concerning the best way to govern his nation.

- The first group was made up of older men who had served Solomon. They told him to treat the people with kindness and that if he, as king, would serve them, they'd serve him in return.
- The second group was made up of young men who were Rehoboam's friends. Their advice was to lead with a heavy hand and raise taxes so he could go farther than his father did.

Unfortunately, Rehoboam decided to follow the advice of the younger men. This was a big mistake. The people rebelled. (Show map of Israel and Judah)

- 10 tribes chose a different leader named Jeroboam and they lived in the northern part of the country. This was called Israel with its capital being Samaria.
- Only 2 tribes, Benjamin and Judah, remained with Rehoboam in the southern part of the country. This was called Judah with its capital being Jerusalem. Remember that Jerusalem was where the Temple was located. It was the only place where the Jewish people could worship God and offer sacrifices.

Sadly, after being a nation for 1200 years – starting when Abraham entered the Promised Land in 2091 BC - the Israelites divided into two nations. The Old Testament Highway shows the key word for 1 Kings is: Solomon-Split.

Incidentally, although Rehoboam and Jeroboam's names rhyme, they were not related.

End Video- SR-06a The Divided Kingdom (info above: Solomon, Covenant repeated, many wives, line of promise, Rehoboam, & split & OT Highway)

Slide: God's Gracious Gifts and Covenant: Solomon

God: *12 I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, ...13 Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—... 1 Kings 3:12-13*

4... "if you ...do all I command and observe my decrees and laws, 5 I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever," as I promised David your father... 1 Kings 9:4-5

- What do we learn about God in His answers to Solomon's prayers?
 - He is a powerful, generous, gracious God
 - He is a covenantal God offering great blessings and also warnings about what disobedience will bring
- How is the little word "if" a word with much meaning?
 - It indicates there are consequences for our actions: we are responsible to do what we're told to do to receive God's blessings
- What is the significance of God mentioning the line of promise?
 - Solomon comes from David through whom is the Line of Promise

Slide: Obedience Necessary

God: *6 But if you or your descendants turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, 7 then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. ... 8 This temple will become a heap of rubble... 1 Kings 9:6-8*

- How clear is God in His warning?
 - Very clear: there is the "if you do not observe the commands"... and then the "I will cut you off..." and "I will reject..."
- What does it cost God to follow through on His warning?
 - The Temple that honors His name will be destroyed

Slide: Obedience Necessary

God told Solomon that if his decedents choose not to obey God's commands then the conclusion of people who walk by the temple ruins will say:

...'Because they have forsaken the LORD their God, who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why the LORD brought all this disaster on them.' 1 Kings 9:9

- What did the people need to remember?
 - All that God did to bring them out of Egypt and His warnings not to forsake Him
- When disaster does happen, who is to blame?
 - The people themselves for not obeying God

Slide: Wisest Man Chooses No Obedience

King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women... He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God... 6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD... I Kings 11:1,3,4,6

- How does Solomon's choice serve as a warning to us?
 - Must stay faithful to God's ways for life or we can fall away from God
 - Hebrews 2:1- "We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away."
- What idols do we worship today?

Slide: Kingdom Splits into Israel and Judah (pix on screen of split kingdom)

God: "...I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand ...33 I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth...Chemosh... and Molek the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in obedience to me, nor done what is right in my eyes, nor kept my decrees and laws as David, Solomon's father, did." I Kings 11:31,33

- What caused the United Kingdom to split into Israel and Judah?
 - The people forsake God and worshipped idols and lived in disobedience

Slide: Wisest Man Chooses Obedience

At the end of his life, Solomon made this conclusion:

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. 14 For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

- What had he learned?
 - The need to fear God
 - Obedience to God's ways is what everyone should do
 - God will justly judge all our actions
- What lesson is there for us?

