

1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings

These four books are a continuation of the History Books of the Bible. The events of 1 Samuel span approximately 100 years, from about 1100 B.C. to c. 1000 B.C., and describe the lives of Samuel, Saul, and young David. The events of 2 Samuel cover another 40 years. The Book of 1 Kings spans about 350 more years describing the reign of Solomon, and continues the story of kings over the divided kingdom (Israel and Judah) concluding in 2 Kings with the final overthrow and deportation of both Israel and Judah's people, to Assyria and Babylon respectively.

1 Samuel

Author: The author is anonymous. We know that Samuel wrote a book (1 Samuel 10:25), and it is very possible that he wrote part of this book as well. Other possible contributors to 1 Samuel are the prophets/historians Nathan and Gad (1 Chronicles 29:29). Originally, the books of 1 and 2 Samuel were one book.

The Date of Writing: About _____ B.C.

The Purpose of this Book: First Samuel records the history of Israel in the land of Canaan as they move from the rule of _____ to being a unified nation under _____. The prophet Samuel emerges as the last judge, and he anoints the first two kings of Israel, _____ and _____.

Key Verses: Beware of rejecting God's rule, 1 Samuel 8:6-7, and to obey God is always better than any sacrifice you may try and make, 1 Samuel 15:22.

Brief Summary: First Samuel can be neatly divided into two sections: the life of _____ (chapters 1-12) and the life of _____ (chapters 13-31).

The book starts with the miraculous birth of Samuel in answer to his mother's earnest prayer. As a child, Samuel lived and served in the temple. God singled him out as a prophet (3:19-21), and the child's first prophecy was one of judgment on the corrupt priests.

The Israelites go to war with their enemies, the _____. The Philistines capture the ark of the covenant, but when the Lord sends judgment upon them, the Philistines return the ark. Samuel calls Israel to repentance (7:3-6) and then to victory over the Philistines.

The people of Israel, wanting to be like other nations, desire a king. Samuel is displeased by their demands, but the Lord tells him that it is not Samuel's leadership they are rejecting, but His own. After warning the people of what having a king would mean, Samuel anoints a Benjamite named Saul, who is crowned in Mizpah (10:17-25).

Saul enjoys initial success, defeating the Ammonites in battle (chapter 11). But then he makes a series of errors in judgment:

1. He presumptuously offers a sacrifice (chapter 13),
2. He makes a foolish vow at the expense of his son Jonathan (chapter 14),
3. And he disobeys the Lord's direct command to annihilate the Amalekites (chapter 15).
4. As a result of Saul's rebellion, God chooses another man to take Saul's place as king. When God removes His blessing from Saul, an evil spirit drives Saul toward madness (16:14).

Meanwhile, Samuel travels to the little village of _____ to anoint a young man named David as the next king of Israel (chapter 16). Later, David has his famous confrontation with _____ the Philistine and becomes a national hero (chapter 17). David serves in Saul's court, marries Saul's daughter, and is befriended by Saul's son. Saul himself grows _____ of David's success and popularity, and he attempts to kill David. David flees, and so begins an extraordinary period of adventure, intrigue, and romance while running for his life from king Saul. With

supernatural aid, David narrowly but consistently eludes the bloodthirsty Saul (chapters 19-26). Through it all, David maintains his integrity and his friendship with _____.

Near the end of the book, Samuel has died, and Saul is a lost man. On the eve of a battle with the Philistines, Saul seeks for direction. Having rejected God, he finds no help from heaven, and he seeks counsel from a witch instead. During the séance, _____ soul rises from the dead to give one last prophecy: that Saul would die in battle the next day. The prophecy is fulfilled; Saul's three sons, including Jonathan, die in the battle, and Saul commits suicide.

Practical Application: The tragic story of Saul is a study in _____. Here was a man who had it all—honour from God and man, authority, riches, good looks, and more. Yet he died in despair, terrified of his enemies and knowing he had failed his nation, his family, and his God.

Saul made the mistake of thinking disobedience didn't matter. Like many today, he believed that a sensible motive will compensate for bad behaviour. Perhaps his power went to his head, and he began to think he was above the rules. Somehow he developed a low opinion of God's commands and a high opinion of himself. Even when confronted with his wrongdoing, he attempted to justify himself, and that's when God rejected him (15:16-28).

Saul's problem is one we all face—a problem of the _____. Obedience to God's will is necessary for success, and if we in pride rebel against Him, we set ourselves up for loss.

David, on the other hand, did not seem like much at first. Even Samuel was tempted to overlook him (16:6-7). But God sees the heart and saw in David a man who would follow after His own heart (13:14). The humility and integrity of David, coupled with his boldness for the Lord and his commitment to prayer, sets a good example for all of us.

A Simple Outline of 1 Samuel

- I. **Birth and Early Years of _____** (1:1-4:1a) – Hannah's Burden, Faith, and Blessing
 - A. Eli's Family Problems (2:12-36)
 - B. God speaks with Samuel (3:1-18)
 - C. Samuel, the prophet (3:19-4:1a)
- II. **Samuel's Leadership of Israel** (4 – 15)
 - A. Abuse of the _____ by the Philistines (4:1b-7:2)
 - B. Samuel Judges Israel (7:3-17)
 - C. The Quest for a King (8:1-12:25) – Saul is selected
 - D. Samuel Steps Down from being Judge in Israel (12:1-25)
 - E. Saul's Kingship (13:1-15:35) – Pretty good leader at first
 - F. Saul's rejection as king after only two years (15:10-35)
- III. **Saul and David** (16:1-30:31)
 - A. David's Rise to Power (16:1-18:30)
 1. Samuel anoints young David (16:1-13)
 2. David enters Saul's service as a _____ player (16:14-23)
 3. David kills Goliath (17:1-58)
 4. Jonathan and David become best of friends (18:1-5)
 5. Women praise David's abilities in battle (18:6-9) and causes envy in Saul's heart
 6. Saul tries to kill David (18:10-11)
 7. David continues to succeed (18:12-16)
 8. David kills Philistines to marry Saul's daughter _____ (18:17-29)
 - B. Saul Versus David (19:1-27:12)
 1. God protects David (19:1-21:15)
 2. David Protects His _____ (22:1-23:5)
- IV. **Saul's Final Battle** (28:1-31:13)

2 Samuel

The Author: The Book of 2 Samuel does not identify its author. It probably was Nathan and Gad (see 1 Chronicles 29:29).

The Date of Writing: The events of 1 Samuel span approximately 100 years, from c. 1100 B.C. to c. 1000 B.C. The events of 2 Samuel cover another 40 years. The date of writing, then, would be sometime after 960 B.C.

The Purpose of Writing: 2 Samuel is the inspired record of King David's reign.

Key Verses: David's kingdom and everlasting kingdom (2Sam 7:16); You cannot worship God without a cost (2Sam 24:24)

Brief Summary: The book of 2 Samuel is broadly divided into two main sections—David's _____ (chapters 1-10) and David's _____ (chapters 11-20). The last part of the book (chapters 21-24) is an appendix which contains further details of David's reign that are not in chronological order.

The book begins with David receiving news of the death of Saul and his sons. He proclaims a time of mourning. Soon afterward, David is crowned king over Judah, while Ish-bosheth, one of Saul's surviving sons, is crowned king over Israel (chapter 2). A civil war follows, but Ish-bosheth is murdered, and the Israelites ask David to reign over them as well (chapters 4-5).

David moves the country's capital from Hebron to Jerusalem and later moves the ark of the covenant there as well in anticipation of building a permanent Temple there (chapters 5-6). David's plan to build a temple in Jerusalem is vetoed by God, Who then promises David the following things:

- 1) That David would have a son to rule after him;
- 2) David's son would build the temple;
- 3) The throne occupied by David's lineage would be established forever; and
- 4) God would _____ take His mercy from David's house (2 Samuel 7:4-16).

