

A Brief History of the Old Testament

After **creation** Adam and Eve fell out of perfect relationship with God. God sent the **flood**. And, at the tower of Babel the **nations** are born. Then about **four thousand years** ago God called Abraham. Abraham left from **Ur** which is near the **Persian Gulf** which tastes like **S.A.L.T.** Salt reminds us that when God called, the group that left Ur was **Sarah** (Abraham's wife). **Abraham, Lot** (Abraham's nephew), and **Terah** (Abraham's father). They traveled along the **Tigris and Euphrates**. Their first stop was **Haran** where **Terah Dies**.

Now for a geography lesson.. We have the **Sea of Galilee** that flows into the **Jordan River** which dumps into the **Dead Sea**. To the West is the **Mediterranean**. Between these bodies of water lies **Israel**.

The nation of Israel grew. There are several important characters in the generations following Abraham. Abraham's sons were **Ishmael** and **Isaac**. Isaac's sons were **Esau** and **Jacob**. One of Jacob's sons was **Joseph** who was taken to **Egypt** after his brothers sold him into slavery.

The **Jews** eventually ended up in **Egypt** when a famine drove Joseph's brothers to Egypt in a quest for food. They remained in Egypt and eventually spent **400 years** in **bondage** as the slaves of Pharaoh. That was until **Moses** went before Pharaoh and took God's message, "**Let my people go!**" But Pharaoh had a hard heart and said, "**No.**" So God sent **ten plagues** culminating with the most frightening, the angel of death visited Egyptian households while he passed over the Israelite households. That event is referred to as **Passover**. Pharaoh relented and told the Jews they could leave Egypt. The Jews fled and only escaped Pharaoh's continued wickedness when God miraculously parted the **Red Sea**. From there they went to **Mt. Sinai** where Moses received the **law** and the teaching on the **tabernacle**. The tabernacle is where the **Levites and priests** gave **offerings** and celebrated **feasts**.

After leaving Mt. Sinai the Jews moved into the desert where they were **counting the faces** for a census. They traveled to **Kadesh Oasis**. From there they sent out the twelve spies. Because of the reports of ten of the **twelve spies** the nation **wanders** in the desert and a whole generation **dies**. They finally end up in **Moab** where **Moses** gives the **second law** (a series sermon on the original laws) and then he **dies**.

God has cleansed the nation of the doubting generation and now allows **Joshua** to cross the **Jordan**. They travel to and destroy the heathen city of **Jericho** with the famous blowing of the trumpets and crumbling of the walls. Once in the land the Jews divide and conquer two military campaigns; first the **South** and then the **North** of the land God has promised. Then again they **divide** the land but this time it is to **settle**. They divide the land between the **twelve tribes** of Israel.

Our next move takes us into the period of the Judges which lasts for **400 years**. Three examples of the judges are **Deborah, Gideon, and Samson**. During this period of the judges, "**every man did that which was right in his own eyes,**" except for **Ruth** and **Samuel**.

Samuel is the last of the judges and he anoints the first king which takes us into the period of the **United Kingdom** which lasted **120 years**. During that time the kings were; **Saul** who had **no heart** for God, **David** who had a **whole heart** for God, and **Solomon** who had a **half heart** for God. Solomon's sons take us into the period of the **divided kingdom** which lasted for **400 years**.

The kingdom was divided into the **North** and the **South**. The North being **Israel** and the South being **Judah**. In the northern kingdom there were **19** kings. In the southern kingdom there were **20** kings. Of the 19 in the North, **0** were good kings (kings who had a heart for God.) In the South, of the 20 kings, **8** were good.

During the period of the divided kingdom the **prophets speak** on behalf of God and warn the Jews to "**shape up or ship out**" Because the message falls on deaf ears **Assyria** comes and overtakes **Israel**. Then they **scatter** them throughout the Middle East. About 150 years later **Babylonia** comes down and conquers **Judah** who they eventually take into **exile** for **70 years**. After a period of time Babylonia is taken over by **Persia**. Persia has no interest in the Jews so they allow **Judah** to **return** to the promised land.

The first wave of people to return came with **Zerubbabel** to rebuild the **temple**. During this time **Esther** becomes **Queen** to Persia. The second wave of people came back with **Ezra** who was responsible for bringing back most of the people. The third wave came back with **Nehemiah** who was responsible for organizing the rebuilding of the **walls**. Then in Scripture there is a period **of 400 years of silence**, and then we move to the New Testament with the arrival of **Christ**.