Start video SR-06b Northern Kingdom (Israel)

First let's learn about the northern kingdom, Israel. Jeroboam is king. His problem was there was no temple there. To make sure his people didn't go down to the temple in Jerusalem, he set up altars in their capital city of Samaria. He tried to make everyone happy so he built altars to false gods, some of whom required the horrible practice of child sacrifice.

Israel lasted 208 years. None of their kings would have a heart for God.

Because God loved them so much, he showed His grace by sending prophets to warn them to turn back to God or else He'd send judgment. Unfortunately, they refused to listen and in 722 BC they were conquered by the Assyrians and most of the Jews in Israel were taken away to Assyria. The Jews left to work the land intermarried with the Assyrians and became known as Samaritans. The northern kingdom ended, never to exist again.

This sounds confusing because there is a nation of Israel today. But, the Israel of today would come from the southern nation- Judah- which we will soon learn about.

End video SR-06b Northern Kingdom (Israel) (above info: Jeroboam, Assyrians)

Slide: Jeroboam's Enticement (map on screen of divided kingdom)

"It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." 1 Kings 12:28

The only acceptable Temple to worship God in was in Jerusalem.

Jeroboam set up alters to false gods in the capital city of Samaria.

- What was Jeroboam's motive?
 - To get the people to stay loyal to him and stay up in Samaria to worship

Slide- Judgment (pix of archeological site where golden calf worshipped)

21...Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the Lord and caused them to commit a great sin. 22 The Israelites persisted in all the sins of Jeroboam and did not turn away from them 23 until the Lord removed them from his presence, as he had warned through all his servants the prophets. So the people of Israel were taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria, and they are still there. 2 Kings 17:21-23

- What does this say about leadership and the **human heart**?
 - Bad leadership leads people into sin
 - Bad leadership leads to bad consequences
 - People often follow without doing critical thinking about if the leader is good or not and end up with the consequences

Start Video SR-06c - Prophets

Before we talk about Judah, I need to explain about God's prophets. Looking again at the Old testament Historical Highway, we see where the prophets fit into history.

They were sent to both Israel and Judah to teach, urge repentance, and predict judgment if people didn't obey. Through prophets God helped His people remember Him and the relationship they should have with Him. God wanted them to choose freedom and success, not moral & spiritual decline.

One obvious role of a prophet was to give prophecies of the future. Their predictions would come true which reveals the sovereignty of God since they were written many years - sometimes hundreds of years- earlier. Here is an example. Isaiah was a young prophet who lived in Israel before it fell. He warned Israel they would be conquered if they didn't repent. He also warned Judah that Jerusalem would likewise fall and this time to the Babylonians. This prediction occurred 120 years later.

Another prophet was Jeremiah who gave a very specific prophecy about judgment in **Jeremiah 25:2-15-**

2 So Jeremiah the prophet said to all the people of Judah and to all those living in Jerusalem: 3 "For twenty-three years—from the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah until this very day—the word of the LORD has come to me and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened. 4 And though the LORD has sent all his servants the prophets to you again and again, you have not listened or paid any attention. 5 They said, 'Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the LORD gave to you and your ancestors forever and ever. 6 Do not follow other gods to serve and worship them; do not arouse my anger with what your hands have made. Then I will not harm you.'

7 "But you did not listen to me," declares the LORD, "and you have aroused my anger with what your hands have made, and you have brought harm to yourselves."

8 Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words, 9 I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the LORD, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. 10 I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp. 11 This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever. 13 I will bring on that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that are written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations. 14 They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings; I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."

End Video SR-06c - Prophets (Info above: prophet's roles, Jeremiah & prophecy destruction Jerusalem)

Slide- Warnings and the Sovereignty of God

Jeremiah: *4*And though the Lord has sent all his servants the prophets to you again and again, you have not listened or paid any attention. *5* They said, 'Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the Lord gave to you and your ancestors forever... Jeremiah 25:4-5

The Lord Almighty says: *8*... "Because you have not listened to my words, *9* I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," ... Jeremiah 25:8-9

Assyria conquered Israel in 722 BC
Babylon conquered Judah in 586 BC

- What choice did the people have?
 - To pay attention to the prophets, turn away from evil ways, and thus stay on the promised land forever- or, be conquered by Babylon.

