

OLD TESTAMENT OVERVIEW

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| FIVE | PENTATEUCH/TORAH (Gen – Deut) |
| TWELVE | HISTORICAL BOOKS (Josh – Esther) |
| FIVE | POETIC BOOKS (Job – Song of Solomon) |
| FIVE | MAJOR PROPHETS (Isaiah – Daniel) |
| TWELVE | MINOR PROPHETS (Hosea – Malachi) |

OLD TESTAMENT OVERVIEW:

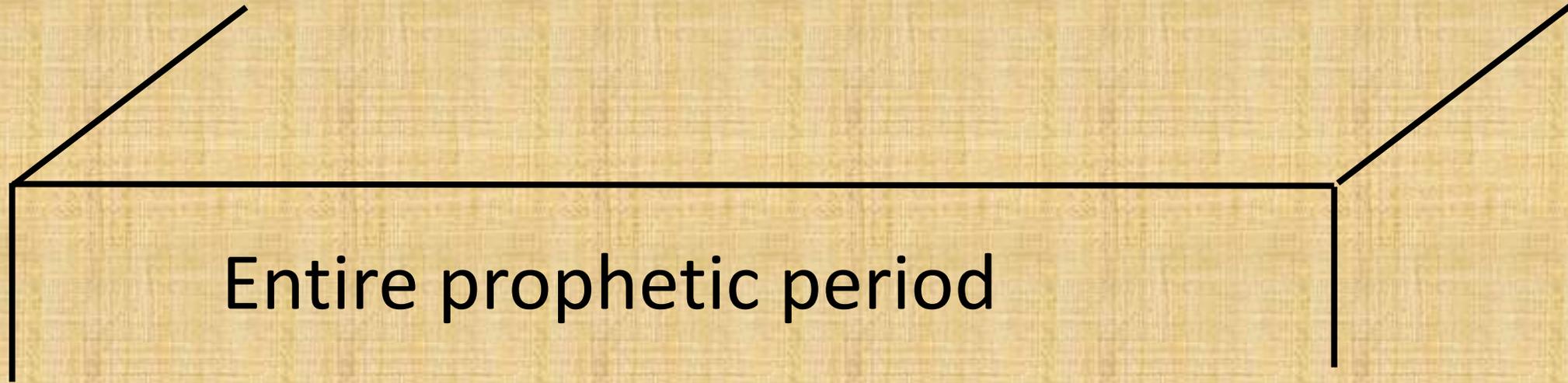
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|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Genesis | Creation | Fall | Flood | Babel |
| | Abraham | Isaac | Jacob | Joseph |
| Exodus | Slavery | Moses | Plagues | Exodus |
| | Red Sea | Sinai/Law | Tabernacle | Desert |
| Leviticus | Sacrifices | Laws for priests | Laws for sanctification/worship | |
| Numbers | Count people | Wander and die in desert | Count people | |
| Deuteronomy | 5 messages | Review of law for second generation | | Land covenant |
| Joshua | Jordan River | Conquest of land | Division of land | |
| Judges | 7 cycles of sin, slavery, deliverance | | | |

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|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Judges | 7 cycles of sin, slavery, deliverance | | Ruth takes place |
| 1 Samuel | Saul | (1051) | reigns 40 years |
| 2 Samuel | David | (1011) | Reigns 40 years |
| 1 Kings | Solomon | (971) | Reigns 40 years |
| 1 Kings 12 | Kingdom divides | Israel: 10 tribes in north (Samaria) under Jeroboam | Judah: 2 tribes in south (Jerusalem) under Rehoboam |
| 1 Kings 12-23 2 Kings | Divided kingdom | Israel: 19 kings 9 dynasties | Judah: 19 kings 1 dynasty (David) |

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|---|----------------------|---|
| Israel | Destroyed by Assyria | 722 B.C. |
| Judah | Destroyed by Babylon | 586 B.C. |
| After 70 years in exile in Babylon, Judah returns to the land and rebuilds the temple (completed in 516 B.C.) | | |
| Ezra | Rebuild the temple | Esther: Takes place between Ezra 6–7 |
| Nehemiah | Rebuild the walls | |
| Old Testament closes about 425 B.C. No further revelation from God until the birth of John the Baptist. | | |

Kingdom divides: 931 B.C.

OT closes c. 425 B.C.



Eight Old Testament books are post-exilic, that is, written after the exile in Babylon:

Ezra

Nehemiah

Esther

1 & 2 Chronicles

Haggai (rebuild the temple)

Zechariah (complete the temple; Messiah in the kingdom)

Malachi (worship distorted – less than 100 years post exile)

A horizontal timeline on a light brown wood-grain background. A thick black line runs across the bottom. Eight vertical grey lines of varying heights extend upwards from the black line to text labels. The labels are: 'Kingdom divides - 931 B.C.', 'Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria becomes king - 745 B.C.', 'King Uzziah dies 740 B.C. Isaiah begins his ministry.', 'Israel destroyed by Assyria - 722 B.C.', 'Sennacherib dies 681 B.C. Isaiah dies after that time', 'Judah destroyed by Babylon - 586 B.C.', 'Temple rebuilt - 516 B.C.', and 'OT closes - 425 B.C.'.

Kingdom divides - 931 B.C.

Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria
becomes king - 745 B.C.

**King Uzziah dies 740 B.C.
Isaiah begins his ministry.**

Israel destroyed by Assyria - 722 B.C.

**Sennacherib dies 681 B.C.
Isaiah dies after that time**

Judah destroyed by Babylon - 586 B.C.

Temple rebuilt - 516 B.C.

OT closes - 425 B.C.

Isaiah divides into two great sections:

Isaiah 1–39: Message of Judgment: focus on future judgment by God upon the nations and upon Israel for her disobedience to God.

