

A background image showing a person's hands writing in a notebook with a pen. A Bible is visible in the foreground, partially open, with the word 'BIBLE' and a cross symbol on its cover. The scene is softly lit and slightly blurred, creating a focused and studious atmosphere.

**A PASSAGE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT
YEAR TWO, QUARTER TWO**

Major Prophets

**A Thirteen Lesson Bible Study
by Jeff S. Smith**

A PASSAGE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT

Year One

Year Two

First Quarter: "In The Beginning"

1. Creation (Genesis 1-2)
2. Sin (Genesis 3-4)
3. Noah's Ark (Genesis 6-10)
4. Promises to Abraham (Genesis 11-12, 15-18)
5. Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 13-14, 18-19)
6. Abraham, Sarah and Isaac (Genesis 20-24)
7. Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25-28, 32-33, 36)
8. Jacob and Rachel (Genesis 29-31, 34-35)
9. Joseph Sold Into Slavery (Genesis 37-38)
10. Joseph Imprisoned (Genesis 39)
11. Joseph Interprets Dreams (Genesis 40-41)
12. Providence (Genesis 42-45)
13. Reunited (Genesis 46-50)

Second Quarter: "From Egypt to Canaan"

1. Call of Moses (Exodus 1-5)
2. The Nine Plagues (Exodus 6-10)
3. The Passover (Exodus 11-13)
4. Crossing the Red Sea (Exodus 14-18)
5. The Ten Commandments (Exodus 19-31)
6. The Golden Calf (Exodus 32-40)
7. Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 1-10)
8. Holy Living (Leviticus 11-27)
9. Leaving Sinai for Canaan (Numbers 1-10)
10. Loyalty and Disloyalty (Numbers 11-21)
11. Balaam and Balak (Numbers 22-36)
12. Moses's Review (Deuteronomy 1-4)
13. Moses's Final Charge (Deuteronomy 5-34)

Third Quarter: "Taming Canaan"

1. Entrance Into The Land (Joshua 1-4)
2. Jericho (Joshua 5-6)
3. Ai and Other Conquests (Joshua 7-21)
4. Covenant Matters (Joshua 22-24)
5. Failure to Drive Out Canaanites (Judges 1-2)
6. Deborah and Other Judges (Judges 3-5)
7. Gideon (Judges 6-9)
8. Jephthah (Judges 10-12)
9. Samson and Delilah (Judges 13-16)
10. Tribal Depravity (Judges 17-21)
11. The Courtship of Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 1-4)
12. Samuel's Beginnings (First Samuel 1-3)
13. The Ark of the Covenant (First Samuel 4-6)

Fourth Quarter: "The Throne of David"

1. Institution of the Monarchy (First Samuel 7-12)
2. The Reign of Saul Begins (First Samuel 13-16)
3. David and Goliath (First Samuel 17)
4. Saul Persecutes David (First Samuel 18-20)
5. David's Flight and Fight (First Samuel 21-24)
6. Abigail and David (First Samuel 25)
7. Saul's Downfall (First Samuel 26-28)
8. David's Rise (First Samuel 29-31)
9. David Becomes King (Second Samuel 1-5)
10. David's Successes (Second Samuel 6-10)
11. David and Bathsheba (Second Samuel 11-12)
12. Absalom's Rebellion (Second Samuel 13-19)
13. David's Decline (Second Samuel 20-24)

First Quarter: "Israel and Judah"

1. David's Demise (First Kings 1-2)
2. Solomon's Splendor (First Kings 3-10)
3. Solomon's Demise (First Kings 11)
4. Rehoboam and Jeroboam (First Kings 12-16)
5. Elijah (First Kings 17-19)
6. Ahab and Jezebel (First Kings 20-22)
7. Elisha (Second Kings 1-4, 6)
8. Naaman the Leper (Second Kings 5)
9. Bloody Reigns (Second Kings 7-12)
10. Fall of Israel (Second Kings 13-17)
11. Hezekiah (Second Kings 18-21)
12. Josiah (Second Kings 22-23)
13. Fall of Judah (Second Kings 24-25)

Second Quarter: "The Major Prophets"