Start Video SR-06d - Prophets Confront Sin

Another role of the prophets was to confront sin in people's hearts and encourage repentance. Here is an example: Israel's wicked leader, Ahab, and the people constantly turned against God and worshiped the idol Baal who sometimes demanded child sacrifice.

- Baal was the leader of the Canaanite gods who was the storm god, the bringer of rain, and thus fertility, to the arid agriculturally marginal land. When crops were abundant, Baal was praised and thanked for his abundant rain. When lack of rain threatened survival, it was a sign that Baal and his gods were unhappy. The issue was who controls the rain, Baal or Yahweh.
- Elijah confronted Israel's evil King Ahab: "...As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word." 1 Kings 17:1b
- After a long time, the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year: "Go and present yourself to Ahab. I will send rain on the surface of the land." 1 Kings 18:1
- *17* When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is that you, you destroyer of Israel?"
- *18* He replied, "I have not destroyed Israel, but you and your father's house have, because you have abandoned the Lord's commands and followed the Baals. *19* Now summon all Israel to meet me at Mount Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah..."
- *21* Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing. 1 Kings 18:17-21

- To summarize next: The prophets of Baal prepared a bull offering for their god and Elijah did the same—with this catch:

24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of Yahweh. The God who answers with fire, He is God.”

All the people answered, “That sounds good.” 1 Kings 18:24

- To summarize next: The pagan prophets went first and cried out and danced around their altar from morning till noon with no answer from Baal. Elijah began to mock them so:

28 They shouted loudly, and cut themselves with knives and spears, according to their custom, until blood gushed over them. 1 Kings 18:28

- Then Elijah prayed:

37 Answer me, Lord! Answer me so that this people will know that You, Yahweh, are God and that You have turned their hearts back.”

38 Then Yahweh’s fire fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 When all the people saw it, they fell facedown and said, “Yahweh, He is God! Yahweh, He is God!” 1 Kings 18:37-38

End Video SR-06d - Prophets Confront Sin (Info above: Elijah & Baal contest & people’s hearts)

Slide- Ahab and the “Blame Game”

Elijah: “As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.” 1 Kings 17:1b

When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is that you, you destroyer of Israel?”

18 He replied, “I have not destroyed Israel, but you and your father’s house have, because you have abandoned the Lord’s commands and followed the Baals.” 1 Kings 18:17-18

- What is the tendency of the **human heart** when there are consequences from our actions?
 - We don’t want to admit that the real consequences for our sin are our fault.

Slide: **Spiritual Conflict & Judgment**

Elijah: 37 “Answer me, Lord! Answer me so that this people will know that You, Yahweh, are God and that You have turned their hearts back.”

38 Then Yahweh’s fire fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 When all the people saw it, they fell facedown and said, “Yahweh, He is God! Yahweh, He is God!” 1 Kings 18:37-39

- What does this passage tell us about Elijah's **faith**?
 - He believed God would perform the miracle
 - He courageously acted on his belief
- What does this passage tell us about God?
 - Wants **relationship with His people** restored
 - **Grace** of God
 - Reminds them of need for **obedience**
 - Wants to Increase their **faith**

Start video SR-06e - Prophets Perform Miracles

Another role of prophets was to perform miracles which proved God cared for His people. Here is an example in **2 Kings 4.1-7-**

4 The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves.”

2 Elisha replied to her, “How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?”

“Your servant has nothing there at all,” she said, “except a small jar of olive oil.”

3 Elisha said, “Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don’t ask for just a few. 4 Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side.”

5 She left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. 6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, “Bring me another one.” But he replied, “There is not a jar left.” Then the oil stopped flowing. 7 She went and told the man of God, and he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left.”