David leads Israel to victory over many of the enemy nations which surrounded them. He also shows kindness to the family of Jonathan by taking in _____, Jonathan's crippled son (chapters 8-10) and treating him as a son. A great picture of mercy and grace!

Then, David falls. He lusts for a beautiful woman named Bathsheba, commits adultery with her, and then has her husband murdered (chapter 11). When Nathan the prophet confronts David with his sin, David confesses, and God graciously forgives. However, the Lord tells David that trouble would arise from within his own household.

Trouble does come when David's firstborn son, Amnon, rapes his half-sister, Tamar. In retaliation, Tamar's brother Absalom kills Amnon. Absalom then flees Jerusalem rather than face his father's anger. Later, Absalom leads a revolt against David, and some of David's former associates join the rebellion (chapters 15-16). David is forced out of Jerusalem, and Absalom sets himself up as king for a short time. Absalom is overthrown, however, and—against David's wishes—is killed by David's general Joab. David mourns his fallen son.

A general feeling of unrest plagues the remainder of David's reign. The men of Israel threaten to split from Judah, and David must suppress another uprising (chapter 20).

The book's appendix includes information concerning a three-year famine in the land (chapter 21), a song of David (chapter 22), a record of the exploits of David's bravest warriors (chapter 23), and David's sinful census and the ensuing plague (chapter 24).

Practical Application: Anyone can fall. Even a godly man like David, who truly desired to follow God and who was richly blessed by God, was susceptible to temptation. David's sin with Bathsheba should be a warning to all of us to guard the heart. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

God is gracious to forgive even the most awful of sins when we truly repent. However, healing the wound caused by sin does not always erase the scar. Sin has natural consequences, and even after he was forgiven, David reaped what he had sown. How much better to avoid sin in the first place, rather than having to seek forgiveness later!

A Simple Outline of the Events of 2 Samuel

I. David Mourns for Saul and Jonathan (1:1-27)

- A. David discovers Saul and Jonathan are dead (1:1-16) – the battle with the Philistines went bad
- B. The Song of David about Jonathan's Death (1:17-27)

II. David's Way to Kingship (2:1-5:5)

- A. David is anointed King of Judah (2:1-4a)
- B. David rewards Jabesh-gilead for caring for Saul's body (2:4b-7)
- C. Rebellious Ishbosheth appointed King of Israel (2:8-11)
- D. There is a brief War between Israel and Judah (2:12-3:1)
- E. David's sons are born (3:2-5)
- F. Abner defects from Saul's army to David, Joab kills Abner out of jealousy (3:6-39)
- G. Ishbosheth is murdered and his head brought to David (4:1-12)
- H. David is finally anointed king of all Israel (5:1-3) – it has been _____ years since David's anointing by Samuel

III. David's Early Successes as King (5:6-10:19)

- A. David captures _____ from the Jebusites for his capital (5:6-12)
- B. David has more sons (5:13-16)
- C. David's Victories over the Philistines (5:17-25)
- D. David brings Ark to Jerusalem (6:1-23)
- E. God makes a covenant with David (7:1-29)
- F. Some of the nations David subdued (8:1-14)
- G. David's administration of Israel (8:15-18)
- H. David cares for Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (9:1-13)
- I. David defeats the Ammonites and Arameans (10:1-19)

IV. David's Difficulties (11:1-21:22)

- A. David and Bathsheba (11:1-12:25)
 1. Adultery and murder (11:1-27)
 2. Nathan, the prophet, confronts David (12:1-15a)
 3. Death of Bathsheba's son (12:15b-23)
 4. The Birth of _____ (12:24-25)
- B. David conquers the Ammonites (12:26-31)
- C. Rape of David's daughter Tamar (13:1-39)
 1. Amnon rapes Tamar (13:1-19)
 2. David's inaction (13:20-22)
 3. Absalom kills Amnon and flees (13:23-39)
- D. _____ rebellion against God, and his family (14:1-19:43)
 1. Absalom's return to David (14:1-33)



2. Absalom leads a rebellion against David (15:1-12) – takes over the kingdom
 3. David flees Jerusalem (15:13-16:14)
 4. Absalom follows bad advice (16:15-17:14)
 5. David follows good advice (17:15-29)
 6. David's army defeats Absalom and Joab wrongfully kills Absalom (18:1-32)
 7. David mourns for Absalom (18:33-19:4)
 8. Joab shames David out of his mourning (19:5-8a)
 9. Those who opposed David plead for mercy (19:8b-43)
- E. The Rebellion of Sheba (20:1-22) – tries to set himself up as king, but is defeated
 - F. David's officers and administrators (20:23-26)
 - G. The Gibeonites get justice concerning Saul's wrongful acts against them (21:1-14)
 - H. David's age shows in a battle with Philistia (21:15-17)
 - I. Battles against giants that were in the land still (21:18-22)
- V. **The Song of David** (22:1-51)
- VI. **The Last Words of David** (23:1-7)
- VII. **David's Thirty Three Mighty Men and Their Victories** (23:8-39)
- A. The Three Mightiest of the Mighty Men (23:8-17)
 1. Adino the Eznite (23:8) – slew _____ men single-handedly
 2. Eleazar (23:9-10) – fought all alone, until the sword “clave to his hand”
 3. Shammah (23:11-12) – defended a field of bean plants (_____) single-handedly
 - B. Bravery of three other mighty men (23:13-17) – risked their lives to get water for David from a well in Bethlehem
 - C. The list of the Thirty Mighty men (23:18-39)
- VIII. **David's Sinful _____** (24:1-25) – a matter of pride instead of war
- A. The Census (24:1-9) – not for war, but only for pride
 - B. David repents (24:10)
 - C. David's punishment (24:11-17)
 - D. David builds an altar (24:18-25)

1 Kings

Author: The Book of 1 Kings does not specifically name its author. The tradition is that it was written by the Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Date of Writing: The Book of 1 Kings was likely written between 750 – 650 B.C.

The Purpose of Writing: This book is the sequel to 1 and 2 Samuel and begins by tracing Solomon's rise to kingship after the death of David. The story begins with a united kingdom, but ends in a nation divided into 2 kingdoms, known as Judah and Israel. 1 and 2 Kings are combined into one book in the Hebrew Bible. They show why God's people were conquered by Babylon and taken captive when they should have been conquerors.

Key Verses: God promises blessings on Solomon but only if he obeys (1Kings 3:5-14); Solomon loved MANY women (1 Kings 11:1); Elijah had great power with God by prayer (1 Kings 17:1)

Brief Summary: The book starts with _____ and ends with _____. The difference between the two gives you an idea as to what lies between. Solomon was born after a palace scandal between David and Bathsheba. Like his dad, he had a weakness for women that would bring him down. Solomon did well at first, praying for wisdom and building a temple to God that took 7 years. But then he spent 13 years building a palace for himself. His accumulation of many wives led him to worship their idols and led him away from God. This, in turn, led the nation away from God and even the preaching of Elijah could not bring them back. Elijah tried, even to challenging the idols to overpower God, and God won. This made Queen Jezebel angry (to say the least). She ordered Elijah's death so he ran away and said; "Let me die." God sent food to the prophet and whispered in a "still, small, voice", and in the process saved his life for further work. But Elijah never regained his confidence in the Lord after that due to depression.



Practical Application: In between Solomon and Elijah, you will find it all. Rebellion, corruption, courage and faith. You will see that their world is much like ours. Things haven't changed and neither has God. The quiet, gentle sound that encouraged Elijah will encourage you. Makes sure you listen for it, and listen to it, so that you can obey every word and be blessed again!