1. The Book of Isaiah (Part 1)
2. The Book of Isaiah (Part 2)
3. The Book of Isaiah (Part 3)
4. The Book of Jeremiah (Part 1)
5. The Book of Jeremiah (Part 2)
6. The Book of Jeremiah (Part 3)
7. The Book of Lamentations
8. The Book of Ezekiel (Part 1)
9. The Book of Ezekiel (Part 2)
10. The Book of Ezekiel (Part 3)
11. The Book of Daniel (Part 1)
12. The Book of Daniel (Part 2)
13. The Book of Daniel (Part 3)

Third Quarter: "The Minor Prophets"

1. The Book of Joel
2. The Book of Jonah
3. The Book of Amos
4. The Book of Hosea
5. The Book of Micah
6. The Book of Zephaniah
7. The Book of Nahum
8. The Book of Habakkuk
9. The Book of Obadiah
10. The Book of Haggai
11. The Book of Zechariah
12. The Book of Malachi
13. Review

Fourth Quarter: "Wisdom Literature & Post-Exile"

1. The Book of Psalms
2. The Book of Proverbs
3. The Book of Job (Part 1)
4. The Book of Job (Part 2)
5. The Book of Ecclesiastes
6. The Song of Solomon
7. The Book of Esther (Part 1)
8. The Book of Esther (Part 2)
9. The Book of Ezra (Part 1)
10. The Book of Ezra (Part 2)
11. The Book of Nehemiah (Part 1)
12. The Book of Nehemiah (Part 2)
13. Intertestamental Period

A PASSAGE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT

Year Two, Quarter Two

Major Prophets

A PASSAGE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT is designed to take a Bible class all the way through the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament in two years' time. Sacrifices were made to arrange this pace, especially in obscure passages such as some found in the Pentateuch, major prophets and wisdom literature. Topical class books can supplement the cursory study of these books at other times, however, so that no part of God's writ is slighted.

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Lesson 1: Isaiah (Part 1)

When Isaiah began his prophetic work, the nation of Israel, separated from the tribe of Judah, was careening toward collapse. His work spans the administrations of four Hebrew kings: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Israel was destroyed by the invading Assyrians in the midst of Isaiah's tenure, around 722 B.C. Judah, however, was headed for a similar fate at the hands of the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

Isaiah's prophecy is often quoted in the New Testament and is among the best at describing the coming Messiah. The book speaks to the nation rather than the individual. The prophet had a pending captivity and restoration in mind, but was also interested in the future reign of the Christ.

The book's authorship has been attacked for many years. Some note the apparent change in tone between the initial thirty-nine chapters and the last twenty-seven and claim there were two authors named Isaiah or many men wrote the book under the single pseudonym. The Dead Sea Scrolls damaged these claims when they were discovered, for there is no break between the supposed sections. Moreover, the New Testament quotes from each division.

Isaiah's name means "The Lord is Salvation" in Hebrew and very clearly, our prophet foresaw salvation for God's people. The justice of God is underscored by Isaiah who saw just two alternatives – salvation or condemnation. He labored for more than half a century, revealing his visions and painting with precise brushstrokes a portrait of the Christ to come.

Little is known of his personal life. His father is named but is obscure. His wife is referred to as "the prophetess," for whatever that is worth. He witnessed one of the great tragedies in Hebrew history when Israel was devastated by the Assyrians but continued to preach courageously.

The reader might identify four main themes with modern relevance from Isaiah. First, the prophet extols the holiness of God, an idea somewhat lost on a nation that seeks to preach tolerance above righteousness. There is a just standard of good and evil and God reveals it to man in the word in which he also demands that we strive to live holy.

Second, Isaiah points out the benefits of a righteous way of life. Living righteously requires the saint to be just with other people, to walk by faith and not by sight, and to seize the hope God has set before him.

Third, Isaiah warns man of God's justice and judgment. There is no escape from God's plan to settle all accounts, rewarding the just and punishing the wicked. The reality of a final judgment needs to be impressed upon the hearts of humanity anew.

Fourth, Isaiah is likely unparalleled in his revelations concerning the coming Messiah. Isaiah tells us that the Messiah is deity who would dwell among men in a tabernacle of flesh and then suffer and die on a cross. Isaiah's projection of the Messiah destroys the Premillennial idea that the Jews' rejection of Jesus surprised God.

