

KNOW THE BOOK

A BIBLE SURVEY AT A GLANCE



E. A. JOHNSTON, Ph.D.

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BY
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2006, 2024

ISBN: 979-8-9903273-3-7

Republished by
The Old Paths Publications, Inc.
www.theoldpathspublications.com
TOP@theoldpathspublications.com
May 2024

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SAMPLE PAGES

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CONTENTS

DEDICATION	7
INTRODUCTION	9
OLD TESTAMENT	11
GENESIS	12
EXODUS	14
LEVITICUS	16
NUMBERS	18
DEUTERONOMY	20
JOSHUA	22
JUDGES	24
RUTH	26
1 SAMUEL	28
2 SAMUEL	30
1 KINGS	32
2 KINGS	34
1 CHRONICLES	36
2 CHRONICLES	38
EZRA	40
NEHEMIAH	42
ESTHER	44
JOB	46
PSALMS	48
PROVERBS	50
ECCLESIASTES	52
SONG OF SOLOMON	54
ISAIAH	56
JEREMIAH	58
LAMENTATIONS	60
EZEKIEL	62
DANIEL	64
HOSEA	66

JOEL	68
AMOS	70
OBADIAH	72
JONAH	74
MICAH	76
NAHUM	78
HABAKKUK	80
ZEPHANIAH	82
HAGGAI	84
ZECHARIAH	86
MALACHI	88

NEW TESTAMENT

	91
MATTHEW	92
MARK	94
LUKE	96
JOHN	98
ACTS	100
ROMANS	102
1 CORINTHIANS	104
2 CORINTHIANS	106
GALATIANS	108
EPHESIANS	110
PHILIPPIANS	112
COLOSSIANS	114
1 THESSALONIANS	116
2 THESSALONIANS	118
1 TIMOTHY	120
2 TIMOTHY	122
TITUS	124
PHILEMON	126
HEBREWS	128
JAMES	130
1 PETER	132
2 PETER	134
1 JOHN	136
2 JOHN	138
3 JOHN	140
JUDE	142
REVELATION	144

DEDICATION

These chapters on the study of God's written word are dedicated with deep esteem to my dear friend, the Reverend Doctor

Dr. Ted Rendall

Chancellor emeritus of Prairie Bible Institute in Canada, a scholar, a man of revival, and a faithful friend.

INTRODUCTION

This book was written for the busy pastor or Sunday school teacher. Having taught Sunday school myself for over a decade I know how frustrating it is to prepare fresh messages each week in the year that are both practical and interesting.

This book is not a commentary but a survey of each book of the Bible. At a glance the reader can grasp the central truths and content of each book. It will be helpful to use other research tools to prepare messages, however, this little book will "do in a pinch" when time restrains.

This book will help you look like a Bible expert and speak like one too! Difficult words (places and names) of each book are pronounced for you. A practical application is presented with each book *for* today's Christian believer. All pronunciation is provided by *That's Easy For You To Say* by W. Murray Severance, Broadman & Holman Publishers, Nashville, 1997. The section entitled, "Historical Insights" information is provided by *The Manners & Customs of the Bible* by James M. Freeman, Bride-Logos Publishers, Gainesville, 2001 and *Holman Bible Handbook*, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, 1992.

It is our desire that this research tool will enable the reader to be more professional, be more interesting, and be more effective in teaching and preaching the Word of God, May God bless you as you handle His Holy Word!