End video SR-06e - Prophets Perform Miracles video- (Info above: miracle: Elisha & oil)

Slide- Elisha & Miracle of Flowing Oil

Miracles proved God cared for His people.

- How much did the widow's **faith** have to do with the extent of the miracle?
 - She had to go collect the jars

Start Video SR-06f - Prophets Tell Future

In addition to giving prophecies, Isaiah gave hope for the coming Redeemer, also called the Messiah. Many of these would not be fully understood until Christ was born. In the New Testament in **1 Peter 1:10-12**, Peter says prophets even wondered about their predictions.

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

1 Peter

God had told the people how they could tell if a prophet was true or not. Let's read that in **Deuteronomy 18:21,22-**

21 You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?" 22 If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously, so do not be alarmed.

Let's see what the New Testament says about Prophets in **2 Peter 1:20-21-**

20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

End Video SR-06f - Prophets Tell Future. (info above: Redeemer prophesied & 1 Peter quote re prophets, how to tell true prophet, 2 Peter's quote re: true prophet)

Slide- Prophetic Scripture

Peter: ...no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit... 2 Peter 1:20-21

- What does this passage tell us about Scripture?
 - The Holy Spirit told them what to say/write
 - And because so thousands of prophecies came true we know God's Word is true (and that future prophecies will come true)

Slide: Prophets' Prophecies

Peter: 10...the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit

of Christ in them was pointing...¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told...¹ Peter 1:10-12

- Who were the prophets serving when they spoke?
 - They knew it was about the future and that they were serving them because they were obedient to tell God's words as instructed
- What does this say about their **faith**?
 - It was deep and courageous because they spoke God's words while often being misunderstood and persecuted, even killed
- How does this affect your **faith** looking at future prophecies?

Slide- Prophet's Claims

... "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord?" ²² If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken... Deuteronomy 18:21-22

Prophets made short-term and long-term claims.

- How could people judge the truthfulness of a prophet?
 - Did they come true

Start Video SR-06g - Southern Kingdom (Judah)

Now let's return to the history of the southern kingdom, Judah.

Judah had the Temple in Jerusalem. The first king was Rehoboam, Solomon's son. To preview their history, Judah had 19 kings and 1 queen. Of those, eight had the heart to obey God. Most of the time the Jews chose to worship idols. Consequently, God allowed judgment in the form of the Babylonians.

In 612 BC the Babylonians had conquered the Assyrians. In order for them to conquer Jerusalem, it took three sieges. In 586 BC Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians and the beautiful Temple destroyed.

Let's read part of one of the descriptions of Jerusalem's destruction. Zedekiah, who is mentioned, was an evil king in Judah. **2 Kings 25:1-15 says-**

25 *So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it. ² The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ³ By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat. ⁴ Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled*

toward the Arabah, ⁵ but the Babylonian army pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, ⁶ and he was captured. He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where sentence was pronounced on him.⁷ They killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.

⁸ On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, an official of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down. ¹⁰ The whole Babylonian army under the commander of the imperial guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem. ¹¹ Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile the people who remained in the city, along with the rest of the populace and those who had deserted to the king of Babylon. ¹² But the commander left behind some of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

¹³ The Babylonians broke up the bronze pillars, the movable stands and the bronze Sea that were at the temple of the LORD and they carried the bronze to Babylon. ¹⁴ They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, dishes and all the bronze articles used in the temple service. ¹⁵ The commander of the imperial guard took away the censers and sprinkling bowls—all that were made of pure gold or silver.

The Jews taken to Babylon, plus those left behind to work the land, did not intermarry with their captors. In this way, the Jewish bloodline was preserved for the coming Redeemer and God's Covenant could be fulfilled.

The prophet Jeremiah gave a specific prophecy of interest in our timeline in 29:10-

¹⁰ This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place."

God's grace is evident amidst judgment.