A Simple Outline of 1 Kings

- I. **Solomon Becomes King (1:1-2:46)**
 - A. David's last acts (1:1-2:12)
 1. A pitiful David (1:1-4) – weak and worn out
 2. Adonijah's bid for kingship (1:5-10)
 3. Nathan and Bathsheba encourage David to make Solomon king (1:11-27)
 4. David gives instructions about his son Solomon being the next king (1:28-37)
 5. Solomon is proclaimed king (1:38-48)
 6. Adonijah pleads for mercy (1:49-53)
 7. David's final instructions to Solomon (2:1-9)
 8. David's death and burial (2:10)
 9. Solomon established as king (2:12)

B. Solomon removes potential threats from his authority (2:13-46)

1. Adonijah killed (2:13-25)
2. Abiathar banished (2:26-27)
3. Joab killed (2:28-35)
4. Shimei killed (2:36-46a)
5. Solomon established as king (2:46b)

II. **Solomon's Glory** (3:1-10:29; Cf Lk 12:27)

- A. His Marriage to Pharaoh's daughter (3:1)
- B. He makes a questionable Sacrifice at the high places (3:2-3)
- C. Solomon's wisdom (3:4-28)
 1. Solomon asks God for wisdom (3:4-15)
 2. Solomon shows his wisdom - determines the mother of a son (3:16-28)
- D. Solomon's administrators (4:1-19)
- E. Solomon's influence over the surrounding kingdoms (4:20-21)
- F. Solomon's provisions and wealth (4:22-28)
- G. More of Solomon's wisdom (4:29-34)
- H. Solomon's building projects (5:1-7:51)
 1. The _____ (5:1-6:38) – 7 years in the making
 2. Other building projects (7:1-14) like his own house
 3. Further Temple work (7:15-51)
- I. Dedication of the Temple (8:1-66) – Solomon's wisest prayer
- J. God makes a covenant with Solomon (9:1-9)
- K. The Cost and administration of Solomon's building (9:10-23)
- L. Further building projects (9:24)
- M. Solomon's sacrifices (9:25)
- N. Solomon's naval fleet (9:26-28)
- O. Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (10:1-10)
- P. Solomon's incredible wealth (10:11-27)
- Q. Solomon's chariot and horse business (10:28-29)

III. **Solomon's Sin and Death** (11:1-43)

- A. Solomon's sin (11:1-8) – like father (David and Bathsheba), like son
 1. Marrying _____ women (11:1-3) – unequal yokes (2Cor 6)
 2. Worshipping other gods (11:4-8)
- B. Solomon's punishment (11:9-40)
 1. The Kingdom will not be given to his son (11:9-13)
 2. Enemies will win over the nation (11:14-40)
- C. The Death of Solomon (11:41-43)

IV. **Split Kingdom - Two Kings:** _____ of Judah, and _____ of Israel (12:1-14:31)

- A. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, loses northern tribes (12:1-19)
- B. Jeroboam made King of Israel (12:20)
- C. Rehoboam warned not to fight Israel (12:21-24)
- D. Jeroboam's capital is in Samaria and he worship golden calves (12:25-33)
- E. The Man of God from Judah - an early prophet (13:1-32)
- F. Jeroboam's sin (13:33-34)

- G. Ahijah, the prophet (14:1-18)
- H. Summary notes on Jeroboam (14:19-20)
- I. Rehoboam's sin of idolatry and toleration of sodomites, and resulting punishment (14:21-28)
- J. Summary notes on Rehoboam (14:29-31)

V. **Series of Kings** (15:1-16:28)

- A. Abijam of Judah (15:1-8) – evil king
- B. Asa of Judah (15:9-24) – good king
- C. Nadab of Israel (15:25-32) – evil king
- D. Baasha of Israel (15:33-16:7) – evil king
- E. Elah of Israel (16:8-10) – drunken king
- F. Zimri of Israel (16:11-20) – Good king
- G. Omri of Israel (16:21-28) – very evil king

VI. **King _____ of Israel and _____, the prophet in Israel** (16:29-22:40)

- A. Ahab's wicked sins (16:29-34) – married Jezebel, worshipped Baal, and made idol groves
- B. Elijah's ministry (17:1-19:21)
 - 1. Elijah predicts 3 ½ year drought (17:1)
 - 2. Elijah taken care of during the drought – first at a small creek, and then in a widow's home in Zarephath (17:2-24)
 - 3. Elijah's Meeting with Ahab (18:1-19)
 - 4. Contest on Mount Carmel (18:20-40) – 850 false prophets of Baal
 - 5. Drought ends (18:41-46)
 - 6. Worn-out Elijah flees and hears still, small voice of God (19:1-18)
 - 7. The Calling of Elisha to take Elijah's place (19:19-21)
- C. Israel defeats Syria guided by prophets (20:1-43)
- D. _____ vineyard is stolen by Jezebel for Ahab (21:1-29)
- E. Israel and Judah fight against Ramoth-gilead (22:1-40) – Judah should NOT have sided with Israel
 - 1. A questionable alliance (22:1-4)
 - 2. The Prophecy of a good prophet named _____ (22:5-28)
 - 3. Israel and Judah defeated (22:29-36)
 - 4. The Death of Ahab (22:37-40)

VII. **Two More Kings** (22:41-53)

- A. Jehoshaphat of Judah (22:41-53) – a good king
- B. Ahaziah of Israel (22:51-53) – an evil king

2 Kings

Author: The Book of 2 Kings does not name its author. The tradition is that the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah were the authors of both 1 and 2 Kings.

Date of Writing: The Book of 2 Kings, along with 1 Kings, was likely written between 650 – 600 B.C.

Purpose of Writing: The Book of 2 Kings continues the story of the rulers over the divided kingdom of Israel and Judah. 2 Kings concludes with the final overthrow and deportation of both Israel and Judah's people, to Assyria and Babylon respectively.

Key Verses: Elisha desires _____ the spirit and power that Elijah had on him from Go (2Kings 2:9); a few times the kings would have a good testimony (like 2 Kings 22:2); but most of the time, the kings had a bad testimony (2Kings 13:2); Judah is finally defeated by Nebuchadnezzar (2Kings 25:8-10)

Brief Summary: 2 Kings describes the downfall of the divided kingdom. Prophets continue to warn the people that the judgment of God is at hand, but they choose not to repent. The kingdom of Israel is repeatedly ruled by wicked kings, and even though a few of Judah's kings are good, the majority are bad. These few good rulers, along with Elisha and other prophets, cannot stop the nation's decline and ultimate ruin. The Northern Kingdom of Israel is eventually destroyed by the Assyrians, and about 136 years later the Southern Kingdom of Judah is destroyed by the Babylonians.

Practical Application: God hates sin and He will not allow it to continue indefinitely. God may at times use heathen authorities to bring correction to His people. God loves us so much that He sometimes has to discipline us (Heb 12:5-12). God gives us warning before delivering His judgment upon us. We can have total confidence that God will never leave us or forsake us even when he is having to chastise us.