OLD TESTAMENT

SAMPLE PAGES

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GENESIS

Genesis means “origin”

Length

50 Chapters

Places to Pronounce

Anon Bachuth (allahn-BAK uhth)
Beer Lahai Roi (BEE ehr-luh HIGH-roy)
Bethuel (beh THYOO uhl)
El Elohe Israel (el-IH OLH hey)
Gerar (GHEE rahr)
Haran (HAY ran)
Machpelah (mak PEE lah)
Mahanaïm (MAY huh NAY im)
Mamre (MAM dh)
Padan Aram (PAY duhn-AY ram)
Peniel (pih NIGH el)
Seir (SEE uhr)
Shinar (SHIGH nahr)
Sidon (SIGH duhn)
Succoth (SUHK ahth)

Names to Pronounce

Abimelech (uh BIM uh lek)
Ephraim (EE fra ihm)
Japheth (JAY feth)
Lamech (LAY mek)
Mahalalel (muh HAL uh hhl)
Mahalath (MAY huh lath)
Manasseh (mull NASS uh)
Methuselah (mih TH(DZ uh hrh)

Historical Insights

“Noah’s Ark: was a three-story, oblong, floating cargo vessel and house, probably with a flat bottom, and with a door in the side and a window in the *roof* or side ... Using the shorter cuba, the ark would have been about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.”

Author and Date

Moses. Between 1450 and 1410 B.C.

Central Message

Genesis is a book of **beginnings and endings**. It begins with **life** and ends with a **death** (Joseph). We see the beginning of a lovely relationship in Eden between God and man— we see that relationship severed due to Satan and sin. We see a mankind so wicked God has to judge it with a flood. We see a man found faithful (Noah) and a man called by God (Abram). God gives Abraham three things:

1. A Promised Covenant
2. A Promised Land (Canaan)
3. A Promised Son (Isaac)

We read this book in wonder as we realize the **purpose** of God which He works through man and the patience of God which He extends toward man. As Sodom and Gomorrah become symbols of **wickedness** so Abraham becomes a symbol of faithfulness. The failure of Abraham to wait upon God by producing Ishmael is overshadowed by his faithfulness in offering Isaac. Jacob steals the birthright and the blessing from his brother Esau! And we follow the Patriarch down his crooked path until he straightens out at the brook Jabbok. There, he wrestles with God and ends up leaning on God and limping through life. We follow Joseph and his dreams into a pit and a prison. We see Joseph raised up to be a prophet and a prince. Genesis is a book of God working out His plans and purpose through man. Man is a failure and God is faithful!

Central Events

Creation, the Fall, the Flood, Tower of Babel, the call of Abram, his family and God's Covenant with him, the offering of Isaac, the stealing of the birthright by Jacob, Jacob's vision of the ladder and his wrestling with God, Joseph in Egypt.

Central Figures

Adam and Eve. God and Satan. Cain and Abel. Abraham and Sarah. Hagar and Ishmael. Isaac and Rebekah. Jacob and Esau. The wives and children of Jacob, Joseph and Potiphar's wife, Pharaoh.

Central Verse

"Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."*

Central Application

The key application for today's Christian believer is, though we are imperfect vessels, God has a perfect plan for us! Despite our failures God will use the **faithful** believer who follows Him and allows Him to fulfill His plans and purposes through us! We must be watchful to be obedient and not disappoint Him and frustrate His plans for us! We must remember that we Christians are chosen like Abraham to be representatives of God in the world to be a blessing to others! Though our path in life is fraught with many sideroads and back-roads we must strive to remain on the main road! God will enable us and He will equip us and He will never desert us!

EXODUS

Exodus means, "way out"

Length

40 Chapters

Places to Pronounce

Baal Zephon (BAY uhl-ZEE fahn)

Marah (MAH ruh)

Massah (MASS uh)

Midian (MID ih uhn)

Pi Hahroth (PIGH-hih HIGH rahth)

Rephidim (REF ih dim)

Sinai (SIGH nigh)

Names to Pronounce

Abihu (uh BIGH hyoo)

Aholiab (uh HOH lih ab)

Amalek (AM uh lek)

Amalekite (uh MAL ur kight)

Amorite (AM uh right)

Bezalel (BEHZ uh lehl)

Canaanite (KAY nuhn ight)

Cherubim (CHEHR uh him)

Eleazar (EL ih AY zuhr)

Eliezer (EL ih EE zuhr)

Gershom (GURH shuhm)

Hittite (HIT tight)

Hivite (HIGH vight)