1. How had Israel reacted to God's previous attempts to chasten her back to submission (Isaiah 1:1-11)?

2. What was God's opinion of the Israelites' worship practices (1:12-15)?

3. What did God suggest they do before returning to worship (1:16-20)?

4. Isaiah turns to prophesy of the new kingdom of God to be established (2:1-5). How would its population extend beyond Hebrews by birth? From what geographic location will the law of the kingdom emanate?

5. How are these two concepts found in the church, the kingdom of God (Acts 10:34-35, 1:1-8)?

6. When was the prophecy contained in Isaiah 7:10-16 fulfilled in the long run? What does "Immanuel" mean (Matthew 1:23)?

7. God's encouragement to Isaiah is timeless, often repeated to New Testament preachers (8:11-20). What is the Lord to those who fear him?

8. Where should people go in search of knowledge? Compare Isaiah 8:20 to the "restoration plea" inspired by First Peter 4:11.

9. What nicknames are given to the coming Messiah (9:6-7)?

10. What did God find wrong with their religion (29:9-14)?

Lesson 2: Isaiah (Part 2)

1. To review, in whose waning reign was Isaiah now prophesying (Isaiah 39:1)?
2. What mistake did Hezekiah make (Isaiah 39:2-8)? What would be the ultimate result?
3. Isaiah 40:1-11 is highly Messianic. What man was prophesied in verse 3? What was his objective (Matthew 3:1-6, John 1:23)?
4. How did Isaiah demonstrate the indestructibility of God's word?
5. To what occupation did Isaiah compare the Messiah (see John 10:11-18)?
6. In an age when most people seem to have believed the Earth was flat, one fact stands out in Isaiah 40:12-31. What is it?
7. Isaiah has prophesied that Judah would go into Babylonian captivity (44:21-28). He made a startling prophecy at the end of this passage. Although Jerusalem would be sacked in 586 B.C. and its temple would be toppled, God would cause the Babylonians to be defeated by the Persians, whose emperor Cyrus would violate a fundamental Chaldean rule of governing captives. What would Cyrus do?

8. Why would Babylon be held accountable for harming Judah if God wanted it done (47:1-15)? Describe Babylon's arrogance.

9. How would Judah react to Babylonian captivity (49:14-26)? Could God ever forget Judah? Why or why not?

10. Saul was powerfully built and David was ruddy and handsome. What did Isaiah predict about the physical appearance of the ultimate King of the Jews (53:1-6)?

11. Why would this man of sorrows have to suffer?

12. How did Jesus go to the cross as Isaiah prophesied (53:7-12; see also First Peter 2:18-25)?

13. How does Isaiah liken the invitation to salvation issued by the Father (55:1-9; see also John 7:37-39)?

Lesson 3: Isaiah (Part 3)

1. The last dozen or so chapters seem to be addressed to the remnant of Jews that would return from Babylonian captivity after 539 B.C. to rebuild the Jewish system. They were to conduct themselves in anticipation of the Messiah who was coming and teach their children to respect God and that hope. Ultimately, why shouldn't the Jews have expected to keep this salvation to themselves (Isaiah 56:1-8; see also John 10:16)?

2. How does Isaiah describe Israel's current crop of leaders (56:9-57:2)?

3. Why did God perceive his people no longer feared him (57:3-14; see also Psalm 50:21)?

4. Whom did God facetiously tell the people to look for rescue when the invasion came (see also Jeremiah 11:12)?

5. What kind of human spirit pleases the Lord (57:15-21)?

6. How does Isaiah describe the fact that there is no peace for the wicked?

7. Why was God not listening to the Hebrews' plaintive cries (58:3-7, 59:1-8)?

8. Name changes in the Bible usually denote a change in relationship with God (62:1-9). List some prominent name changes from the Bible.
9. What could be the “new name” God predicts for his people (62:2; see also 60:14, Revelation 2:17)?
10. About whom was the prophet speaking (65:1-16; see also Romans 10:20-21 and Acts 28:17-28)?
11. The context demands we consider Isaiah 65:17-25 to be prophetic of the remnant’s return to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the subsequent arrival of the Messiah. What age was Isaiah prophesying here?
12. On whom does God look favorably (66:1-13; see also Acts 10:34-35)?
13. How did Isaiah describe God’s judgment upon these sinners (66:24)?

