

LifePoint Adult Discipleship

PLAN & PROMISE

Year 4: Echos of Eden
From Exile to the New Jerusalem

WELCOME

to year four of LifePoint's discipleship program, Plan and Promise: Echoes of Eden – From the Exile to the New Jerusalem. This four-year course is designed to give you an understanding of the big picture of God's Word. The weekly classes, along with this devotional, are designed to help you develop a routine and a desire to be in the Word daily. God's written Word is to be your guide and your source of blessing. The Bible reveals God, for the Bible is God's very Word. Through his Word, God makes himself known. You cannot fully know God or grow in your faith without it. As Moses told Israel in Deuteronomy 32:47, "For it is no empty word for you, but you very life..."

This fourth year of Plan and Promise will continue the story of God's people in God's place under God's rule experiencing God's blessing. The year will begin by studying through Hebrews and looking at how Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God's promises, and culminate in a study through the book of Revelation, where we see the promise of Jesus Christ's return as foundational for our hope in suffering. In between we will hear the echoes of Eden in Israel's wisdom literature and exilic literature, in the general epistles to the church, and throughout the Johannine literature as well. This fourth year will contain two main sections:

Old Testament Literature III: Exilic and Wisdom This section will look at the exile of the southern kingdom into Babylon, exploring the relationship between God's covenant promises of cursing and blessing toward his covenant people. Israel's foolish behavior in relationship to her covenant God, which ultimately led to her exile from the land, is seen against the background of the wisdom literature that God have given her. The hope of restoration for those who turn back to God and live wise lives will be seen throughout.

New Testament Literature III: General Epistles and Johannine Literature Moving from the hope of the New Covenant to the inauguration of the New Covenant, we will look at how Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of all of God's promises, and how the Old Testament is a shadow of the substance in Christ. This New Covenant is not without its own ethic, which will be demonstrated throughout the general epistles. Our hope, which is rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ, is on full display throughout John's gospel account, in his letters, and in the Revelation.

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David Denny

Nate Gast

Mary Harris

Bob Logsdon

Nate Meece

Sandy Mobley

Katie O'Malley

Andy Schmidt

Ryan Smith

David Trujillo *a friend from Covenant

YEAR 4 SCHEDULE

<i>Week</i>	<i>Scripture</i>
1	Hebrews 1-2
2	Hebrews 3:1-4:13
3	Hebrews 4:14-7:28
4	Hebrews 8-10
5	Hebrews 11
6	Hebrews 12-13
7	James 1-2
8	James 3-5
9	1 Peter 1-2
10	1 Peter 3-5
11	2 Peter 1-3
12	Jude
13	Jeremiah 1-10
14	Jeremiah 11-20
15	Jeremiah 21-29
16	Jeremiah 30-33
17	Jeremiah 34-45
18	Jeremiah 46-52
19	Lamentations 1-5
20	Daniel 1-6
21	Daniel 7-12
22	Ezekiel 1-3
23	Ezekiel 4-11
24	Ezekiel 12-24
25	Ezekiel 25-32
26	Ezekiel 33-39
27	Ezekiel 40-48
28	Ruth 1-4
29	Ecclesiastes 1:1-5:7
30	Ecclesiastes 5:8-12:14
31	Song of Songs 1-8
32	Esther 1-5
33	Esther 6-10
34	Job 1-42
35	John 1:1-18
36	John 1:19-4:54
37	John 5-10

YEAR 4 SCHEDULE...continued

<i>Week</i>	<i>Scripture</i>
38	John 11-12
39	John 13-17
40	John 18-21
41	1 John 1:1-3:10
42	1 John 3:11-4:21
43	1 John 5
44	2 John
45	3 John
46	Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature and Overview of the Book of Revelation
47	Revelation 1-3
48	Revelation 4-11
49	Revelation 12-16
50	Revelation 17-20
51	Revelation 21-22

HEBREWS 1-2

1. Why do you think the author of Hebrews begins by referencing the Old Covenant prophets and the superiority of Jesus? How does this set the stage for the rest of the book?
2. What are some things revealed about Christ in Hebrews 1–2 (e.g. his superiority, divinity, work in redemption, etc.)?
3. What is the overarching admonition in Hebrews 2?
4. How does right doctrine help us to fight against drifting spiritually (cf. Heb. 2:1)?
5. Why did Jesus have “to be made like his brothers” (Heb. 2:17)?
6. In what ways is the doctrine of the atonement highlighted throughout Hebrews 2?

NOTES:

1. How is Jesus superior to Moses?
2. What does it mean that Jesus is “the apostle and high priest of our confession” (Heb. 3:1)?
3. What is the bad example given for us in Hebrews 3, and how are we exhorted to act differently? How are we to go about fulfilling that exhortation?
4. In what ways does the author’s treatment of Scripture in this passage bolster your confidence in the Bible?
5. How would you respond to someone who says, “I don’t need a developed theology from the Bible; I just need Jesus”?
6. What is the greater rest that the author of Hebrews is describing in Hebrews 4?

NOTES:

1. Why can we boldly go before the throne of grace? Why response should that evolve from our hearts?
2. List the similarities and differences between the traditional high priest and Jesus as our high priest of a new and better covenant.
3. What does the author mean when we read that Jesus “learned obedience through what he suffered” (Heb. 5:8)?
4. What are some of the elementary doctrines that are referred to in Hebrews 6:1–2? Do you find those doctrines to be elementary?
5. When considering the warnings in Hebrews 6 in particular, and the warnings throughout the book of Hebrews in general, what should they produce in the life of a believer? Do these passages trouble you in any way?
6. Go back and read Genesis 14 and Psalm 110. What do we know about Melchizedek from these passages?

NOTES:

HEBREWS 8-10

1. How do the Old Covenant and the earthly priesthood anticipate the New Covenant and Jesus's better priesthood?
2. Did the work of Christ end with his death and resurrection? Please explain your answer.
3. Take some time to read through Jerermiah 31:31-34. List the ways that the hope of the New Covenant mentioned there is better than the Old Covenant. In what ways did Christ fulfill each of these promises?
4. How is Jesus presented as being superior to the Levitical priesthood in Hebrews 9?
5. Why does the author note that instead of bringing forgiveness of sin, the sacrificial offering actually brought a reminder of sin (cf. Heb. 10:1-10)?
6. How would you reconcile Hebrews 10:26-31 with the doctrine of the preservation of the saints?