A General Outline of 2 Kings

- I. **Final Acts of Elijah** (1:1-2:12)
 - A. Elijah predicts death of king Ahaziah (1:1-18)
 - B. Elijah taken up in whirlwind (2:1-12) – an Old Testament _____
 - C. Elisha desires God's power on his life – twice as much as was on Elijah
- II. **The Ministry of Elisha** (2:13-9:10)
 - A. Elisha Picks up Elijah's mantle (2:13-14) – a sign of following in his ministry
 - B. Futile search for Elijah's body (2:15-18)
 - C. Miracle - Purifies water (2:19-22)
 - D. Curses young men who ridicule him (2:23-25)
 - E. Jehoram of Israel (3:1-3)
 - F. Prophecies against Moab (3:4-27)
 - G. Miracle - Makes oil (4:1-7)
 - H. Elisha and the woman of Shunem (4:8-37) – she makes him a small apartment
 - I. Miracle - Purifies stew (4:38-41)
 - J. Miracle - Multiplies food (4:42-44)
 - K. Miracle - Cures Naaman the Syrian of leprosy ((5:1-27)
 - L. Miracle - Axe head floats (6:1-7)
 - M. Battles the Syrians (6:8-8:15)
 - N. King Jehoram of Judah (8:16-24)
 - O. King Ahaziah of Judah (8:25-29)
 - P. Anoints Jehu as King of Israel (9:1-10)

Q. List of Miracles of the prophets Elijah and Elisha

14 Miracles of Elijah	28 Miracles of Elisha
1. Causing the rain to cease for 3 1/2 years (1Ki 17:1)	1. Parting of the Jordan River (2Ki 2:14)
2. Being fed by the ravens (1Ki 17:4)	2. Healing of the drinking waters with SALT (2Ki 2:21)
3. Miracle of the barrel of meal and cruse of oil (1Ki 17:14)	3. Curse of the she bears against 42 children (2Ki 2:24)
4. Resurrection of the widow's son (1Ki 17:22)	4. Prophecy commanding the filling of the valley with water for the victory against the Moabites (2Ki 3:17)
5. Calling of fire from heaven on the altar (1Ki 18:38)	5. Deception of the Moabites with the valley of blood (2Ki 3:22)
6. Causing it to rain (1Ki 18:45)	6. Miracle of the vessels of oil for the widow woman (2Ki 4:4)
7. Prophecy that Ahab's sons would all be destroyed (1Ki 21:22)	7. Prophecy that the Shunammite woman would have a son (2Ki 4:16)
8. Prophecy that Jezebel would be eaten by dogs (1Ki 21:23)	8. Resurrection of the Shunammite's son (2Ki 4:34)
9. Prophecy that Ahaziah would die of his illness (2Ki 1:4)	9. Purification of a poisoned stew (2Ki 4:41)
10. Calling fire from heaven upon the first 50 soldiers (2Ki 2:10)	10. Miracle of the feeding of 100 men with bread (2Ki 4:43)
11. Calling fire from heaven upon the second 50 soldiers (2Ki 2:12)	11. The healing of Naaman the leper in the Jordan River (2Ki 5:14)
12. Parting of the Jordan (2Ki 2:8)	12. Perception of Gehazi's transgression (2Ki 5:26)
13. Prophecy that Elisha should have a double portion of his spirit (2Ki 2:10)	13. Cursing Gehazi with leprosy (2Ki 5:27)
14. Being caught up to heaven in a whirlwind (2Ki 2:11)	14. Floating of the axe head (2Ki 6:6)
	15. Prophecy of the Syrian battle plans (2Ki 6:9)
	16. Vision of the angelic chariots and army (2Ki 6:17)
	17. Smiting the Syrian army with blindness (2Ki 6:18)
	18. Restoring the sight of the Syrian army (2Ki 6:20)
	19. Prophecy of the end of the great famine (2Ki 7:1)
	20. Prophecy that the scoffing nobleman would see, but not partake of, the abundance to be given to the people (2Ki 7:2)
	21. Deception of the Syrians with the sound of chariots (2Ki 7:6)
	22. Prophecy of the seven-year famine (2Ki 8:1)
	23. Prophecy of Benhadad's untimely death (2Ki 8:10)
	24. Prophecy of Hazael's cruelty to Israel (2Ki 8:12)
	25. Prophecy that Jehu would smite the house of Ahab (2Ki 9:7)
	26. Prophecy that Joash would smite the Syrians at Aphek (2Ki 13:17)
	27. Prophecy that Joash would smite Syria thrice but not consume it (2Ki 13:19)
	28. Resurrection of the man touched by his bones (2Ki 13:21)

III. _____ of Israel (9:11-10:36) – a zealous killer!

- A. Jehu kills Joram and Ahaziah (9:11-29)
- B. Jehu kills Jezebel (9:30-37)
- C. Jehu kills Ahab's 70 sons (10:1-11)
- D. Jehu kills Ahaziah's 42 sons (10:12-14)
- E. Jehu kills other relatives of Ahab (10:15-17)
- F. Jehu kills prophets of Baal (10:18-28)
- G. Concluding notes on Jehu (10:29-36)

IV. **Long Series of Kings** (11:1-17:41)

- A. Queen Athaliah of Judah (11:1-20) – a very evil woman
 - 1. Athaliah's deeds (11:1-3)
 - 2. Jehoida, the priest, overthrows Athaliah (11:4-16)
 - 3. Jehoida mediates a covenant (11:17-20)
- B. King Jehoash of Judah (11:21-12:21) – a good king
- C. King Jehoahaz of Israel (13:1-9) – an evil king
- D. King Jehoash of Israel (13:10-13) – an evil king
- E. Death and last miracle of Elisha (13:14-21)

- F. Hazael and Ben-hadad of Aram (13:22-25)
- G. King Amaziah of Judah (14:1-14) – a good king
- H. King Jeroboam II of Israel (14:23-29) – an evil king
- I. Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah (15:1-7) – a good king
- J. Zechariah of Israel (15:8-12) – an evil king
- K. Shallum of Israel (15:13-16) – an evil king
- L. Menahem of Israel (15:17-22) – an evil king
- M. Pekahiah of Israel (15:23-26) – an evil king
- N. Pekah of Israel (15:27-31) – an evil king
- O. Jotham of Judah (15:32-38) – a good king
- P. Ahaz of Judah (16:1-20) – an evil king
- Q. Hoshea of Israel (17:1-41) – an evil king

1. Introductory notes on Hoshea (17:1-2)
2. Israel becomes submitted to the King of Assyria (17:3-4)
3. Assyria conquers Israel (17:5-6)
4. Israel's and Judah's sin (17:7-41)

V. **King _____ of Judah** (18:1-20:21) – a good king

- A. Hezekiah's reform (18:1-8)
- B. Assyria conquers the northern areas of Israel (18:9-12)
- C. Sennacherib of Assyria invades Judah but can't defeat Jerusalem (18:13-19:37)
- D. Hezekiah's illness and miraculous recovery because of prayer (20:1-11)
- E. Hezekiah foolishly entertains Babylonian envoys (20:12-19)

VI. **The Final Kings of Judah** (21 – 25)

- A. King Manasseh of Judah (21:1-18) – an evil king
- B. King Amon of Judah (21:19-26) – an evil king
- C. King _____ of Judah (22:1-23:30) – a good king

1. Introductory notes on Josiah (22:1-2)
2. Josiah's reform (22:3-23:27)
 - a. Repair of Temple (22:3-7)
 - b. Finding the Book of the Law (22:8-13)
 - c. The Prophecy of Huldah, the prophetess (22:14-20) – how to get right with God
 - d. General renewal of the Covenant of Judah with God (23:1-3)
 - e. The Passover is held (23:21-23) – it has been a long time since the last Passover
 - f. God still is determined to destroy Judah (23:26-27)

3. The Death of good King Josiah (23:28-30)

- D. King Jehoahaz of Judah (23:31-33) – an evil king
- E. King Jehoiakim (Eliakim) of Judah (23:34-37) – an evil king
- F. Babylon Conquers Judah (24:1-25:30)

1. Babylon attacks Judah (24:1-4)
2. Death of King Jehoiakim (24:5-7)
3. King Jehoiachin of Judah (24:8-9) – _____ – so wicked that God says there would be NO MORE SONS of David from Jehoiachin on the throne – calls him Coniah in Jeremiah 22:24-30; 37:1
4. The Fall of Judah (24:10-16)
5. Zedekiah (Mattaniah) is set up as a submissive king of Judah (24:17-20)
6. The Destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon (25:1-21)
7. Gedaliah, made governor of Judah by Babylon (25:22-26)
8. Jehoiachin released from prison in Babylon and treated well (25:27-30)

1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah

1 Chronicles

Author: Tradition has it that 1 and 2 Chronicles were written by _____.