Lesson 4: Jeremiah (Part 1)

Jeremiah's prophecy does not seem to be arranged by any logical means, certainly not by chronology. This makes it somewhat difficult to follow, but the book contains such worthwhile reminders that it demands serious study.

The first twenty chapters of Jeremiah speak of the times in Josiah's reign as Judah's king. The rest of the book spans the reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. While Jeremiah contains much history, it is still primarily a record of prophecy.

As Jeremiah began to write, Israel had already been long destroyed and Judah was drifting in that direction as well. Jeremiah prophesied as Israel's invader, Assyria, was on the wane and Egypt and Babylon were struggling for preeminence in the world. He predicted the victory of Babylon, but also its quick demise.

Jeremiah was charged with confronting Judah with her misplaced confidence as the drums of war began to beat. Judah believed that God would be forced to intervene and save them from Babylon because they held the trump cards: the temple and the true religion. Jeremiah, however, sought to remind them that with their greater blessing came greater responsibility and a deeper punishment if they failed.

Jeremiah was the son of a priest named Hilkiah. Our prophet's name means "exalted of Jehovah" in Hebrew and shows his position in Israel as false prophets exalted themselves as patriotic and optimistic. He is often called the weeping prophet or the prophet of doom because he was completely pessimistic about Judah's prospects for surviving war with the Chaldeans. Jeremiah had a scribe named Baruch who helped him record his prophecies. The original copy was destroyed by the king and then rewritten.

Jeremiah labored from his youth until his old age, from 625 B.C. to Judah's fall in 586 B.C. He is also traditionally credited with writing Lamentations, a book of sad poems on Jerusalem's destruction. Jeremiah remains relevant today as false teachers and prophets continue to proliferate in the world. Even the church has become plagued with men who preach smooth messages of an imagined peace when the soul is truly at great peril.

Jeremiah blasts away at three particular sins: idolatry, immorality, and false prophecy. He teaches that it is insufficient simply to recognize our sins and regret them. God requires that we repent of them. Jeremiah reminds us that teaching and contending for the truth will often make one unpopular and the object of persecution and humiliation. The prophecy before us also serves to demand the confluence of the externals and internals of religion. Heart and hands must be joined as one, not betraying one another, according to God and the faith.

Finally, Jeremiah is relevant in that he points out the limits of God's patience. It will not endure forever but has a set conclusion.

1. How did God recognize Jeremiah as a living human before he was born (Jeremiah 1:1-8)? What was Jeremiah's objection to his prophetic calling?

2. What kind of reception could Jeremiah expect in Judah (1:9-19)?

3. For what was God divorcing Judah (2:1-13)?

4. What did God truly want from Judah (3:1-15)?

5. The major issue in Judah concerned the prospects for war against either Egypt or Babylon (6:1-12). What was God predicting?

6. What were the prophets of Judah predicting (6:13-15)?

7. What did God recommend Judah do to find rest for their souls (6:16-21)?

8. What did God make young Jeremiah do and say (7:1-11)?

9. What is the age-old question Jeremiah asks in beginning chapter twelve?

10. What four types of destruction did Jeremiah predict for Judah (15:1-4)?

11. What was the message of Jeremiah's broken flask (19:1-15)?

Lesson 5: Jeremiah (Part 2)

1. What were the hopes of Judah regarding Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 21:1-10)? What would God do instead of aiding them against the Chaldeans? What is God's shocking advice about the way of life and death?
2. How would the nations explain the destruction of God's city (22:1-10)?
3. What would be Shallum's fate (22:11-17; Second Kings 23:31-34)?
4. What would be Jehoiakim's fate (22:18-23; Second Kings 24:1-6)?
5. What would be the fate of Jehoiachin, also called Coniah and Jeconiah, who ruled briefly in 598-597 B.C. (22:24-30; Second Kings 24:8-25:30)?
6. What did God find lacking in the "shepherds" and prophets of Israel (23:1-4, 16-22)?
7. What is the distinction between the good and bad figs (24:1-10)?