End Video SR-06g - Southern Kingdom (Judah) (info above: Judah, Babylonians take Jerusalem fulfills prophecy)

Slide: **Judgment on Judah**

¹⁶ But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the LORD was aroused against his people and there was no remedy. 2 Chronicles 36:16

- What does this say about the limit to God's mercy and patience?
 - It says His wrath will finally result in judgments
- How should this be a warning to us?

Slide- Prophecy of Plans

10 ...“When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place.¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:10-11

- What does this tell us about God?
 - He will still work out His sovereign plan in history which brings hope once again

Slide: Relationship With God

12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you,” declares the Lord, “and will bring you back from captivity...Jeremiah 29:12-13

- What does this tell us about God?
 - If one's heart will sincerely seek God He will listen to us and we will find God
- How should this change how you personally live life?
 - Call on Him, pray, and seek Him with all or heart

Start Video SR-06h - Daniel

It is important to mention a prophet named Daniel. Daniel was an adolescent when taken to Babylon in 605 BC.

In chapters 7-12 of his book, he records dreams which are prophecies. Many have been fulfilled. Some are yet to come. God made historical events happen according to His **sovereign** plan.

- An example of his fulfilled prophecies is his vision of four beasts. Daniel interprets them to mean the coming of four world empires. Historically the first would be the Persians who conquer the Babylonians in 539BC. Daniel lived to be an old man who served under Persian rule. It was during that time Daniel was thrown into the lion's den.

End Video SR-06h - Daniel - (Info above: Daniel & dream of beasts)

Slide (pix of 4 beasts/empires) (chart on slide)

- Which empires were prophesied to come after Babylon?
 - Medo-Persian...Greek...Roman
- How does this show the sovereignty of God?
 - Only God can know the future. Only God can make events happen to fulfill His prophetic plan.

Slide: (OT Highway chart on slide & Daniel circled)

Historically, we see Daniel comes after the Kings.

- In what category is Daniel?
 - Prophets
- What's the key word for his book?
 - Dreams

Start Video SR-06i - Cyrus

We read that the Jews would go back to their homeland after being gone 70 years. It would be a Persian king, Cyrus, who permitted the Jews to resettle Jerusalem. The prophet Isaiah, in **Isaiah 44:24-28**, predicted who that king would be, by name, 150 years before he lived-

*24 "This is what the LORD says—
your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:
I am the LORD,
the Maker of all things,
who stretches out the heavens,
who spreads out the earth by myself,
25 who foils the signs of false prophets
and makes fools of diviners,
who overthrows the learning of the wise
and turns it into nonsense,
26 who carries out the words of his servants
and fulfills the predictions of his messengers,
who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be inhabited,'
of the towns of Judah, 'They shall be rebuilt,'
and of their ruins, 'I will restore them,'
27 who says to the watery deep, 'Be dry,
and I will dry up your streams,'
28 who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd
and will accomplish all that I please;
he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt,"
and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."'"*

There is another interesting passage about Cyrus in the historical document of **2 Chronicles 36:22-23-**

*22 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing:
23 "This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: "'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you may go up, and may the LORD their God be with them.'"*

When Cyrus sent the Jewish people back to Judah, he gave them money and many of the Temple articles taken when the Babylonians destroyed it.

Cyrus sent the Jewish people back to Judah in three groups.

- First, in 538 BC, a military leader named Zerubbabel, returned with 50,000 Jews to resettle the land and rebuild God's Temple.
- Eighty years later, a spiritual leader named Ezra, returned with about 2000 men and their families. He was committed to teaching the people God's Word and how it applied to their lives. He influenced people's hearts to re-establish their relationship with God. This had been prophesied 200 years earlier.
- Thirteen years later, Nehemiah returned and led the people in rebuilding a wall around Jerusalem to defend it. **Nehemiah 6:15-16 says-**

15 So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. 16 When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

- Thus, the Jewish nation was reestablished.

Of interest, during this time other world events were Japan became a nation, Aesop wrote his fables, and cataract operations were performed in India.