NOTES:

NOTES:

1. What are the keys to running a successful spiritual race, and how does this differ from the Israelites mentioned earlier in the book?
2. We don't often consider discipline a good thing. What types of discipline are described in Hebrews 12 specifically and throughout the book generally? Why is discipline a good thing?
3. In what ways have Christians come to Mount Zion? How might this reality help us in interpreting Old Testament prophetic texts?
4. Why do you think so many of the practical considerations and imperatives are addressed at the end of the book? How does this relate to the general principle of imperatives (that is, commands) being grounded upon indicatives (that is, what is foundationally true)?
5. How do you think you can be a joy to your church leadership? In what ways does Hebrews 13:17 describe the responsibility of church leaders?
6. Why are Christians commanded to show hospitality? How do you practice hospitality? What keeps you from practicing it?

NOTES:

JAMES 1-2

1. According to James, what should our reaction be when facing the trials of life?
2. James 1:27 describes “religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father.” Please write out what things James describes as such a religion.
3. When James 2:8 talks about the “royal law,” what is James referring to?
4. Why does James emphasize the sin of partiality? How does he then demonstrate the connection between violating one law and being guilty and accountable for the whole law?
5. According to James, what is the relationship between faith and works, specifically as they relate to justification?
6. What types of faith are being described in James 2:14–20? How are they described?

NOTES:

1. Why does James provide a tempered warning against becoming teachers?
2. How does James describe the effects of the poor use of the tongue (that is, speech)? How does this reality impact you personally?
3. In James 4:1 we are told that fights and quarrels were present among the believers throughout the Dispersion. What is the cause of such fighting and quarrelling?
4. Is it possible to be a friend of God and of the world at the same time? Please explain your answer.
5. What should the attitude of believers be regarding the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?
6. What does James say we should do concerning those who have wandered from the truth?

NOTES:

1 PETER 1-2

1. Please explain the connection between our hope and Jesus's resurrection.
2. How does Peter help us in our thinking about rejoicing in the midst of our trials?
3. Toward what ultimate goal does our faith lead, and what effect does this goal have on us now?
4. What is the purpose for which we have been called, and what are some applications for our lives today?
5. We have been set free in Christ, but 1 Peter 2:16 tells us how we are to use our freedom while under the authority of human institutions. How does Peter describe the ethic we should live by?
6. All who are in Christ and seek to honor Christ with their lives will suffer (cf. 2 Tim. 3:12). According to Peter, what kind of suffering is and is not pleasing to God?

NOTES:

1 PETER 3-5

1. Please describe how Peter calls husbands and wives to act towards one another. What is the ultimate motivation that Peter provides for such behavior?
2. What does it mean for a husband and wife to be “joint heirs” in Christ (1 Pet. 3:7)?
3. What does it mean to be sober-minded and self-controlled? Why should we pursue such characteristics?
4. In light of the example of Christ, how are we to act when we are mistreated?
5. How do Christians partake in Christ’s suffering? What should our attitude toward suffering be? How is this unique to the Christian worldview?
6. What should and should not motivate elders in their work (cf. 1 Pet. 5:1–5)? How are members of the flock to relate to elders? How are elders to relate to members of the flock?

NOTES:

2 PETER 1-3

1. What reasons would people need to be “stirred up” and reminded of things they know?
2. What lessons can we learn about the purpose and value of the written Word? What can we learn about the preservation of the Word through the years?
3. How would you respond to a person who claimed that false teaching is rarely mentioned in Scripture and is not a serious problem?
4. How is someone worse off if after hearing the Word of God they fall away, compared to them never having heard the Word of God in the first place?
5. Why is it important for Christians to believe in the bodily and imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ?
6. What warning does Peter give in 1 Peter 3:17, and what does this show regarding one’s assurance of salvation?

NOTES:

1. What does it mean to contend for the faith, and where else in the Bible do we see this concept of contending?
2. What was Jude concerned about in verse 4, and how does he describe these men?
3. What can we learn from Michael's response to the situation described in Jude 8–10?
4. What characteristics of false teachers does Jude provide? What should we do to help combat false teaching in the local church?
5. How does Jude conclude his letter?
6. Within the closing doxology we are told that God is able to keep us (v. 24). How does this relate to the call for our perseverance in verse 21?

NOTES:

JEREMIAH 1-10

1. What two themes, which will be seen through the book of Jeremiah, are summarized in Jeremiah 1?
2. What are the two evils the Israelites have committed in Jeremiah 2?
3. What is Israel's sin compared to in Jeremiah 3?
4. What are some ways described in Jeremiah 5–7 that Israel broke the covenant the Lord established with them?
5. In Jeremiah 10, Jeremiah reminds the people of Israel of two ways to live. What are they and what are the consequences of each?

NOTES:

1. What emotions do you see in Jeremiah throughout Jeremiah 11–18? How are these similar to Jesus’s emotions during his life?
2. What is Jeremiah’s complaint in Jeremiah 15? What is the Lord’s response?
3. Why did Jeremiah refrain from marriage in Jeremiah 16? Are there any applications for us from his text?
4. How does God compare himself to the potter and Israel to the clay in Jeremiah 18?
5. In chapter 20, Jeremiah shows the inner turmoil and persecution he feels with the message he is delivering. What is his conclusion about how to be joyful in the midst of such turmoil and persecution?

NOTES:

JEREMIAH 21-29

1. Judgement is inevitable for the Israelites in Jeremiah 21–22. What is the hope Yahweh promises in Jeremiah 23?
2. Describe Jeremiah's vision and its meaning in Jeremiah 24.
3. What was Jeremiah told by God to have the nations do in Jeremiah 25:15? Why? How does this passage find its ultimate fulfillment in Christ? What response should this provoke in the hearts of believers?
4. How was a false prophet identified in Jeremiah 28?
5. What does Jeremiah's letter to the exiles say in Jeremiah 29?

NOTES:

JEREMIAH 30-33

1. Jeremiah offers hope in Jeremiah 30 to the Israelites. List all of the ways hope is offered.
2. What does the New Covenant entail in Jeremiah 31?
3. Where is the hope for Jeremiah in chapter 32? What is Jeremiah concerned about in verse 25? What is the Lord's response ultimately by the end of the chapter?
4. Describe the ways Jesus fulfilled Jeremiah 33.
5. As Jeremiah describes the covenant in Jeremiah 33, what attributes of God are on display?

NOTES:

1. What are some ways Yahweh's Word was rejected in Jeremiah 34-37?
2. Why was Jeremiah cast into the cistern in Jeremiah 38?
3. What did the Lord promise to Jeremiah after the Israelites were taken into exile in chapter 39? Why did he promise this?
4. In Jeremiah 42, the Israelites cry out to the Lord for mercy. What is his response?
5. Who is Baruch in Jeremiah 45, and what do we learn about him and the Lord from this chapter?