8. What would become of Babylon for her role in the Judah's punishment (25:11-14)?

9. What did the people want to do with their pessimistic prophet (26:1-15)?

10. What did Urijah have in common with Jeremiah (26:20-24)? What did they do differently?

11. What was in Judah's future once they had become accustomed to exile (30:1-3)?

12. What kind of covenant was God planning to make with Judah (31:31-34)? Upon what would it be written (see Hebrews 8:8-12)?

13. How did the king treat Jeremiah's prophecy (36:1-32)? How did Jeremiah respond?

14. Was the accusation made about Jeremiah's preaching accurate (Jeremiah 38:1-6)? How was Jeremiah repaid for his courageous work?

15. Describe the thoroughness of the destruction of Jerusalem (39:1-18).

Lesson 6: Jeremiah (Part 3)

1. Where did Jeremiah go once Nebuzaradan released him from the dungeon (Jeremiah 40:1-12)? Did they plan to serve the Chaldeans or rebel?
2. What became of Governor Gedaliah (40:13-41:3)?
3. How much trust were the forces of Johanan willing to put in God and Jeremiah (42:1-6; Second Kings 25:23)?
4. What did God tell them to do (42:7-17)? Where did he forbid them to go? What did God learn when he read their hearts and motives (42:18-22)?
5. How did Jeremiah assure the rebels that they would not be safe, though they had fled to Egypt and taken the prophet captive (43:1-13)?
6. How much had the Jews learned from their experience in the destruction of Jerusalem for idolatry (44:1-10)?
7. How did God reward Baruch for being faithful in his service (45:1-5)?

8. What fate did God pronounce upon Egypt (46:13-28)? Why?
9. As Babylon was basking in the glory of world domination, what did God prophesy for this ascending power (50:1-51:58)?
10. How long was this punishment to endure (51:59-63)? What symbolized that sentence?
11. There are obvious parallels in the content of Jeremiah 52:1-11, Second Kings 24:18-25:7 and Jeremiah 39:1-7. This last chapter, then, provides something of a summary of the results of Jeremiah's preaching, "pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant" nations and kingdoms (1:10). This chapter goes back in time to just before the fall of the city. What effect did Babylon's siege wall have inside the city?
12. Who were left in the city after it was sacked (52:12-16)?
13. How much respect did the Chaldeans show the temple (52:17-23)? Which Judean king received a prophecy that this would happen (Isaiah 39:1-8)?
14. Which Babylonian king treated Jehoiachin well (52:24-34)? How?

Lesson 7: Lamentations

The rabbis gave this book the name “Dirges” or “Lamentations,” although it is simply called *Ekah* – “How” – after its first word in the Hebrew Bible. Lamentations is a collection of five interconnected poems that describe national shame and misery following military defeat.

The first four chapters, each individual poems, are written in an acrostic pattern. Each successive stanza begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The fifth chapter is not acrostic and the third is more elaborate than the form described here. A careful reading of Lamentations will show the devastating effect of the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem on both the nation and the hearts of the survivors. The subsequent exile was a great humiliation to a nation that had defeated every opponent that ever dared oppose her. The text of Second Kings 25:8-12 narrates the immediate background of these sorrowful poems.

Lamentations is God’s explanation of the fall of Jerusalem and the blame rests squarely on the sinful infidelity of man rather than any impotence or apathy of God. The visible reminders of God’s choice of Judah were taken away in an object lesson that broke the hearts of the faithful. The city itself was destroyed, the temple was toppled, and the worship rendered there was eliminated. The truth is often difficult to hear and even harder to confess and Lamentations is both a recitation and admission of guilt.

Lamentations is an anonymous book but strong internal evidence and Jewish tradition attribute it to the prophet Jeremiah, whose undisputed work precedes this one in the canon (Second Chronicles 25:25). The content of both works is similar: Jeremiah sees God’s providence and judgment behind the tragedy of Judah’s destruction raging all about.

This book was apparently composed during the period immediately following the capture of the city of Jerusalem in 587-586 B.C., before temple worship resumed in 516 B.C.

