

OLD TESTAMENT (1) - ADAM TO SAMSON

(Genesis to Judges)

1. ALIENATION & TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES

[Genesis 1-11]

Early history: -

- individual 'pen-portraits': -
 - Adam (rebellion)
 - Cain (guilt, despair)
 - Enoch (need of help, communion with God, 5:22)
 - Noah (obedience, 6:22)
- collective sin
 - perversion (6:5-7)
 - pride (11:4, 'a name for ourselves')

But, throughout OT, its portraiture of God is of the greatest importance: -

God's holiness – human contrasts: -

- a guilty rebel (3:8, 23)
- a protected fugitive (4:15)
- a dependent friend (5:22-24)
- a responsive partner (6:18, 22; 7:5)
- an arrogant builder (11:1-9)

2. PROMISE & UNMERITED BLESSINGS

[Genesis 12-50 / ?Job]

Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

God's power - promising what God alone is able to give: -

- land (12:1; 13:14-15:1; 15:7; 17:8) and
- life (12:2, 7; 13:15b-16; 15:5; 17:2, 16-17; 18:10-15)

Power to: -

- give life in grace (birth of Isaac) and
- take life in judgment (on evil cities, 19:1-29)

God's mercy: -

- saving families: -
 - Noah and family
 - Lot and daughters
- and individuals: -
 - Isaac, providing a substitute lamb (22:8, 12-13)

God's patience: -

- with materialistic (25:29-34), deceitful Jacob (27:19)
Not attractive biblical character (God does not only love the loveable; hope for all!) but human life can be transformed – this is ‘the gospel in Genesis’, love for a lonely refugee (28:10-17) and a returning, now accompanied, prosperous yet fearful traveller (32:22-32)

God's sovereignty: -

- Joseph triumphs over an unhappy beginning (37:4) – a story of personal holiness (39:9), courage (39:20-21), compassion (45:1-4; 50:15-21) and confidence (45:5-7; 50:24-26)

3. DELIVERANCE & HUMAN FAILURE **[Exodus-Deuteronomy]**

Moses

Exodus - From Egypt to Sinai (one year) through desert (**Numbers**) to unbelief at Kadesh Barnea (Num 13-14) followed by 40 year delay in the wilderness

Leviticus – worship and daily life

Numbers describes the journey – stark realism, e.g. complaints about their diet (11:4), leader (12:1-3) and destination (13:30-14:4)

Before entering the land, the departing Moses preaches to the people – **Deuteronomy**

4. SETTLEMENT & EVIDENT NEED **[Joshua-Judges]**

Joshua – entry into, possession, sharing (tribal territories) and unification of the land under Moses' younger colleague, Joshua

Judges – occasional stories of courage and confidence (Gideon) but overall picture is of apostasy, disobedience (17:6; 21:25)

Cyclic pattern – disloyalty (2:8-11), judgment (2:15), plea (6:7), deliverance (2:16-18) followed by further disobedience (2:19) – a pattern repeated throughout the book

Samson typical of gifted leader, but in pursuit of godless ambitions, yet repeated mercy (16:15-20, 22, 28).

Inexhaustible grace!