NOTES:

JEREMIAH 46-52

1. Why does Jeremiah speak about the day of the Lord in Jeremiah 46?
2. In Jeremiah 47–49, what is Jeremiah’s message to the nations? What does this tell you about God and his character?
3. Jeremiah 50:4-5 foreshadows Hebrews 12:22-24. Please explain the relationships between these two passages.
4. Two common biblical themes are seen in Jeremiah 51:1–2, 10. What are they?
5. Despite Israel’s sin and judgement, what is significant about Jeremiah 52:31-34?

NOTES:

LAMENTATIONS 1-5

1. What is the general context into which the book of Lamentations is written?
2. How is the book of Lamentations as a whole structured (that is, what specific literary device is used)?
3. How does the book of Lamentations teach us to lament? In what ways can you apply the practice of biblical lamentation?
4. There is a consistent emphasis throughout Lamentations on the covenantal promises of the Lord. What are some of those covenantal promises and why do you think Jeremiah focuses on them?
5. Considering the general structure of Lamentations (see question 2 above), how are we helped to better appreciate the truths contained in Lamentations 3?
6. What questions has this week's readings left you with? In what ways were you challenged? Encouraged?

NOTES:

DANIEL 1-6

1. The term *youths* is used five times in Daniel 1. How does this magnify the impact of the king's inquiry of Daniel and his friends in verse 20?
2. Many today accept the narrative that the ancient world simply and ignorantly bought into astrology and mythology. How does Nebuchadnezzar's demand to reveal his unnamed dream before an interpretation show that this narrative is not quite so obvious (that is, why did he require them to tell him his dream first)? What was his reaction to Daniel's revelation of the dream and its interpretation?
3. Do you think the example of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3 is evidence that God will always rescue his people if we only do what is right? Please explain.
4. Nebuchadnezzar learned an important lesson in Daniel 4. What attributes of God does he acknowledge and praise in verses 34–37?
5. In response to the injunction by Darius, Scripture tells us that Daniel's reaction was to do "as he had done previously" (Dan. 6:10). What does this tell us about Daniel's daily life and what application can we make today?
6. It is common to hear that the main point or application of the book of Daniel is "Dare to be like Daniel!" Please explain why you agree or disagree with this assessment.

NOTES:

1. Daniel 5 records the last days of Belshazzar's reign as king of Babylon (538 BC). However, Daniel 7 records an event happening in Belshazzar's first year as king (ca. 552 BC). Why are these out of chronological order?
2. At face value, the term "son of man" simply denotes being a human being. Why, then, does Jesus refer back to Daniel 7:13–14 and call himself the "Son of man," as if he were making some great claim (cf. Mark 14:62–64)?
3. Daniel's prophecies are inspired by God, and are therefore true and accurate. Does this mean that they are fulfilled literally (e.g. Dan. 9:24, "Seventy weeks are decreed... to put an end to sin...)? Please explain?
4. What insight does Daniel's vision in Daniel 10 (specifically vv. 12–14) give us concerning the unseen realm? Can you think of other places in Scripture which may give us further insight?
5. Some scholars date Daniel's prophecies to the second century BC rather than the sixth century BC. Why might they do this? What does this tell us about their view of Scripture?
6. The ESV Study Bible notes that the purpose of the book of Daniel is, "designed to reassure God's people that in spite of their present persecution and suffering, God is in control and will ultimately be victorious." Noting the similar apocalyptic writing style, how does this then compare to the purpose of the book of Revelation? Please explain.

NOTES:

EZEKIEL 1-3

1. What is the context in which Ezekiel was writing?
2. While the appearance of the four living creatures certainly is wonderful, what is the main emphasis of Ezekiel's vision in Ezekiel 1:4–28?
3. Ezekiel is told to not be afraid of the rebellious and stubborn people of Israel in Ezekiel 2:1–7. What reasons are given for Ezekiel's potential fear?
4. What do you think is conveyed in the eating of the scroll in Ezekiel 2:8-3:3?
5. What was the function of the watchmen prior to and during the time of Ezekiel?
6. How might you describe the ministry of the Spirit in Ezekiel 1–3?

NOTES:

EZEKIEL 4-11

1. What do the sign-acts signify in Ezekiel 4:1-8? What about the sign-acts in verses 9-17? Where else do you see sign-acts in the readings for this week?
2. What are the reasons given for the punishment from the Lord described in Ezekiel 5:5-17?
3. The abominations mentioned in Ezekiel 8 center on idolatry. Describe some of the forms of idolatry mentioned in this chapter. What are some areas of idolatry in your life that you need to confess and repent of?
4. Where does the judgment of God begin, as described in Ezekiel 9:6? Where does it then extend to in Ezekiel 9:1-11?
5. What is the significance of the glory of the Lord departing from the temple in Ezekiel 10?
6. What is the ultimate cause of our walking in the Lord's statutes in Ezekiel 11:19-20? What is said to be true of this people in verse 21?

NOTES:

1. The proverb mentioned in Ezekiel 12:22 points to particular misconceptions the people of Israel had during the days of Ezekiel. What were those misconceptions?
2. The message of false prophets in Ezekiel 13 was “Declares the Lord!” and “Peace!”, yet this was not the word of the Lord. In what ways are the judgments of the Lord described in verses 8–16?
3. What is the chief sin of the elders and others within Israel mentioned in Ezekiel 14? What are they called to do in verse 6? What is the outcome if they do not heed the command of verse 6?
4. Ezekiel 16 contains very graphic language. What does such language suggest about how the Lord views spiritual adultery?
5. What is the motivating factor for the display of God’s mercy mentioned in Ezekiel 20:9 (cf. vv. 14, 22, 44)?
6. What were some common themes running through the reading for this week?

NOTES:

1. There is a shift in focus beginning in Ezekiel 25 as it relates to the judgment oracles. Describe the shift taking place.
2. What are some common reasons given for the judgment that comes upon the foreign nations in our reading for this week? In what ways does this produce hope in the heart of God's people?
3. What specific sins are attributed to the prince of Tyre in Ezekiel 28:1–19? What prompts the lamentation described in verses 11–19?
4. When describing the fall of Egypt and the destruction of Pharaoh, who is the Lord using to bring about this judgment? What are your thoughts concerning this? In what ways does this encourage your heart here and now?
5. What is the main emphasis in Ezekiel 32:17–32?
6. What are some general questions or thoughts about the reading for this week? Take some time and identify different aspects of prophetic literature that were present in our reading for this week

NOTES:

EZEKIEL 33-39

1. The image of a watchman is used in Ezekiel 33:1–9. Why is this particular image used, and how does Ezekiel apply that image to his role within Israel?
2. What were the tasks of the shepherds in Ezekiel 34:1-10, and in what ways were they failing?
3. Take some time to compare Ezekiel 34:11–31 with John 10:1–21. In what ways are these two passages similar?
4. What New Covenant promises are described in Ezekiel 36? How does verses 25–27 help us understand John 3:5–6?
5. In Ezekiel 37:1–14, what is the relationship between the work of proclamation that Ezekiel is called to and the movement of the Holy Spirit?
6. Ezekiel 38–39 concludes in 39:25–29. How does this conclusion help us contextualize the battle described and in showing forth its primary purpose?