Date of Writing: The Book of 1 Chronicles was likely written around _____ B.C.

Purpose of Writing: Even though 1 Chronicles begins with Adam, and covers briefly the genealogy from Adam through the tribes of Israel down to the kings, the Books of 1 & 2 Chronicles end up covering much of the same information as 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings. 1 & 2 Chronicles focus more on the priestly aspect of the time period. The Book of 1 Chronicles was written after the Babylonian exile to help those returning to Israel understand how to worship God. The history focused on the Southern Kingdom, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi. These tribes tended to be more faithful to God.

Key Verses: _____ prayer (1Chron 4:9,10); The desire of all of Israel for David to be king (1 Chronicles 11:1-2), God would bless David with a Son who would be the _____ (1Chron 17:11-15); God _____ David (1Chron 28:4).

Brief Summary: The first 9 chapters of 1 Chronicles are dedicated to lists and genealogies. Further lists and genealogies are scattered throughout the rest of 1 Chronicles. In between, the Book of 1 Chronicles records David's ascension to the throne and his actions thereafter. 1 Chronicles concludes with David's _____, and his son Solomon becoming the King of all Israel.

Practical Application: God keeps up with his children. He knows ALL their names and keeps them recorded in a book. What may be dry and almost meaningless to us matters most to God because these names and people are His children. So are we, and the book He has listed our names in is the Book of Life (Luke 10:20; Philp 4:3).

A Simple Outline of the Events of 1 Chronicles

- I. **Genealogies** (1:1-9:44) – from Adam to David
- II. **The Death of King Saul** (10:1-14)
- III. **The Reign of King David** (11:1-29:30)
 - A. David is Anointed King at _____ (11:1-3)
 - B. David's warriors (11:4-12:40)
 - C. David moves Ark (13:1-14)
 - D. David establishes himself in Jerusalem (14 - 16)
 1. David builds his palace in Jerusalem (14:1-2)
 2. David's children (14:3-7)
 3. David defeats Philistia (14:8-17)
 4. David brings the Ark to Jerusalem and assigns duties to Levites (15:1-16:7)
 5. David's Psalms (Psalms 105, 95, 106) (16:8-36)
 6. Provisions made for regular worship (16:37-43)
 - E. God makes a covenant with David (17:1-27)
 - F. David's victories (18:1-20:8)
 - G. David's census and punishment (21:1-22:1)
 - H. David gathers material to build Temple (22:2-19)
 - I. David makes Solomon king (23:1)
 - J. David organizes priests and Levites (23:2-26:32)
 - K. David's administrators (27:1-34)
 - L. David charges Solomon and people to build Temple (28:1-29:5)
 - M. Tribal leaders give toward Temple construction (29:6-9)
 - N. David's prayer (29:10-19)
 - O. Special worship service (29:20-22a)
 - P. Solomon anointed king (29:22b-25)
 - Q. Concluding notes on David, and his Death (29:26-30)

2 Chronicles

Author: Tradition has it that 1 and 2 Chronicles were written by _____.

Date of Writing: The Book of 2 Chronicles was likely written around 450 B.C.

Purpose of Writing: The Books of 1 & 2 Chronicles cover mostly the same information as 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings. 1 & 2 Chronicles focus more on the _____ aspect of the time period. The Book of 2 Chronicles is essentially an evaluation of the nation's religious history from Solomon until the Captivity to Babylon.

Key Verses: Greatest verse on _____ (2 Chronicles 7:14); Cyrus the king of Persia will honour God and command the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 36:23).

Brief Summary: 2 Chronicles records the history of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, from the reign of Solomon to the conclusion of the Babylonian exile. The decline of Judah is disappointing, but emphasis is given to the spiritual reformers who zealously seek to turn the people back to God. Little is said about the bad kings or of the failures of good kings; only goodness is stressed. Since 2 Chronicles takes a priestly perspective, the Northern Kingdom of Israel is rarely mentioned because of her false worship and refusal to acknowledge the Temple of Jerusalem. 2 Chronicles concludes with the final destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

Problem Text Issues: 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles are easy targets for finding “contradictions” between the lists contained in these books. A few of the “problems” include:

King _____ being either 42 or 22 years old at ascension (2Chron 22:2 and 2 Kings 8:26)
 Jehoiachin being either 8 years old or 18 (2Chron 36:9 and 2Kings 24:8)

Practical Application: Even the best of men will fail, and fail big (as with Solomon), but God desires to forgive and heal those who will humbly pray and repent. That goes for any individual all the way up to an entire nation! 2 Chronicles shows that no worthy project can be completed without the help of God. The failures of Solomon, and of all kings shows that God hates sin and will not tolerate it.

A Simple Outline of 2 Chronicles

- I. **The Reign of King _____** (1:1-9:31) – The Wise King who gets Bored
 - A. Solomon's dream and gift of wisdom (1:1-13)
 - B. Solomon's horses and chariots (1:14-17)
 - C. Temple (2:1-7:22)
 1. Temple is built (2:1-5:1)
 2. Dedication of Temple (5:2-6:11)
 3. Solomon's dedicatory prayer (6:12-42)
 4. Dedication continues (7:1-11)
 5. God speaks with Solomon (7:12-22)
 - D. Solomon's greatness (8:1-9:28)
 1. Building projects (8:1-11)
 2. Worship (8:12-15)
 3. Summary note (8:16)
 4. Shipping (8:17-18)
 5. Queen of Sheba (9:1-9)
 6. Exotic materials (9:10-11)
 7. Queen of Sheba departs (9:12)
 8. Incredible wealth (9:13-28)
 - E. Conclusion (9:29-31)
- II. **The Reign of Rehoboam** (10:1-12:16) – A Spoiled King
 - A. Becomes king (10:1)

- B. Acts foolishly (10:2-15)
 - C. Northern tribes rebel (10:16-19)
 - D. Reign (1:1-12:12)
 - E. Concluding notes (12:13-16)
- III. **The Reign of Abijah** (13:1-14:1a) – a good king
- IV. **The Reign of Asa** (14:1b-16:14) – a good king
- A. Reforms (14:1b-8)
 - B. Defeat of Ethiopia (14:9-15)
 - C. Prophecy of Azariah (15:1-7)
 - D. Reform and covenant (15:8-19)
 - E. Later sin and cruelty (16:1-10)
 - F. Death (16:11-14)
- V. **The Reign of Jehoshaphat** (17:1-19:3) – a good king
- A. Peace of his reign (17:1-19)
 - B. Dealings with Ahab (18:1-19:3)
 - 1. Alliance (18:1-3)
 - 2. Prophecy of Micaiah (18:4-27)
 - 3. Defeat in battle and death of Ahab (18:28-34)
 - 4. Prophecy of Jehu (19:1-3)
 - C. Reforms (19:4-11)
 - D. Prayer and victory over Moab and Ammon (20:1-30)
 - E. Concluding notes (20:31-34)
 - F. Failure in shipping (20:35-37)
- VI. **The Reign of Jehoram** (21:1-20) – an evil king – followed the kings of Israel
- VII. **The Reign of Ahaziah** (22:1-9) – an evil king
- VIII. **The Reign of Queen Athaliah** (22:10-23:21) – an evil queen
- IX. **The Reign of Joash** (24:1-27) – a great king
- A. Initial obedience and success (24:1-14)
 - B. Death of Jehoiada, the priest (24:15-16)
 - C. Later disobedience and failure (24:17-27)
- X. **The Reign of Amaziah** (25:1-28) – a good king
- XI. **The Reign of Uzziah the leper king** (26:1-23) – a good king
- XII. **The Reign of Jotham** (27:1-9) – a good king
- XIII. **The Reign of Ahaz** (28:1-27) – a wicked king
- XIV. **The Reign of Hezekiah** (29:1-32:33) – a great king
- A. Introductory notes (29:1-2)
 - B. Reform of Jewish life back to the Bible (29:3-31:21)
 - 1. Temple repaired and worship restored (29:3-36)
 - 2. Passover celebrated (30:1-27)
 - 3. High places destroyed (31:1)
 - 4. Temple provisions (31:2-12a)
 - 5. Priests and Levites organized (31:12b-19)
 - 6. Concluding notes (31:20-21)
 - C. Sennacherib's (the Assyrian empire) attack (32:1-23)
 - 1. Preparation for invasion (32:1-8)
 - 2. Sennacherib's psychological warfare (32:9-19)
 - 3. Defeat of Sennacherib (32:20-23)
 - D. Hezekiah's illness and recovery (32:24-26)
 - E. His Greatness (32:27-31)