Though seldom read much today, Lamentations speaks volumes of a society where God has been forgotten. Two major themes appear that are relevant to modern audiences. First, adversity should bring out the best in man. The author honestly describes his sorrow and loss and admits the reasons for it. There is no attempt to blame God for sin or for his righteous judgment. Instead, there is repentance and a new commitment to do justly.

Second, adversity should draw us closer to God. When man blames God for sadness and loss, the devil wins on two fronts. Not only does he cause the sorrow, but also he prevents man from seeking the one sure source of comfort and salvation there is. The devil has managed to get God convicted in the court of man’s heart for a crime the devil himself committed. Instead, man is blessed when he realizes that God is light and in him is no darkness at all (First John 1:5).

1. What feminine image did the writer employ to describe the depths of Jerusalem's downfall (Lamentations 1:1-22)?
2. How had the history of the Jews come full circle since the days of Moses?
3. What had become of worship in Judah, now that she was sacked? How had Judah committed spiritual adultery?
4. Was the punishment of Jerusalem God's will or in spite of it (2:1-22)? What is symbolized by the removal of God's right hand from the nation?
5. What ancient city that Israel overthrew did Jerusalem now resemble? What class of Israelites were called to blame for part of Judah's fall?
6. What was God's reaction to their prayer for pity (3:8, 44)?
7. What is the characteristic of wormwood that applies to this lament?
8. According to Lamentations 3:17-18, why cannot God allow the impenitent soul to be comfortable (see Isaiah 57:17-21)?
9. According to Lamentations 3:27, what great lessons must be learned in youth to assure contentment (see James 1:2-4, Ecclesiastes 12:1-8)?
10. What had the ensuing famine led some mothers to do (4:1-22)? Why was Jerusalem's suffering greater than that of Sodom?
11. What had happened to the inheritance of the Jews (5:1-22)?

Lesson 8: Ezekiel (Part 1)

Ezekiel prophesied during the Babylonian exile as one of the captives in the foreign land. His prophetic record is of Judah's appointed watchman, and he also serves to identify for his country the reason for her plight – sin. He said that the exile would last seventy years, although false prophets were presumptuously predicting an earlier return to Judah.

Ezekiel was charged with preventing further or complete apostasy of the Jews held captive in Babylon. These people were the good figs of Jeremiah's prophecy (Jeremiah 24:1-10), taken in the second captivity of 597 B.C., who humbly submitted to God's recommendation to accept exile. They would help form the faithful remnant that would return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Jewish way of life. Daniel was among the first group of captives, taken in 605 B.C.

The initial twenty-four chapters of Ezekiel are predictions made before the invasion of Jerusalem. The prophecy is devoted to predicting Judah's certain doom and appealing for her residents' repentance.

Chapters 25-32 concern predictions made during the siege of Jerusalem and record God's impending judgments on the nations of the region.

Chapters 33-48 are predictions made after the siege of Jerusalem and tell of the restoration of the remnant and their future back home.

Ezekiel was born about 622 B.C. to a priest named Buzi. Ezekiel lived by the River Chebar in the village of Tel-Abib until he was called by God to prophesy to Judah. He was burdened with two tragic prophecies, recorded in his book – the death of Jerusalem and the death of his wife.

Ezekiel is sometimes referred to as the watchman of Judah, for God gave him this occupation, if not the appellation itself. God made his countenance firm and confident in the face of unbending opposition from the people of Judah. It is likely that Ezekiel was influenced by the reforms of Judah's last godly king, Josiah, a decade before Ezekiel began to prophesy. The book gives a record of his life, his early fears and growth in his office. In a sense, he was charged with taking Israel's face into his hands and forcing her to listen to God's rebuke. Because no one enjoys such chastening, Ezekiel was as unpopular as Jeremiah.

Ezekiel is an extremely relevant prophet to modern readers. He teaches about the nature of God, a subject sorely misunderstood in a society that has stripped the Lord of his jealousy, justice, and genuine love for sinners.

Ezekiel held nothing back in exposing the seriousness of sin. Modern religion has devalued sin and redefined it so much that one rarely even hears the word pronounced any more. He reminds the reader of God's standard of judgment and that justice demands the wicked be punished, especially if the opportunity for atonement is rejected. Still, he points to the possibility of restoration and rebirth as a new people in God's favor.