NOTES:

EZEKIEL 40-48

1. In light of the vision that Ezekiel received in Ezekiel 10, what is the general emphasis being made in Ezekiel 40–48 (consider especially Ezekiel 43)?
2. There is an intricacy in Ezekiel 40–48 that's simply incredible! Why do you think the LORD, speaking through Ezekiel, gives such detail?
3. What images are used in the inner decorations of the temple? From what direction does the temple open up? What should the answers to the two previous questions remind you of?
4. How does Ezekiel's description of the return of the glory of the Lord in Ezekiel 43 inform our understanding of John's description of the exalted Christ in Revelation 1:9–20?
5. In what ways does Ezekiel 44 anticipate the coming of the New Covenant?
6. What general observations and insights do you have from the reading for this week?

NOTES:

RUTH 1-4

1. Both Ruth and Orpah were from the land of Moab. In Genesis we are told that the people of Moab were descended from whom?
2. Why did Naomi want Ruth and Orpah to return to their families rather than go with her back to Judah?
3. In Ruth 2:8 Boaz instructs Ruth to, “not go to glean in another field or leave this one.” Why would he do this?
4. What did Naomi mean when she told Ruth that Boaz was a “close relative” and one of her “redeemers”?
5. What do you think was the motive behind the instructions Naomi gave Ruth at the beginning of Ruth 3?
6. Why do you think the book of Ruth ends the way it does?

NOTES:

1. What do you think is meant by the statement that, “there is nothing new under the sun”?
2. Why was it important during this time to have a proper burial (cf. Ecclesiastes 6:3)?
3. What comes to both the foolish and the wise according to Ecclesiastes 2:16?
4. What does the author mean when he says that God, “has put eternity into man’s heart”?
5. There are several benefits to having companions and friends listed in Ecclesiastes 4:9–12. What are they?
6. What does the author say about the popularity of kings in Ecclesiastes 4? Why do you think this is so?

NOTES:

ECCLESIASTES 5:8-12:14

1. How does the sleep of a rich man compare to that of a laborer (cf. Ecclesiastes 5:12)?
2. Why was it important during this time to have a proper burial (cf. Ecclesiastes 6:3)?
3. How is a man's life like a shadow?
4. Ecclesiastes 7:1 says that, "a good name is better than precious ointment." Why would this be so?
5. According to Ecclesiastes 8:11, if punishment for an evil deed doesn't occur quickly a child is likely to continue doing it. Does this apply to adults as well?
6. What is the goal, or end, of the matter according to Ecclesiastes 12:13-14? Why do you think that the book of Ecclesiastes ends this way?

NOTES:

SONG OF SONGS 1-8

1. Genesis 3:16 plays a big role in the history of Israel and for us as well. How does the Song of Songs help us to overcome the effects of Genesis 3:16?
2. What ways are the king and the bride alienated from one another in chapters 2, 3, 5? How is the separation overcome in each case? Who takes the initiative?
3. In what ways is Eden seen throughout the Song?
4. A “theology of love” is described in Song of Songs 8:6–7. Please summarize these two verses.
5. How does the way love is seen throughout the Song of Songs point forward to the love between Christ and his church (cf. Ephesians 5:22–23)?

NOTES:

ESTHER 1-5

1. When King Ahasuerus commanded his wife, Queen Vashti, to come to his banquet to display her beauty to his guests, she refused. How did the king react? Why was he so upset by her refusal?
2. Why do you think that Mordecai's ancestral background is provided in Esther 2?
3. Why did Haman seek to destroy all the Jews in the land? What did he tell King Ahasuerus that convinced him that all the Jewish people needed to be destroyed?
4. How did Mordecai react when he learned of the king's edict that the Jewish people were to be annihilated?
5. Haman was very pleased with his invitation to the banquet Queen Esther was giving. Why?
6. How did Haman's wife respond when he told her about Mordecai's sitting at the king's gate and refusing to rise for him?

NOTES:

ESTHER 6-10

1. When the king asked Haman about what needed to be done to honor an individual that delighted him, who did Haman think he was talking about?
2. What was the reaction of Zeresh, Haman's wife, when he told her of the king's honoring of Mordecai?
3. How did Haman react when his treachery was exposed? What happened next?
4. What did the king do to see that his original edict to annihilate the Jews was curtailed?
5. In Esther 9 it says that the nobles and of the provinces feared Mordecai. Why did they fear him?
6. Even though God is not explicitly mentioned throughout Esther, how is his presence seen throughout? Who is the ultimate hero of the story?

NOTES:

JOB 1-42

1. Where does Job fall in the Hebrew order of the Old Testament? Why is this important?
2. If you had to summarize the book of Job into one main point, what would it be?
3. What are the names of Job's three friends?
4. How does Job describe the "comfort" his friends were meant to provide for him (cf. Job 2:11; 21:34)?
5. How do Job 1:1-2:13 and 42:7-17 form bookends to the book of Job?
6. We get the Lord's response to Job's questions in Job 38:1-41:34. How would you summarize the Lord's response?

NOTES:

JOHN 1:1-18

1. We are immediately confronted with a profound statement in John 1:1. Please explain some of the implications of this verse.
2. What are we told of the agency of the Son in creation?
3. What blessing comes to those who believe in Jesus Christ according to John 1:12?
4. What does John 1:13 tell us about the nature of our conversion?
5. What is the relationship between the law given through Moses and the grace and truth that came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17)? Looking at what John has just said in verse 16 would be helpful here.
6. What are the triune implications of John 1:18 (that is, what does this verse tell us about the Father and the Son)?

NOTES:

JOHN 1:19-4:54

1. How does John the Baptist understand his own work in relation to the work of Jesus Christ? Are there any points where John may not have fully understood his own missional work?
2. When John the Baptist says, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,” (John 1:29) what are the Old Testament backgrounds that may have led him to make this declaration?
3. What is the Old Testament context for Jesus’s words in John 1:51? With that context in mind, what kind of declaration is Jesus making here in verse 51?
4. John tells us that the first sign Jesus performed manifested his glory (John 2:11). In what ways was Jesus’s glory manifested?
5. Arguably the best-known verse in the Bible, John 3:16, talks about the magnanimous love of God toward the world. In the context of John 3:16-21, what makes the love of God so great and generous?
6. What does Jesus mean when he says that the day is coming when true worshipers “will worship the Father in spirit and truth” (John 4:23; cf. v. 24)?