- F. Concluding notes (32:32-33)
- XV. **The Reign of Manasseh** (33:1-20) – an evil king who gets right with God
- XVI. **The Reign of Amon** (33:21-25) – an evil king
- XVII. **The Reign of Josiah** (34:1-35:27) – a great king
 - A. Introductory notes (34:1-2)
 - B. Reform (34:3-35:19)
 - 1. High places destroyed (34:3-7)
 - 2. Temple repaired (34:8-13)
 - 3. Book of the Law (34:14-33)
 - a. Discovery of the book (34:14-21)
 - b. Prophecy of Huldah, the prophetess (34:22-28)
 - c. Renewal of covenant (34:29-33)
 - 4. Celebration of Passover (35:1-19)
 - C. Death in battle against Egypt (35:20-25)
 - D. Concluding notes (35:26-27)
- XVIII. **The Reign of Jehoahaz** (36:1-3) – an evil king
- XIX. **The Reign of Jehoiakim** (Eliakim) (36:4-8) – an evil king
 - A. Introductory notes (36:4-5)
 - B. Nebuchadnezzar conquers Judah (36:6-7)
 - C. Concluding notes (36:8)
- XX. **The Reign of Jehoiachin** (37:9-10) – an evil king
- XXI. **The Reign of Zechariah** (37:11-21) – an evil king
 - A. Introductory notes (37:11-12)
 - B. Sin of Zechariah and people (37:13-16)
 - C. Babylon destroys Jerusalem (37:17-21)
- XXII. **The Decree of Cyrus the Persian** (37:22-23) – For Israel to Return to their land!

List of kings of Judah	List of kings of Israel – All Evil
1. Rehoboam c.928-917, 1Kings 11-12, 2Chron 10-12	1. Jeroboam c.928-907, 1Kgs 11-14
2. Abijam c.917-908	2. Nadab c.907-906, 1Kgs 14:20, 15:25-31
3. Asa c.908-867, 1Kgs 14:31-15:24, 1Chron 3:10, 2Chron 13-16	3. Baasha ben Ahijah c.906-883, killed entire Jeroboam family, 1Kgs 15:16-16:7
4. Jehoshaphat	4. Elah , 1Kgs 16:8-10
5. Jehoram	5. Zimri , 1Kgs 16:11-14
6. Ahaziah	6. Omri c.882-871, founded Samaria c.879, 1Kgs 16:15-24
7. Athaliah	7. Ahab c.871-852, 2Kgs 3
8. Jehoash	8. Ahaziah
9. Amaziah c.798-769, defeated by Israel, 2Kings 14:7-22	9. Jehoram c.851-842, 2Kgs 1:17, 3:1, 5-9, 2Chron 22:5-6
10. Uzziah c.784-733, prince-regent, then king, 2Kings 15:1-7, 2Chron 26:1-3	10. Jehu c.842-815, 2Kgs 9-12
11. Jotham	11. Jehoahaz c.814-800, 2Kgs 10:35, 13:1-9
12. Ahaz	12. Jehoash (Joash) c.800-784, sacked Jerusalem, raided Temple c.785, 2Kgs 13:12-20, 14:8-14, 2Chron 25:14-24
13. Hezekiah c.727-698, 2Kgs 16:20, 18-20, 1Chron 3:13, 4:39	13. Jeroboam II c.784-748, last important ruler of Israel, 2Kgs 14:23
14. Manasseh c.690-638, sacrificed his son to Molech, 2Kgs 21:2-7	14. Zachariah
15. Amon	15. Shallum
16. Josiah c.638-609, c.621 found Law Scroll in Temple, 1Kgs 13, 2Kgs 22-23, 2Chron 34-35	16. Menahem
17. Jehoahaz	17. Pekahiah
18. Jehoiakim	18. Pekah
19. Jeconiah	19. Hoshea c.732-722, conquered by Shalmaneser V
20. Zedekiah c.597-587, conquered by Nebuchadnezzar II	

Ezra

Author: Tradition has it that the Prophet _____ wrote the Book of Ezra. It is interesting to note that once Ezra appears on the scene in Ezra chapter 7, the author of the Book of Ezra switches from writing in the third person, to first person.

Date of Writing: The Book of Ezra was likely written between 460 and 440 B.C.

Purpose of Writing: The Book of Ezra is devoted to events occurring in the land of Israel at the time of the return from captivity and subsequent years, covering a period of approximately 100 years, beginning in 538 B.C. The emphasis in Ezra is on the rebuilding of the Temple. The book contains extensive genealogical records, principally for the purpose of establishing the claims to the priesthood on the part of the descendants of Aaron. These were needed to know who was supposed to be the High Priest.

Key Verses: The rejoicing for the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra 3:11); Just how great was this man Ezra (Ezra 7:6)

Brief Summary: The book may be divided as follows: I. The First Return under Zerubbabel, and the Building of the Second Temple (Ezra chapters 1 – 6), and II. The Ministry of Ezra (Ezra chapters 7 – 10). Since well over half a century elapsed between chapters 6 and 7, the characters of the first part of the book had died by the time Ezra began his ministry in Jerusalem. Ezra is the one person who is prominent in both the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Both books end with prayers of confession for sin (Ezra 9; Nehemiah 9) and a subsequent separation of the people from the sinful practices into which they had fallen. Some of the encouraging messages of Haggai and Zechariah, who are introduced in this narrative (Ezra 5:1), may be seen in the prophetic books that bear their names. The Book of Ezra covers the return from captivity to rebuild the Temple up to the decree of Artaxerxes (445 BC), the event covered at the beginning of the Book of Nehemiah. _____ was the main prophet in the day of Ezra, and _____ was the prophet in the day of Nehemiah.