A Brief History of the New Testament

The Early Life and Ministry of Jesus

Bethlehem is the city of Jesus' Birth, which took place in the winter of 5/4 B.C. Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt to escape Herod and then returned to **Nazareth** where He was raised by his construction worker father who was a **Carpenter** or stone mason. Jesus inaugurated His ministry when He went to the Jordan River to be **Baptized by John**. Immediately after this He went to the **Wilderness** where He was **Tempted by Satan** but overcame each one.

The Early Judean Ministry

Jesus went to **Jerusalem** often (likely three times a year for the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Trumpets). On one trip He taught Nicodemus about the **Second Birth** which is necessary to be saved. From time to time He had a ministry in Samaria on His way to Jerusalem. On one trip He stopped at **Sychar** where He met a **Woman at the Well** and proved to her that He was Messiah which was a message she shared with many others.

The Galilean Ministry

Early in His ministry Jesus was in His hometown of **Nazareth** and experienced a clear **Rejection** in the Synagogue there. He decided to move his base of operation and ministry to the lakeside city of **Capernaum** on the Sea of Galilee. From there He made a **Selection of the Twelve** Apostles whom He trained to carry out his ministry. He preached the **Sermon on the Mount** explaining that righteousness cannot be earned but must be imputed. Jesus was accused by the religious leaders that He is getting his **Power from Satan** which led Him to teach in a different way. The **Parables Start** in order to teach those who have spiritual insight and confuse those with religious pride. On the Sea of Galilee **A Storm Stilled** proved to his disciples that He was the Son of God. Later as His following was growing, **A Crowd Filled** up with a miraculous meal that included twelve baskets of leftovers demonstrated Jesus makes more than enough provision for the nation of Israel. Near the middle of His ministry, a **Testimony of Peter** made it clear that Jesus is the Son of God. The **Transfiguration** of Jesus in the presence of Peter, James and John revealed His full glory.

Later Judean Ministry

The opposition to Jesus continued to grow in **Jerusalem** until **Stones Flew** from the religious leaders trying to kill Him; therefore, **Jesus Withdrew** and began to focus on training his disciples. In **Perea**, across the Jordan, He taught his disciples about **Counting the Cost** and how He was **Seeking the Lost**.

Last Week in Jerusalem

Jesus made His final trip to **Judea** at the time of the Passover and on the way He stopped in Bethany where **Lazarus Raised** from the dead caused many to believe in Him. While in Jericho a tax collector came to faith in Jesus. **Zacchaeus Praised** by Jesus demonstrated that all sinners can find salvation in Him. Finally, Jesus arrived in **Jerusalem** in a **Triumphal Entry** which is quickly followed by a **Temple Cleansing**. On the night before His crucifixion He had a **Last Supper** with His Disciples. He went to the Garden of Gethsemane where he **Prayed** and is **Betrayed** by Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples. Jesus is **Tried** three times and found innocent each time. He is **Denied** by Peter, **Crucified** by the Romans, and finally **Resurrected** to prove He is the Son of God and Savior of the world.

Establishment of the Church

The word **ASCENDS** helps us remember that in Acts Jesus **Ascends** into heaven, gives the **Spirit** which enables the Apostles to **Cure** people as a sign to authenticate their message. Ananias and Sapphires' **Embezzlement** of sorts resulted in their death. After being arrested, Peter and John experienced a **Night Release** and the gospel exploded so much that they had to appoint **Deacons** to take care of some duties to keep the Apostles focused on the Word of God and Prayer. **Stephen** was the first Christian to be martyred for his faith in Christ.

Extension of the Church

The **Persecution** of the church by the Jews became official but this did not prevent **Philip's Preaching** from spreading the Gospel to Samaria. After harshly persecuting the church, **Paul's Conversion** on the road to Damascus resulted in a dramatic change in the future of the Gospel witness. **Peter's Vision** cleared the way for Gentiles to be fully accepted into the church.

Expansion of the Church

Paul's **First Missionary Journey** lasted **Two Years** as he took the gospel to the region of **Galatia**. After the journey he returned to **Jerusalem** where the leaders of the church held a **Council** and said "Law? . . . No!" Paul's **Second Missionary Journey** lasted **Three Years** as he planted churches in **Macedonia —Achaia —Greece**. His **Third Missionary Journey** lasted **Four Years** and he planted churches in **Asia**. Like Jesus, Paul went through three **Trials** before **Felix**, **Festus**, and **Agrippa**. His **First Imprisonment** was in Caesarea and then Rome. After his **Freedom** from Rome he evangelized in more places, perhaps in Spain, until his **Second Imprisonment** which did not stop the church but led to further **Expansion**.