NOTES:

1. What were the two reasons the Jews were seeking to kill Jesus in John 5?
2. How does John 5:23 help us in responding to claims that the God of Christianity and the “gods” of other religions are merely the same?
3. What is the significance of Jesus’s response in John 6:20? Can you think of any other Old Testament passages that would confirm your thoughts?
4. What are we to make of Jesus’s words to the crowds in John 6:52-59? How can 2 Samuel 23:13–17 help us to better understand the passage from John’s Gospel?
5. What assumptions is John making (with regards to information his readers would have known that is contained in other Gospel accounts) in John 7:40–44? What Old Testament passages do you think John might also be referring to?
6. List the different metaphors that Jesus uses to describe both himself and his followers in John 10. What metaphors are used to describe those who are not followers of Jesus?

NOTES:

JOHN 11-12

1. Read John 11:5–6. Describe the relationship between these two verses, and describe their relationship with verses 1–27 as a whole.
2. What is the importance for John’s description of Lazarus already being dead four days by the time Jesus arrived in Bethany?
3. How does John 11 combine the two wonderful realities of Jesus’s true deity and true humanity in one glorious person?
4. In light of the raising of Lazarus back to life in John 11, how do the chief priests plan to address the growing favor being shown to Jesus in John 12?
5. What are the Old Testament passages that the crowds likely have in mind as they shout for joy at the coming of Jesus to Jerusalem in John 12:12-19?
6. According to John 12:36b-43, what effect did Jesus’s ministry have on many of those who surrounding him and witnessed some of his miracles?

NOTES:

1. Why do you think John tells us that it was night when Judas left the upper room (John 13:30)?
2. What makes the commandment of Jesus in John 13:34 new?
3. Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as “another helper” in John 14:16; who is the other “Helper” that Jesus is referring to?
4. What is the relationship that Jesus paints between bearing fruit and remaining in the vine in John 15:1–11?
5. Jesus mentions in John 16:7 that it was to the advantage of the disciples that he returns to the Father. What advantage comes from this, and why is this truly advantageous?
6. What themes from John’s Gospel thus far are repeated in Jesus’s prayer in John 17?

NOTES:

JOHN 18-21

1. What is Jesus proclaiming in John 18:5, 6, 8? How might that help to explain the response of the soldiers who were before him?
2. In what ways do the Romans mock Jesus's kingship in John 19:1–16? In what ways do the Jews spurn their rightful king?
3. What reversal do we see in the lives of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus in John 19:38–42?
4. Consider the picture John paints for us in John 20:12 in light of Exodus 25:22; what might John be emphasizing here?
5. John provides a thesis statement for his gospel account in John 20:30–31. What is that thesis statement?
6. What is the importance of the threefold questioning from Jesus to Peter in John 21:15–19?

NOTES:

1 JOHN 1:1-3:10

1. First John has an opening very similar to another New Testament book. Which one? Please list the similarities and any insights this may provide.
2. According to 1 John 1:8–10, there is an “if...then” formula in order to receive God’s forgiveness. What is it? What does this tell us about the nature of forgiveness?
3. Jesus is the propitiation for, “the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). Is this evidence that everyone will eventually be saved (i.e. Universalism [hint: read John 11:50–52])? Please explain.
4. Some insist that a mental assent to the fact that Jesus died for our sins is all that is required for salvation. What does 1 John 2–3 have to say about that idea?
5. Who is the antichrist? How can we know who he is?
6. Jesus tells us in John 7:24 that we are to, “judge with a right judgment.” What is the standard of this right judgment in order to know the children of God versus the children of the devil?

NOTES:

1 JOHN 3:11-4:21

1. What is the predominant theme of this week's reading?
2. Do we still have commandments in the New Testament? Please explain.
3. John sandwiches two sections on love with a warning to test false prophets (1 John 4:1–5). How should this inform our view of love?
4. Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus has come in the flesh from God. Should we conclude, then, that they have the Spirit of God (cf. 1 John 4:2)? Please explain.
5. "God is love," is a phrase often quoted as evidence that God accepts everyone and does not judge. How does its context in 1 John affect this interpretation?
6. List some evidences to confirm that we love God.

NOTES:

1 JOHN 5

1. How should we understand the phrase “overcoming the world”? How are we to do it?
2. To what do the Spirit, water, and the blood testify and agree? Please explain.
3. What is the simple test to know who has life?
4. Why did John write this letter?
5. John acknowledges that all wrongdoing is sin but says there is one sin that must lead to death. What is that sin?
6. How does John’s final sentence in this letter (1 John 5:21) capture the theme of the whole book?

NOTES:

2 JOHN

1. Who are the elect lady and her children?
2. What does John mean when he says, “walking in truth” (v. 4)?
3. What is John’s warning to the church?
4. John has an exhortation and a warning about abiding in Christ’s teaching. What are they?
5. Does John’s warning in verses 10–11 imply that we should not invite those from false religions or unbelievers into our homes? Please explain.
6. John’s joy seems to be connected to the well-being of the churches (cf. 1 John 1:4; 2 John 12; 3 John 4). What application can we make for today?

NOTES:

3 JOHN

1. Who is the recipient of 3 John?
2. How is John's "shepherd's heart" revealed in verse 4?
3. Does verse 7 have any bearing on whether the church should take money from the government? Please explain.
4. What good testimony does Demetrius receive? Is there any application we can learn from this?
5. Why does John write such a short letter?

NOTES:

INTRODUCTION TO APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE AND OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

1. Should we read apocalyptic writing literally? Please explain
2. Some insist that when we read the Bible we should simply ask, "What does it say?" How does our approach to interpreting apocalyptic literature affect our understanding of what it says?
3. Revelation uses imagery, metaphor, simile, allusion, and symbolism. Define each of these:
 - Imagery-
 - Metaphor-
 - Simile-
 - Allusion-
 - Symbolism-
4. Describe the difference between symbolism and allegory.
5. Revelation was not written as an isolated book with no background or pattern with which to follow. Assuming ones needs the Holy Spirit, what is vital to understanding the visions and patterns of the book of Revelation?