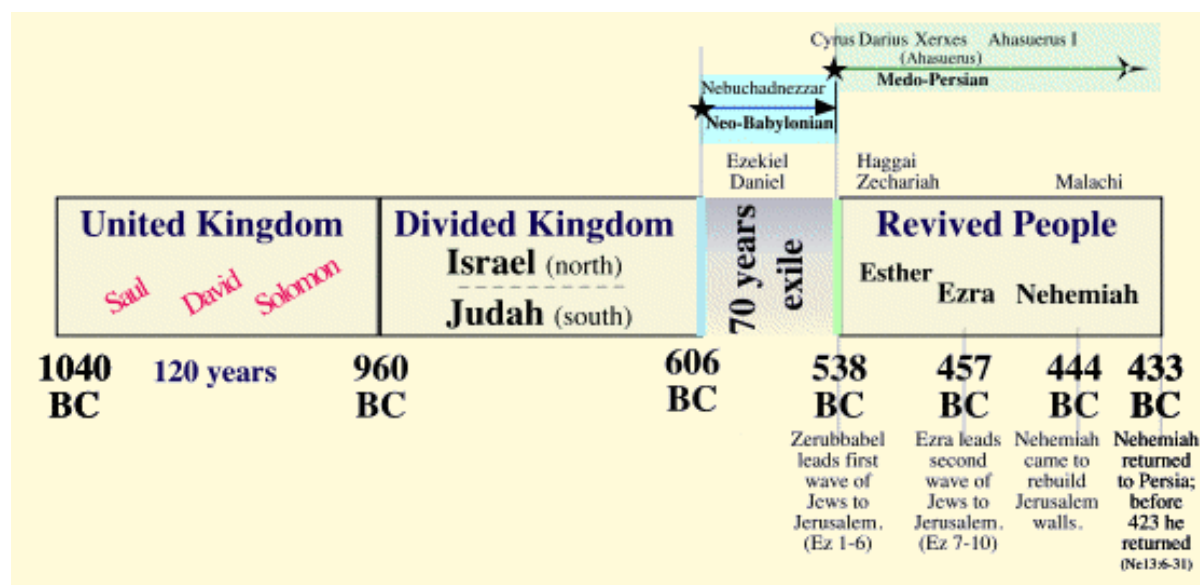
Practical Application: Because of Ezra, Israel made it back to worshipping God in the Temple. God didn't leave Ezra to do this single-handedly; he gave him substantial and special help in the person of Nehemiah, whose work providentially converged with his. The idea of the Jews being the "People-of-God" was recovered and preserved through the efforts of Ezra and Nehemiah. Ezra used Worship and Bible to do it. Ezra engaged the people in the worship of God, the most all-absorbing, comprehensive act in which men and woman can engage. This is how our God-formed identities become most deeply embedded in us. And Ezra led them into an obedient listening to the words of Scripture. Listening and following God's revelation are the primary ways in which we keep attentively obedient to the living presence of God among us.

A Simple Outline of the Book of Ezra

- I. **The Decree of Cyrus the Persian (1:1-4)**
- II. **Return of the Exiles Led by Sheshbazzar to Jerusalem (1:5-11)**
- III. **Return of Exiles Led by Zerubbabel and Jeshua to Jerusalem (2:1-6:22)**
 - A. List of those who returned (2:1-67)
 - B. Temple building fund (2:68-69)
 - C. Living arrangements (2:70)
 - D. Rebuilding of Temple (3:1-6:18)
 1. Initial preparations (3:1-9)
 2. Laying the foundation (3:10-13)
 3. Opposition halts the rebuilding (4:1-24)
 4. Haggai, Zechariah, Zerubbabel, and Jeshua encourage people (5:1-2)
 5. Darius allows rebuilding to continue (5:3-6:13)
 6. Work proceeds well (6:14)



- 7. Completion of Temple (6:15)
- 8. Dedication of Temple (6:16-18)
- E. Celebration of Passover (6:19-22)
- IV. **The Work of Ezra (7:1-10:44)**
 - A. Introduction (7:1-6)
 - B. Ezra's journey and companions (7:7-10)
 - C. Artaxerxes' letter empowering Ezra (7:11-26)
 - D. Ezra's expression of thanks to God (7:27-28)
 - E. Ezra's journey (8:1-36)
 - 1. His companions (8:1-20)
 - 2. Prayer and fasting for a safe journey (8:21-23)
 - 3. Priests and Levites carry gold, silver, and vessels (8:24-30)
 - 4. Journey (8:31-32)
 - 5. Gold, silver, and vessels delivered (8:33-34)
 - 6. Further actions after arrival in Jerusalem (8:35-36)
 - F. Problem of Jews who married non-Jewish women (9:1-10:44)
 - 1. Ezra discovers the problem (9:1-4)
 - 2. Ezra's prayer of confession (9:5-15)
 - 3. People seek to repent (10:1-5)
 - 4. Required meeting in Jerusalem (10:6-8)
 - 5. Ezra leads people in confession (10:9-15)
 - 6. Investigative committee formed (10:16-17)
 - 7. List of those married to non-Jewish women (10:18-44)



Nehemiah

Author: It is highly likely that either Nehemiah or Ezra was the author.

Date of Writing: The Book of Nehemiah was likely written between 445 and 420 B.C.

Purpose of Writing: Nehemiah was a Hebrew in Persia when the word reached him that the Temple was being reconstructed. He grew anxious knowing there was no wall to protect the city. Nehemiah invited God to use him to save the city. God answered his prayer by softening the heart of the Persian king. Artaxerxes gave not only his blessing, but also supplies to be used in the project. Through opposition and accusations the wall was built and the enemy silenced. The people rejoiced and Nehemiah went back to Persia. After 12 years he returned to find the walls strong but the people weak. He set about the task of teaching the people morality and he didn't mince words... "I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair" (13:25).

Key Verses: Nehemiah 1:3; Nehemiah 1:11; Nehemiah 6:15-16

Brief Summary: Nehemiah is given permission by the king of Persia to return to Jerusalem, where he rebuilds the walls of the city and is made governor. The people, inspired by Nehemiah, give tithes of much money, supplies and manpower to complete the wall in a remarkable 52 days, despite much opposition. This united effort is short-lived, however, because Jerusalem falls back into apostasy when Nehemiah leaves for a while. But he then returns to re-establish true worship through prayer and by encouraging the people to revival by reading and adhering the Word of God.

Practical Application: Each of us ought to have genuine compassion for others who have spiritual or physical hurts. To feel compassion, yet, do nothing to help, is unfounded Biblically. At times we may have to give up our own comfort in order to minister properly to others. We must totally believe in a cause before we will give our time or money to it with the right heart. When we allow God to minister through us, even unbelievers will know it is God's work.

A Simple Outline of the Book of Nehemiah

- I. **Nehemiah in Babylon (1:1-2:8)**
 - A. Nehemiah learns of conditions in Jerusalem (1:1-3)
 - B. Nehemiah prays to God (1:4-11)
 - C. Nehemiah asks Artaxerxes to allow him to go and help (2:1-8)
- II. **Nehemiah's Journey to Jerusalem (2:9-10)**
- III. **Nehemiah's First Term as Governor in Jerusalem (2:11-13:3) – The _____**
 - A. Inspection of Jerusalem (2:11-16)
 - B. Rebuilding the walls (2:17-6:19)
 1. Nehemiah encourages people (2:17-18)
 2. Opposition from other governors (2:19)
 3. Nehemiah further encourages people (2:20)
 4. People who worked on wall (3:1-32)
 5. Outside opposition continues (4:1-3)
 6. Nehemiah's prayer (4:4-5)
 7. Wall rebuilt to half its height (4:6)
 8. Continued outside opposition (4:7-8)
 9. Prayer for help (4:9)
 10. Nehemiah's plans to protect workers (4:10-23)
 11. Financial reform (5:1-19)
 - a. Abolishment of interest on loans (5:1-13)
 - b. Nehemiah and his servants live simply (5:14-19)

12. Continued outside plots foiled by Nehemiah (6:1-14)
 13. Completion of wall and reaction to it (6:15-19)
- C. Nehemiah's plan for guarding Jerusalem (7:1-4)
 - D. Census (7:5-69)
 - E. Offerings for rebuilding (7:70-72)
 - F. Peace in the land (7:73a)
 - G. Nehemiah and Ezra (7:73b-10:39)
 1. Ezra reads and interprets law (7:73b-8:18)
 2. People's confession of sin (9:1-5)
 3. Ezra's prayer (9:6-37)
 4. Covenant renewal (9:38-10:39)
 - H. Further census information (11:1-12:26)
 - I. Dedication of the wall (12:27-43)
 - J. Support for and service of the priests and Levites (12:44-47)
 - K. Exclusion of those of foreign descent (13:1-3)
- IV. **Nehemiah's Second Term as Governor in Jerusalem (13:4-31)**
- A. The priest Eliashib does wrong (13:4-5)
 - B. Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem (13:6-7a)
 - C. Nehemiah corrects Eliashib's mistake (13:7b-9)
 - D. Tithes provided for Levites (13:10-14)
 - E. Abolishment of business on Sabbath (13:15-22)
 - F. Abolishment of marriages between Jews and non-Jews (13:23-27)
 - G. Removal of a priest who had a non-Jewish wife (13:28-29)
 - H. Conclusion (13:30-31)

Esther

The Book of Esther is the _____ of the Historical books of the Old Testament, and is kind of out of sequence because it take the reader back to the time when the nation of Judah was captive in Persia, but it is a record of how God miraculously protected it as a nation from genocide – complete destruction.