Finally, Ezekiel represents the watchman, vigilant in warning of evil.

1. What mission was God giving to Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:1-2:10)?

2. What did God call Ezekiel's new occupation (3:16-27)? What was the extent of his accountability?

3. Why was God so angry with Judah that he let her be destroyed (5:1-17)?

4. What was Israel doing in the dark when they thought God could not see (8:1-18)?

5. Summarize the prophecy in Ezekiel 11:14-25.

6. Why was God dissatisfied with so many prophets (13:1-12)?

7. Where were the Hebrews' idols located (14:1-11)? What does this mean?

8. What had God done for Israel (16:1-14)? How was he repaid (16:15-29)?

9. What Jewish proverb angered God (18:1-32)? Why?

10. What is God's standard of individual accountability?

Lesson 9: Ezekiel (Part 2)

1. Why did God intend to punish the Ammonites and Moabites also (Ezekiel 25:1-11)? How were they related to Israel (see Genesis 19:30-38)?

2. Why did God intend to punish Edom (25:12-14; see also Obadiah 10-14)? How were the Edomites related to Israel (Genesis 36:8-9)?

3. What was God's complaint against the Philistines (25:15-17)?

4. Whom would God use to punish Tyre (26:1-21)? Why would the coastlands tremble and shake?

5. Of what was Tyre especially proud (27:1-3)? What are the modern names for Put and Persia (27:10)?

6. What was the king of Tyre's trespass (28:1-10)? How would God punish him? To what might the prophet be comparing the king of Tyre (28:11-20)?

7. When would Israel and the surrounding nations know that Jehovah was the God of Israel (28:25-26)?

8. What was the sin of the Pharaoh and the people of Egypt that God was condemning (29:1-12)?

9. What was Israel's iniquity involving Egypt (29:13-16)? Who else would fall with Egypt (30:5, 24)?

10. What former nation rivaled Egypt in world domination, and provided Egypt an example of God's wrath (31:1-9)? What happened to that one (10-14)?

11. How would all this destruction "comfort" Pharaoh (32:1-32)?

Lesson 10: Ezekiel (Part 3)

1. Whose fault is it if a man does not heed the sound of warning (Ezekiel 33:1-9)? What will happen to the man that heeds the warning cry? Whose fault is it if souls are lost because the watchman is too cowardly or lazy to blow the warning when danger approaches?

2. What was God's invitation plea in Judah that day (33:10-20)?

3. What must the wicked man do to regain God's grace? How can the righteous man suffer loss? Is this fair?

4. How did Ezekiel's audience respond to his preaching (33:30-33)?

5. How were the shepherds of Israel failing the flock (34:1-16)? Explain. What would God do about it (34:11-24)?

6. What would God do for his name that he would not do for Israel (36:16-38)?

7. What is the explanation given to the vision of the valley of the bones (37:1-14)?

8. What is the explanation of the vision of the two sticks (37:15-28)?

9. What is the name of God's enemy in Ezekiel 38:1-39:29? From whence does he hail? What was this enemy's evil intention?

10. What did Ezekiel's visitor do (40:1-42:20)? What is God's temple in the New Testament (Ephesians 2:19-22)?

11. What did God tell Ezekiel about his throne (43:1-9)? What did God hope to inspire in Israel by Ezekiel's description of this temple (43:10-27)?

12. What was Ezekiel shown issuing from the threshold of the temple (47:1-12; see Revelation 22:1-2)?

13. What is the name of the city (48:35; see Revelation 22:3)?

Lesson II: Daniel (Part I)

Three of the Bible's most memorable stories are recorded in the relatively short major prophecy by Daniel: the fiery furnace, the writing on the wall, and the lions' den. Daniel is also well known for his ability to interpret dreams, some of which predicted the coming kingdom of God. The message of Daniel involves the power of God over the affairs of men.

For a thousand years, God had been bringing up Israel as a tool to express his grace to the world through Jesus. That nation, however, was now plunged into the depths of idolatry and facing annihilation at the hands of an infidel king. God was preserving a remnant, from which a new spiritual Israel would arise and from which the Messiah would be born.