NOTES:

REVELATION 1-3

1. There is a flow in the transmission of the Revelation from the ultimate giver of revelation to the ultimate receiver. List the five participants in the revelation from its origin to its final reception (cf. Revelation 1:1).
2. God revealed himself to Moses as YHWH (likely pronounced Yahweh), or I AM, in Exodus 3. How does this relate to the greeting which God gave through John to the seven churches in Revelation 1:4?
3. John wrote his letter to seven churches. Surely there were more than seven churches in his day. What is the significance of the seven? On a practical level, what can you learn from a first century map of these cities?
4. To each of these churches is given an exhortation (or admonition) and promise to the one who overcomes. What is the exhortation (or admonition) to each of the churches? What application can we make of this for today?
5. Many use Revelation 3:20 as a universal call to the lost. In context, to whom was the written? What, then, is the proper application of this passage?
6. Jesus ended many of his parables saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (e.g. Matt. 13:9, 43). How does this relate to the words to each of the seven churches? Please explain the significance

NOTES:

REVELATION 4-11

1. We repeatedly read of twenty-four elders. What might they represent?
2. Describe the significance of each of these names:
 - Lion of the tribe of Judah-
 - Root of David-
 - Lamb-
3. Who do the four living creatures fall down and worship in Revelation 5:14? How does this relate to Exodus 20:5?
4. How might Romans 11:25–26 give some insight into a proper understanding of Revelation 7?
5. The two witnesses in Revelation 11 are described as two lampstands. What does John tell us about the lampstands in Revelation 1:20? Explain how this should direct our understanding of the two witnesses.
6. Which images in this week's reading demand a literal interpretation? What about a symbolic interpretation? How did you decide which was correct?

NOTES:

REVELATION 12-16

1. Is the vision in Revelation 12 symbolic or literal? Who is the woman? Who is the male child?
2. How did the believers conquer the deceiver of the whole world?
3. The enemy's regular strategy is to imitate Yahweh (cf. 2 Cor. 11:14). List some ways that the beast and the dragon go about this imitation.
4. Does Revelation 14:11 give us any insight into the doctrine of hell? Please explain.
5. Does Revelation 14:12 suggest a requirement for Christians to persevere in the faith? Do you see other similar exhortations in the book of Revelation?
6. Do you see any similarities between the seven bowls (cf. Rev. 16) and the seven trumpets (cf. Rev. 8–9)? Please explain.

NOTES:

REVELATION 17-20

1. In Revelation 17 we read of another woman who seems to parody the woman of Revelation 12. What are the similarities and differences between them? Why is the woman in Revelation 17 called “the great prostitute” and “mother of prostitutes”?
2. What does the title, “King of kings and Lord of lords” given to the Lamb tell us about him (cf. 1 Timothy 6:15–16)?
3. What is the name given to the “great city” in Rev. 17:18? Why is it given this name? What does God expect of his people concerning this great city?
4. Hallelujah simply means, “Y’all praise Yahweh!” What things does God receive praise for in Revelation 19:1–8?
5. What images in Revelation 19–20 are literal and which ones are symbolic? How did you come to that conclusion?
6. Some believe in annihilationism for all evildoers on the last day—in other words, that they will simply be annihilated (that is, destroyed). What does Revelation 20:10 reveal about the punishment of evildoers?

NOTES:

REVELATION 21-22

1. According to the book of Revelation, will believers live with God in “heaven” for all eternity, or will he live with believers here on a new earth? Please explain.
2. Some today hyphenate their select sin with being a Christian in order to describe themselves (e.g. “carnal-Christian”, “gay-Christian”, etc.). What does Revelation 21:8; 22:15 have to say to such thoughts?
3. Twice in the book of Revelation we read of the angel telling John not to worship him, but to worship only God (cf. Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9). Does this tell us anything about Jesus?
4. Who is the “Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end” in Revelation 21:3-7? Who is the “Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” in Revelation 22:8-16?
5. How might someone misuse the warning of Revelation 22:18-19 (cf. Deuteronomy 4:2)? Please explain, while considering the context of the statements.
6. Explain how Genesis 1-3 and Revelation 21-22 make perfect bookends to Scripture.

NOTES:

“I AM”

SAYINGS IN JOHN’S GOSPEL

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1

“THE BREAD OF LIFE”

“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry ... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” (6:35, 51)



2

“THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD”

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. ... While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (8:12; 9:5)



3

“THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP”

“Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ... I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.” (10:7, 9)



4

“THE GOOD SHEPHERD”

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ... I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.” (10:11, 14)



5

“THE RESURRECTION & THE LIFE”

“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.” (11:25-26)



6

“THE WAY & THE TRUTH & THE LIFE”

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” (14:6-7)



7

“THE TRUE VINE”

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ... I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (15:1, 5)

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Attentive - God hears and responds to the needs of His children.

Compassionate - God cares for His children and acts on their behalf.

Creator - God made everything. He is uncreated.

Deliverer - God rescues and saves His children.

Eternal - God is not limited by and exists outside of time.

Faithful - God always keeps His promises.

Generous - God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

Glorious - God displays His greatness and worth.

Good - God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

Holy - God is perfect, pure and without sin.

Incomprehensible - God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

Infinite - God has no limits in His person or on His power.

Immutable/Unchanging - God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Jealous - God will not share His glory with another. All glory rightfully belongs to Him.

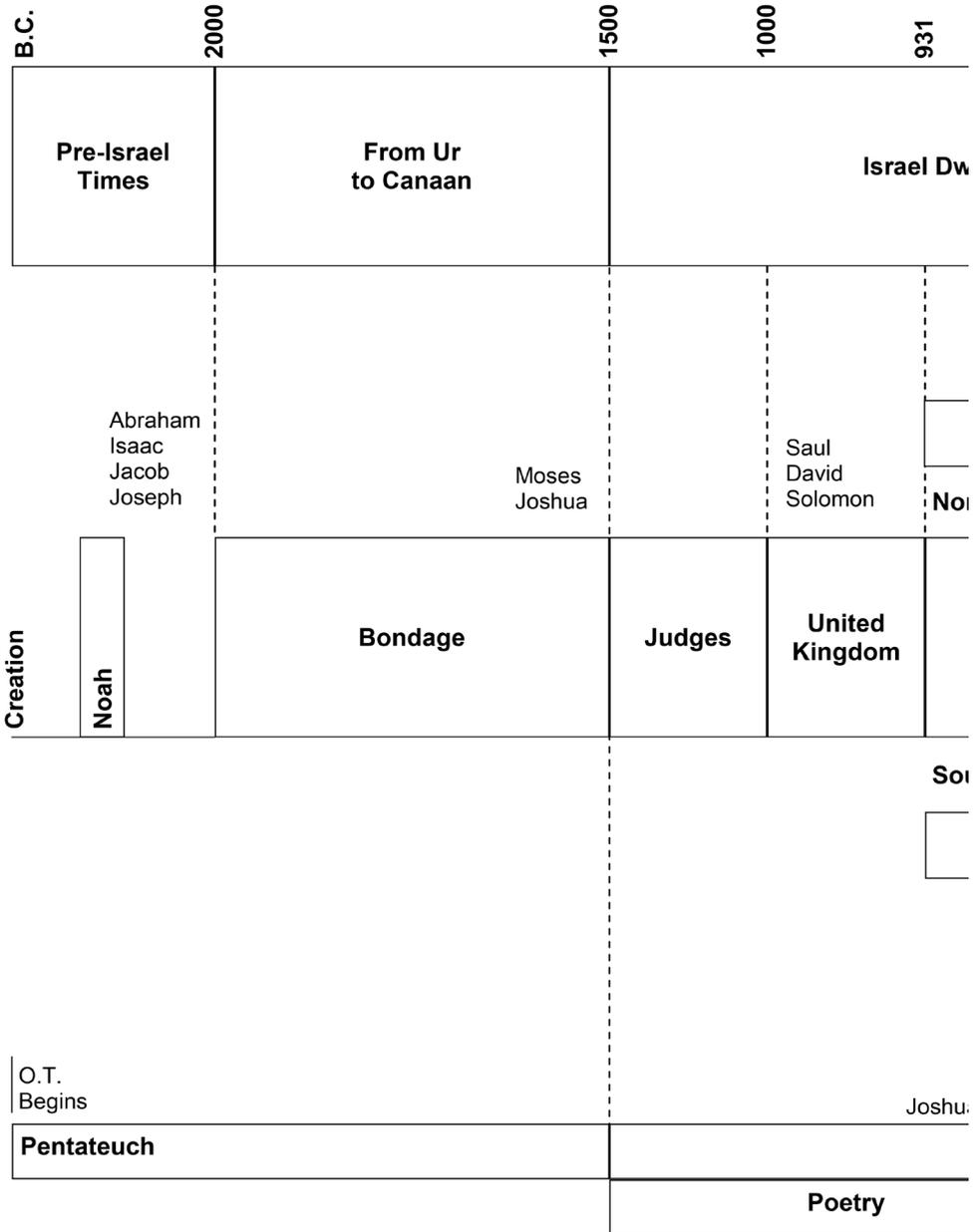
Just - God is fair in all His actions and judgments. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