End Video SR-06i - Cyrus (info above: Cyrus prophesies & Cyrus, Jews sent back 3 groups)

Slide: Cyrus

In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation...

"The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you may go up, and may the Lord their God be with them." 2 Chronicles 36:22-23

- What does this tell us about the **sovereignty of God**?
 - Because Cyrus lived 150 years before Jeremiah made the proclamation, we know God is sovereign over history for getting His plans accomplished through Cyrus.

Slide: Cyrus continued

150 years before Cyrus lived Isaiah prophesied:

*26...who says of Jerusalem, 'It shall be inhabited,'
of the towns of Judah, 'They shall be rebuilt,'
and of their ruins, 'I will restore them'...*

28... who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd
and will accomplish all that I please;
he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt,"
and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."' Isaiah 44:26 & 28

- What does this tell us about the **sovereignty of God**?
 - God told Isaiah Cyrus' specific name! And it came to pass historically.

Start Video SR-06j- 400 Years of Silence

Between the Old and New Testaments, 400 years passed when God did not speak through a prophet.

The prophet **Amos** had warned Israel this would happen in **8:11-12-**

11 "The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD,
"when I will send a famine through the land—
not a famine of food or a thirst for water,
but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.

12 People will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it.

It was during this time the Jews began to worship in local synagogues in addition to the Temple in Jerusalem.

Although God was silent, 400 years of historical events occurred which prepared for the coming Redeemer. The rise and fall of the empires which Daniel saw in his visions came true in that 400 years. This shows the sovereignty of God.

So it was that the next empire was the Greeks which conquered Persia. Alexander the Great conquered 14,000 miles of land. This introduced one common language: Greek. This allowed the scriptures to be translated into Greek- called the *Septuagint*. Now everyone could read God's Word.

Then the Romans defeated the Greeks. Rome ruled Israel at the time of the New Testament.

Two Roman contributions prepared for the coming of the Redeemer. One, they connected the empire by roads which will mean that after Jesus died and rose from the dead, His followers traveled on good roads to spread their message.

Secondly, the Romans established crucifixion and the coming Redeemer had to die by crucifixion to fulfill prophecy. In Psalm 22, 1000 years before Jesus was born, David described crucifixion without knowing anything about this method of death. Jesus had to be born into a Roman world in order to be crucified.

Of interest, during this time other world events were the births of Aristotle in Greece, Buddha in India, Confucius in China, and the construction of the Great Wall of China.

End Video SR-06J- 400 Years of Silence (Info above: Amos' prophecy, Greeks & Romans)

Slide: 400 Years of Silence

- Although God was silent for 400 years, how was He actively working to prepare for the promised Redeemer?
 - The Greeks brought in one language and had the Scriptures translated into Greek so everyone could read God's story to that point.
 - The Romans built roads throughout the empire preparing for the spread of the Gospel. In addition, the Romans used crucifixion as a way of death and the prophesied Messiah had to die by crucifixion (Ps. 22 and Isaiah 53).

Start Video SR-06K – Old Testament Summary

We have completed the Old Testament portion of A Bible OverView. Here is a summary incorporating all the themes: From the time God created people, He wanted to be known and have a relationship with us. He is a personal God. Because of the "fall of man" and the subsequent constant spiritual conflict, a blood sacrifice of a pure animal was needed to cover the sin in human's depraved hearts. Judgment is deserved and there are consequences for our sinful choices, but grace is offered. God made a covenant that a Redeemer would come through the "line of Promise". Faith in God's plan, accompanied by obedience to God's ways, are needed for success. Remembering God, who He is and what He has done for us, is key to staying in a right relationship with God and others.

The time was now right for the Redeemer and the Jews were anxious for Him to come. In the next session we will start the New Testament where we will learn who Jesus Christ is and why He is the promised Redeemer.

End Video SR-06K Old Testament Summary

Slide: A Bible OverView

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