The book of Daniel, like Jonah, shows the exploits of the prophet as he deals with his office and the temptations of his surroundings. The accounts increase the faith of God's people, encouraging them with the understanding that they can stand up to any challenge. Daniel makes it clear that God's power must prevail in the end.

When Ezekiel and Daniel finished their work, Israel was established as a nation without idolatry. It is more than an amazing footnote to Hebrew history; it is one of the greatest preaching success stories rarely told. The virus of idolatry was finally eradicated from Israel, too late to prevent the Assyrians and Babylonians from toppling the tribes and the temple, but in time to nurture God's scheme of salvation. Four world empires are foreseen by Daniel as coming and going prior to the establishment of the kingdom of God, the church of Christ: Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome.

Daniel is represented as the author of the book that bears his name, although the first six chapters do not so identify him. He was a young Jew of noble lineage taken captive by the Babylonians in 605 B.C. under Nebuchadnezzar. In Babylon, he was numbered among the best and brightest and put on a track to rise in stature with the government. Daniel served the king, spending most of his career as a high-ranking advisor to Nebuchadnezzar. After Persia conquered the Babylonians, Darius elevated Daniel to a similar position in his new administration.

Daniel's name means "God is my Judge," which seems to indicate his responsibility in showing heathen kings how God controls the affairs of men. He was courageous and prayerful; indeed, not a single flaw is revealed in all the book. Even those who did not believe in Jehovah trusted in Daniel because of his overwhelming integrity.

The book of Daniel is relevant to the modern reader for its examples of a strong faith. We see Daniel refuse the dainties of a sinful court, speaking the truth to an unlikely audience, and praying despite prohibition. We see his three friends surviving the fiery furnace and Daniel surviving the lions' den on the basis of their unimpeachable faith in Jehovah.

1. Was Nebuchadnezzar a believer in Jehovah or an idolater (Daniel 1:1-7)? What were the qualifications for the company of men Nebuchadnezzar was assembling?

2. Why should Daniel and his friends have refused the Babylonians' diet (1:8-21)? Why were Daniel and the three considered better than the king's astrologers?

3. What difficult demand did the king make of his magic men (2:1-15)? Why? Why was Daniel in danger (2:16-30)? How did he escape?

4. Whom did Daniel identify as represented in the gold head of the image (2:31-49)? What did Daniel see in this one's future?

5. Using a knowledge of world history and examining Daniel's interpretation in retrospect makes it clear exactly what nations he was prophesying. Complete the following chart:

First Kingdom:

Third Kingdom:

Second Kingdom:

Fourth Kingdom:

6. What would be established during the reign of the fourth kingdom?

7. What outrageous demand did Nebuchadnezzar make of his people (3:1-12)? Who refused?

8. How did Nebuchadnezzar punish the three dissenters (3:13-23)? How did they survive?

Lesson 13: Daniel (Part 3)

1. List and describe the four beasts Daniel saw in Daniel 7:1-10.
2. What was the horn speaking (7:11-18)? What happened to it?
3. Identify the Ancient of Days. What was given to the Son of Man? Compared to Daniel chapter two, what kingdom is this?
4. How does the description of the fourth beast/kingdom compare to the Roman empire that persecuted the saints in the first century (7:19-28; see also Revelation 12:17-18, 13:5, 17:12)?
5. What powerful animals did Daniel see fighting in his next vision (8:1-12)? Which prevailed? What historical era might this represent?
6. Who explained the vision to Daniel (8:13-27)? What did he describe?

7. What calamity on Jerusalem is Daniel describing (9:1-12)?

8. What was Daniel's prayer (9:13-19)?

9. What symbolic period did Gabriel prescribe for Israel to finish its punishment (9:20-27)? What might this represent?

10. Why was Daniel receiving all these special messages (10:1-14)? Who helped him (see also 12:1; Jude 9, Revelation 12:7)?

11. What kingdom was foreseen as troubling Daniel's homeland of Persia (10:15-21)?

12. What mighty king defeated the Persians and established the prominence of the Greek empire (11:1-45)? How did the Jews fare once that empire divided and men like Antiochus Epiphanes came to power?

13. What was to be Daniel's fate (12:1-13)?

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