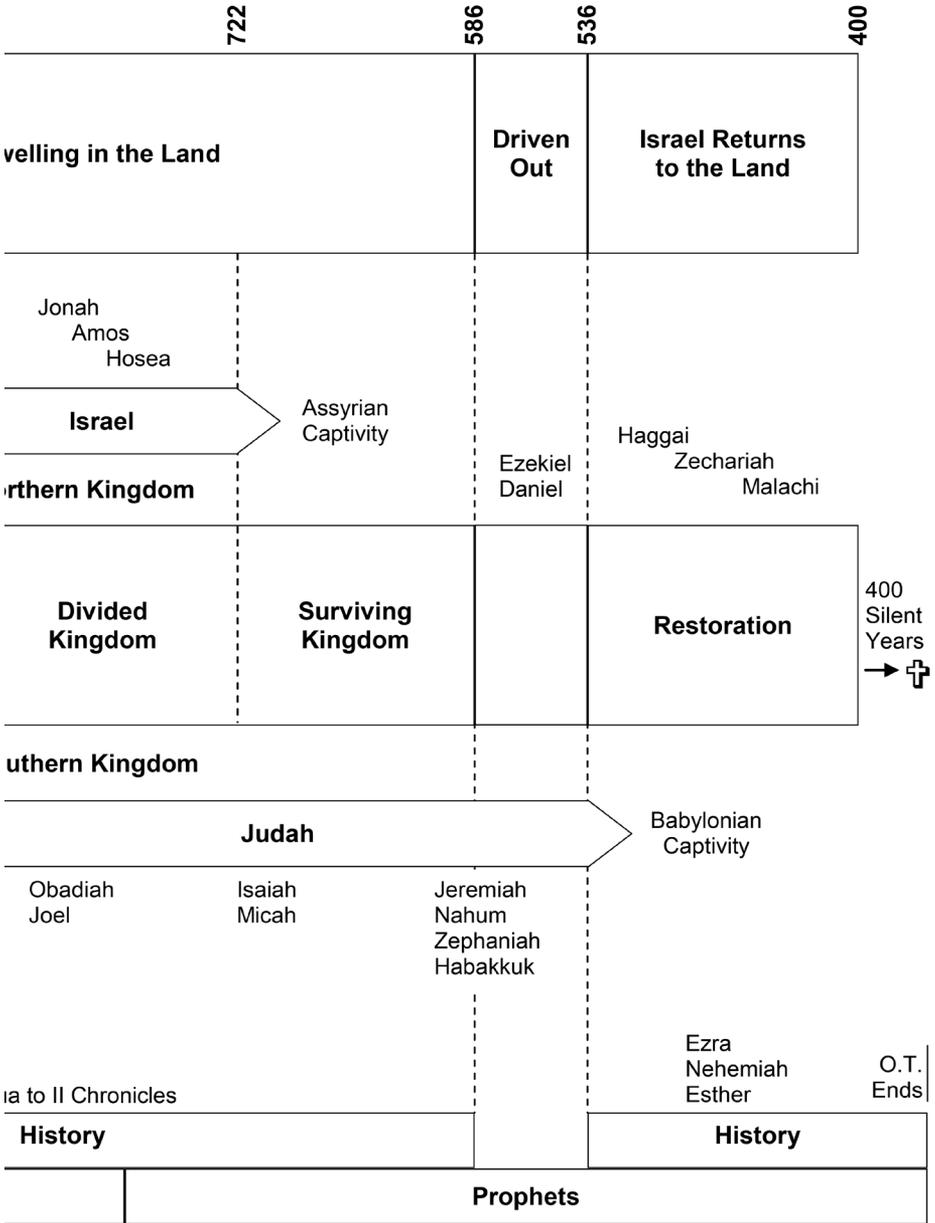
Loving - God feels and displays infinite unconditional affection toward His children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response or merit.

Merciful - God does not give His children the punishment they deserve.

- Omnipotent/Almighty - God holds all power. Nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.
- Omnipresent - God is fully present everywhere.
- Omniscient - God knows everything, past present and future, all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.
- Patient/Long-Suffering - God is untiring and bears with His children.
- Provider - God meets the needs of His children.
- Refuge - God is the place of safety and protection for His children.
- Righteous - God is always good and right.
- Self-Existent - God depends on nothing and no one to give Him life or existence.
- Self-Sufficient - God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.
- Sovereign - God does everything according to His plan and pleasure. He controls all things.
- Transcendent - God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.
- Truthful - Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.
- Wrathful - God hates all unrighteousness.
- Wise - God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.
- Worthy - God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

TIMELINE OF OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY





REVELATION: ROME & THE SEV

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VEN CHURCHES



See Revelation 2:1

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands ... (12-13)



See Daniel 7:13

... and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. (13)



See Daniel 7:9; P

The hair on his white like wool, snow ... (14)



THE VISION OF JESUS REVE



... and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. (15)

See Ezekiel 1:24, 43:2



In his right hand he held seven stars ... (16)

See Revelation 3:1



... and coming mouth was a sword. (17)