Author: The Book of Esther does not specifically name its author. The most popular traditions are Mordecai (a major character in the Book of Esther) and Nehemiah (who would have been familiar with Persian customs).

Date of Writing: The Book of Esther was likely written between 460 and 350 B.C.

Key People in the Book:

King Ahasuerus (Artaxerxes, also just called Xerxes) – a very powerful Persian ruler of the day

Vashti – his beautiful queen who rejects his commands once too often

Mordecai – a godly Jew who had been carried captive into Babylon, and was taking care of his niece Hadassah (Esther) since her parents had been killed

Haman – a wicked, selfish second-in-command over Persia who hated the Jews and attempts to just have them exterminated, but dies by his own invention

Esther – her Jewish name was “Hadassah”

Purpose of Writing: The purpose of the Book of Esther is the recording of the institution of the Feast of **Purim** and the obligation of its perpetual observation. The Book of Esther is read at the yearly Feast of Purim to commemorate the great deliverance of the Jewish nation brought about by God through a young lady named **Esther**. The noble Esther risked her own death as she realized what was at stake. She willingly did what could have been a deadly manoeuvre as she faced off with the second in command of her husband’s kingdom, **Haman**. She proved a wise and most worthy opponent, all the while remaining humble and respectful of the position of her husband-king.

Much like the story of Joseph in Genesis 41:34-37, both stories involve foreign monarchs who control the destiny of the Jews. Both accounts show the heroism of Israelite individuals who provide the means for the salvation of their people and nation. The hand of God is evident, in that what appears to be a bad situation is indeed very much under the control of the Almighty God who ultimately has the good of the people at heart. At the centre of this story is the ongoing divergence between the Jews and the Amalakites, which was recorded to have begun in the Book of Exodus. Haman’s goal is the final effort recorded in the Old Testament period of the complete eradication of the Jews. His plans eventually end up with his own demise, and the elevation of his enemy Mordecai to his own position, as well as the salvation of the Jews.

Key Verses: Esther 4:14; Esther 6:12; Esther 7:3

Brief Summary: Feasting is a major theme of this book, there are ten recorded banquets, and many of the events were planned, plotted or exposed at these banquets. Although the name of God is never mentioned in this book, it is apparent that the Jews sought His intervention when they fasted and prayed for three days (Esther 4:16). In spite of the fact that the law allowing their destruction was written according to the laws of the Medes and Persians, rendering it unchangeable, the way was cleared for their prayers to be answered. Esther risked her life by going not once uninvited before the king but twice, (Esther 4:12; 8:3). She was not content with the destruction of their enemy, Haman; she was more intent on saving her people. The institution of the Feast of Purim is written and preserved for all to see and is still observed today. God’s chosen people, without any direct mention of His name, were granted a stay of execution through the wisdom and humility of Esther.

Practical Application: The Book of Esther shows the choice we make between seeing His hand in our circumstances in life and seeing things as merely coincidence. One can be assured that His plans will not be moved by the actions of mere evil men. One cannot but to see the Almighty exerting

influence over King Xerxes timely insomnia. The silent love language our Father often uses to communicate directly to our spirit is shown in this book.

Esther proved to have a godly and teachable character that also showed great strength and willing obedience. In short, Esther was very different than most other girls her age and this caused her to be elevated into the position of Queen. She shows us that remaining respectful and humble even in difficult if not humanly impossible circumstances often set us up to be the vessel of untold blessing for both ourselves and others. We would do well to emulate her godly attitudes in our difficult positions. Not once is there a complaint or bad attitude exposed in the writing. Many times you will read she won the "favour" of those around her. Such favour is what ultimately saved her people. We can be granted such favour as we accept our situation in life by utilizing her example of maintaining a positive attitude, coupled with humility and the determination of leaning on God and seeking His will and favour in our circumstances. Who knows that God put us in such a position, for just such a time as this?

A Simple Outline of the Book of Esther

I. King Ahasuerus and Queen Vashti of Persia (1:1-22)

- A. The Great Persian Empire
- B. A 180-day banquet (1:1-4)
- C. A special 7-day banquet (1:5-9)
- D. Vashti's refusal to be displayed (1:10-12)
- E. Vashti deposed (1:13-22) – the concern about her affect and influence on the society by her attitude of rebellion

II. Esther Becomes Queen (2:1-18)

- A. The search for a new (2:1-4)
- B. Esther prepared (2:5-11)
- C. Esther chosen (2:12-18) – not the most godly of ways of choosing, but slaves can't be particular

III. Mordecai Foils an Assassination Plot against King Ahasuerus (2:19-23). Even though he is a slave and a captive of Persia, he cares about his king and maintains a right attitude towards him

IV. Haman's Plot to Kill Mordecai and all the Jews (3:1-15)

- A. Haman's hatred (3:1-6) – picture of Satan's hatred of God's people
- B. Casting lots (3:7). A lot seems to have been cast, or a throw of some kind made, for each day of the month and each month of the year. The day and month which obtained the best throws were then selected.
- C. Haman slyly convinces the king to do HIS will against the Jews (3:8-9)
- D. The official decree is signed and circulated (3:10-15) – it is unstoppable! Except by God!

V. Mordecai and Esther Save the Jews (4:1-9:17)

- A. Mordecai weeps and fasts for wisdom about what to do (4:1-3)
- B. Mordecai convinces Esther to intercede (4:4-17) – you have got to appeal to our authority
- C. First banquet Esther has for king and Haman (5:1-8) – she can't quite do it yet – Can't speak about her people's plight
- D. Haman's plan to rid himself of Mordecai (5:9-14)
 1. Haman's mounting hatred (5:9-10a)
 2. Haman reports to wife and friends (5:10b-13)



3. His wife and friends suggest building a gallows on which to hang Haman (5:14)

E. King rewards Mordecai for faithful service (6:1-13)

1. King is reminded of Mordecai's service (6:1-3)
2. Haman unwittingly provides method for rewarding Mordecai (6:4-9)
3. Haman forced to honour Mordecai (6:10-11)
4. Haman's fury grows (6:12-13)



F. Second banquet Esther has for king and Haman (6:14-7:10)

1. King and Haman arrive (6:14-7:1)
2. Esther reveals Haman's treachery (7:2-6)
3. Haman pleads for his life but his actions are misinterpreted (7:7-8)
4. Haman hung on his gallows (7:9-10)

G. Physical Salvation of the Nation of Israel while in Captivity (8:1-9:17)

1. Esther and Mordecai receive house of Haman (8:1-2)
2. Royal proclamation allows Jews to defend themselves (8:3-14)
3. Jews rejoice (8:15-17)
4. Jews slaughter their enemies (9:1-17)

H. The Feast of Purim (9:18-32) – a kind of mockery against the ways that the Persians choose out their special days, and sought their God's direction. The Jews trusted in the living God who spoke to them through the word of God, and acted on their behalf in mighty ways – not ways of chance or Purim!

VI. **Conclusion of the Book** (10:1-3)