Isaiah 40–66: Message of Comfort: Focus on God's future deliverance of Israel, the fulfilment of all of God's promises for Israel.

In the comfort section are four “Servant Songs”

They describe the service, suffering, and exaltation of the Servant of the Lord, the Messiah. All four songs show the Messiah to be God’s willing and obedient Servant.

SERVANT SONGS IN ISAIAH

Isaiah 42:1–9;

Isaiah 49:1–13;

Isaiah 50:4–11;

Isaiah 52:13–53:12

There are three basic divisions in Isaiah 40–66.

1. Isa. 40–48: focuses on the reality of a future deliverance for Israel. God promises that He will deliver no matter how bad, how impossible things may seem.

And within that there is the first song of the servant in Isaiah 42:1–9.

There are three basic divisions in Isaiah 40–66.

2. Isa. 49–55: The second division is a focus on the future deliverer of Israel. There are three songs in this section.

- The second song is in Isaiah 49:1–13,
- The third song is in 50:4–11, and
- The fourth song is in 52:13–53:12.

There are three basic divisions in Isaiah 40–66.

3. Isaiah 56–66 focuses on the future results of the deliverance of Israel, the kingdom in the future and what that will be like.

Isa. 42:1 “Behold! My Servant”

Isa. 52:13 “Behold! My Servant”

Who is the Servant?

Isaiah 20:3 refers to Isaiah himself:

“And the LORD said, ‘Even as My servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot three years as a sign and token against Egypt and Cush,’ ”

Who is the Servant?

- Isaiah 22:20 God refers to “my servant Eliakim.”

“Then it will come about in that day, That I will summon **My servant** Eliakim the son of Hilkiah.”

Eliakim was a faithful servant of God at the time of the Assyrian invasion. He was the master of the palace under Hezekiah.

Who is the Servant?

Isaiah 37:35 God refers to “**my servant David.**”

“ ‘For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.’ ”

Who is the Servant?

The nation Israel: Isaiah 41:8–9

“But you, Israel, **My servant**, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend, ⁹ You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its remotest parts, And said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you.’ ”

Who is the Servant?

Isaiah 20:3 refers to Isaiah himself:

“And the LORD said, ‘Even as **My servant** Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot three years as a sign and token against Egypt and Cush,’ ”

Who is the Servant? Israel

Isaiah 42:18–20, “Hear, you deaf! And look, you blind, that you may see.

¹⁹ “Who is blind but **My servant**, Or so deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is so blind as he that is at peace *with Me*, Or so blind as the servant of the LORD?

²⁰ “You have seen many things, but you do not observe *them*; *Your* ears are open, but none hears.”

Isaiah 43:10, “ ‘You are My witnesses,’ declares the LORD, ‘And **My servant** whom I have chosen, In order that you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me.’ ”

Isaiah 44:1, “But now listen, O Jacob, **My servant**; And Israel, whom I have chosen:”

Isaiah 1:4, “Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, They have turned away from Him.”

Isaiah 29:10, “For the LORD has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep, He has shut your eyes, the prophets; And He has covered your heads, the seers.”

It is clear that these passages refer to Israel as the servant of God. But the nation of Israel is viewed as being too corrupt to fulfill God's purpose.

So, Isaiah presents a Second Servant, and it is the role of the Second Servant to fulfill the mission of redemption for the people.

There are many, especially among Jews today, who, when they read Isaiah 53, say that the Servant of YHWH is Israel. But a careful reading of Isaiah will prove that this cannot be the case.

Isaiah 52:9, “Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem.”

His role is mentioned in Isaiah 42:7, “To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon, And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.”

The Jewish people have failed in their servant function. They cannot redeem themselves because they are spiritually blind and disobedient, and they have pursued the idols of the Babylonians.

Isaiah 53:11, “... By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.”

Notice that here the Servant is identified as “righteous.” Israel cannot be considered righteous, and certainly Israel has no basis for justifying themselves or anyone else.

Isaiah 49:5–6, “And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb [the human, physical aspect], to be His Servant to bring Jacob back to Him”

How can Israel bring Jacob back? He can't, this has to be a separate person who brings Israel back.

Isaiah 49:6, “Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

The 4th Servant Song: Isaiah 52:13–53:12

The major question that Isaiah 52:13– 53:12 raises within Rabbinic Judaism is whether the section refers to an individual (namely, the Messiah) or to the nation of Israel. The following quotation summarizes the modern Orthodox Jewish view:

The servant is the ideal Israel or the faithful remnant. That he is not an individual is the opinion of all Jewish and most modern non-Jewish commentators ... Whatever causes may have tended to stimulate the advocacy of this form of interpretation (viz. the Christological), it is important for Christian exegetes to recognize that this path of Jewish exposition is in the main right, and that the path of Christian interpreters down to the time of Rosenmüller (i.e., 1820) has been in the main wrong.

~Slotki, Israel Wolf. *Isaiah with Hebrew Text and English Translation with an Introduction and Commentary*, Soncino Books of Books of the Bible. London, England: Soncino Press, 1966.

The 17th century Jewish historian, Raphael Levi, admitted that long ago the rabbis used to read Isaiah 53 in synagogues, but after the chapter caused “arguments and great confusion” the rabbis decided that the simplest thing would be to just take that prophecy out of the ... readings in synagogues. That’s why today when Isaiah 52 is read the reader stops in the middle of the chapter and the week after skips straight to Isaiah 54.

The majority of rabbinic interpretations today make Isaiah 52:13–53:12 a reference to the nation of Israel suffering in a Gentile world. However, the context shows that this cannot be so. It shows that the Servant has to be an individual personality.

To be continued