See Isaiah 49:2; Hebrews 4:12; R

Proverbs 16:31

... his head was
... as white as



See Daniel 10:6; Revelation 2:18

... and his eyes were like
blazing fire. (14)



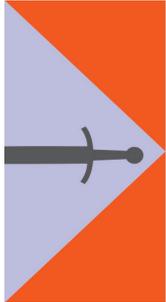
See Daniel 10:6; Revelation 2:18

His feet were like bronze
glowing in a furnace ... (15)



REVELATION 1

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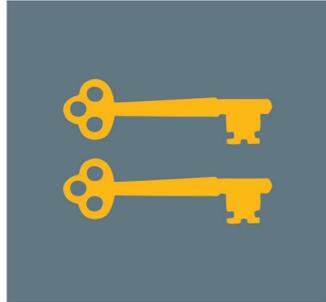


... out of his
mouth, double-
(16)

Ephesians 6:17;
Revelation 2:12



His face was like the sun
shining in all its brilliance.
When I saw him, I fell at his
feet as though dead. Then
he placed his right hand on
me and said: ... (16-17)



“Do not be afraid. I am the
First and the Last. I am the
Living One; I was dead, and
now look, I am alive for ever
and ever! And I hold the keys
of death and Hades.” (17-18)

See Isaiah 41:4, 44:6; Revelation
2:8, 3:7

JESUS IS BETTER THE SHADOW & TH

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THE OLD COVENANT

promise = shadow

with 'our fathers' 'in the past'

angels = God's messengers



Jesus the Son is superior to angels (1)

the message of angels



Jesus the Son is superior to the message of angels (2)

Moses = servant in God's house



Jesus the Son is superior to Moses (3)

Aaron (and his sons) = representative of sinners



Jesus the High Priest is superior to Aaron (4)

Melchizedek = eternal priest



Jesus the High Priest is superior to the priesthood of Melchizedek (5)

Levitical priests = sinful, impermanent, weak, must offer sacrifices for themselves before offering for others



Jesus the High Priest is superior to the Levitical priesthood (6)

THE REALITY IN HEBREWS

→ fulfilment = reality

THE NEW COVENANT

with 'us' 'in these days'

Jesus is superior to the Law (1:2-14)



Jesus = God's Son = heir, creator, glory of God, imprint of God, sustainer, priest, Lord

Jesus's message is the message of the Law (2:1-4)



the message of Jesus = his incarnation & substitutionary atonement = salvation

Jesus is superior to the Temple (3:1-6)



Jesus = Son over God's house

Jesus is our true High Priest (4:14-5:5)



Jesus = our true High Priest = sinless representative & substitute

Jesus is our true High Priest = eternal priest who brings eternal salvation (5:6-10)



Jesus = our true High Priest = eternal priest who brings eternal salvation

Jesus is our true High Priest = priest appointed by divine oath, perfect, permanent, powerful to save others, can offer himself for others (7:9-28)



Jesus = our true High Priest = priest appointed by divine oath, perfect, permanent, powerful to save others, can offer himself for others

THE OLD COVENANT

with 'our fathers' 'in the past'

promise = shadow

Levitical priests = serve in human tent on earth = copy & shadow



Jesus' place superior to that of the Levitical priesthood (1:10)

Levitical priests = mediate old covenant = ineffective & obsolete



Jesus' covenant superior to that of the Levitical (8:7-13; 10:1-4)

Levitical priests = blood of animals in earthly tent, repeated sacrifices, no true redemption, outward cleansing only



Jesus' sacrifice superior to that of the Levitical priesthood (10:10-14)

Levitical priests = bodies of animals, continual & many, reminder of sin, no lasting sanctification or perfection, stand daily to serve



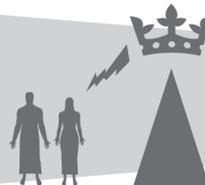
Jesus' sacrifice superior to that of the Levitical priesthood (10:10-14)

God's old covenant people = examples of faith



Jesus is superior to the old covenant of God (11:16)

Sinai = earthly mountain, terror & fear toward God, laws & penalties = condemnation from God



Jesus' New Covenant superior to the old as symbolised by the mountain of Sinai (12:1-5)

→ fulfilment = reality

THE NEW COVENANT

with 'us' 'in these days'

Place of service is that of the Levitical Priest (8:1-6; 9:1-5)



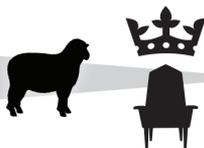
Jesus = our true High Priest = serves at divine throne in heaven = original & reality

Christ is superior to Levitical priesthood (8; 9:6-10)



Jesus = our true High Priest = mediates new covenant = effective & eternal

Sacrificial blood is that of the Levitical Priest (9:11-28)



Jesus = our true High Priest = own blood in heaven itself, single sacrifice, eternal redemption, inward forgiveness & purification

Sacrificial body is that of the Levitical Priest (10:1-18)



Jesus = our true High Priest = own body, singular & once for all, takes away sin, eternal sanctification & perfection, sits down at right hand of God

Superior to the people (1:1 - 12:3)



Jesus = God's Son = the founder & perfecter of our faith, endured the cross, seated with God

New Covenant is superior to the Old Covenant established by Sinai & Zion (8:18-24)



Zion = heavenly mountain, grace & kindness in the presence of God, forgiveness & cleansing in the blood of Jesus

GLOSSARY OF BIBLICAL TERMS

adoption: an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.

antichrist: the “man of lawlessness” who will appear prior to the second coming of Christ and will cause great suffering and persecution, only to be destroyed by Jesus. The term is also used to describe other figures who embody such an opposition to Christ and are precursors of the final antichrist.

atonement: the work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation.

election: an act of God before creation in which he chooses some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of his sovereign good pleasure.

eschatology: the study of “the last things,” or future events, such as the second coming of Christ, the millennium, and the final judgment.

faith: trust or dependence on God based on the fact that we take him at his word and believe what he has said.

fellowship: of saints with one another, in duties; in ordinances; in grace, love, joy, etc.; mutual interest, spiritual and temporal; in sufferings; and in glory.

glorification: the final steps in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own.

justification: an instantaneous legal act of God in which he (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in his sight.

propitiation: a sacrifice that bears God’s wrath to the end and in so doing changes God’s wrath toward us into favor.

redemption: Christ’s saving and complete work viewed as an act of “buying back” sinners out of their bondage to sin and to Satan through the payment of a ransom.

repentance: a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ.

sanctification: a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and more like Christ in our actual lives.

saving faith: trust in Jesus Christ as a living person.

(definitions adapted from Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*)



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8540 Combs Road • Indianapolis, IN 46237

p: 317-881-4010 f: 317-881-4036 w: lifepointindy.com