Issachar (ISS uh KAHR)

Jebusite (JEB yoo sight)

Nadab (NAY dab)

Naphtali (NAF tuh ligh)

Perizzite (PEHR ih zight)

Zebulun (ZEB yoo luhn)

Zipporah (zi POH ruh)

Historical Insights

"The Hebrew word translated "ark" in the KJV can be translated "basket", the word is the same for both. Also the KJV bulrushes were papyrus plants. Moses' basket was made of the leaf of the papyrus, which is a reedy plant that in those days grew plentifully on the banks of the Nile, and whi was used by the Egyptians for making garments, shoes, cords, baskets, boats, sails, and a variety of other things. The roots were dried and used for fuel. The pith of the stem was boiled and eaten, but it was used mainly in making papyrus paper."

Author and Date

Moses. Between 1450 and 1410 B.C.

Central Message

Exodus traces the history of the Israel nation as they leave their bondage in Egypt under the leadership of Moses. It is a record of the birth of Moses and his rise to prominence within the household of Pharaoh. It is an example of a man trying to accomplish God's purposes by human effort (defending his Hebrew brethren by killing the Egyptian and taking matters into his own hands) and failing. Only when Moses is put out in the desert for the next 40 years of his life in total obscurity does he become emptied of self and useful for God. Exodus is one of the most exciting books of the Bible as it relates the following central accounts: God reveals Himself to Moses at the burning bush (3:1-22). Miracles are performed by God (4:1-9; 14:1-31; 15:23-25; 17:1-7).

2. The Law given with its commandments, judgments, and ordinances.

The plans for the Tabernacle are given and constructed.

4.

The furniture of the Tabernacle: brazen altar, brazen laver, table of shewbread, candlestand, altar of incense, the ark, the mercy seat.

In this epic of Israel's testing ground we see God lay out His Best for His People by giving them a **way to access Him** (through the Tabernacle), by giving them **laws to live by to help and protect them**, by giving them **liberty from human bondage**, by giving them **bread from heaven to sustain them** and by giving them **guidance in the wilderness**

(through the pillar of cloud and fire). But we see the backsliding people of Israel fail their test and bow down to a golden calf and murmur against God practically every step of the way. God's patience is tested by this sinning people and Moses intercedes for them (32:11-13) and God relents of His anger toward them; but because of their continually provoking Him the Day of Mercy ends.

Central Events

Bondage in Egypt, the ten plagues, the Passover, the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the ten commandments, the golden calf, the manna and quail, water from the rock.

Central Figures

Moses, Pharaoh, Jethro, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua.

Central Verse

***Exodus 29:46** And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God..*

Central Application

The key application for today's Christian can be found in the words "**HOLINESS TO THE LORD**". We like Aaron and his sons are to be priests holy to the Lord. Like the vessels of the tabernacle were "set apart and consecrated" we too should be the same! The Hebrews murmured in the wilderness and failed to enter Canaan- the Land of Promise. We must examine our lives under the spot light of the Holy Spirit and be sure we are not grumblers as well! We have **Light**, we have **Grace**, we have **Jesus!** And we have **our Bibles!** How much more is expected from us by God in this present dispensation of the Church Age. Will we fail as well?

Leviticus

Leviticus means "pertaining to the Levites'(")

Length

27 Chapters

Places to Pronounce

Canaan (KAY nutin)

Sinai (SIGH nigh)

Names to Pronounce

Abihu (uh BIGH hy@)

Eleazar (EL ih AY zuhr)

Elzaphan (el ZAY fan)

Ithamar (ITH uh mahr)

Mishael (MISH eh un)

Molech (MOH lek)

Nadab (NAY dab)

Uzziel (UHZ ih um)

Historical Insights

"The scapegoat was taken out of the camp into the wilderness, symbolically bearing upon itself the sins of the people, and was never allowed to return to the camp again. Certainly this dramatic ritual in which the people could vividly see their sins laid upon the scapegoat and then removed from among them, was a foreshadow of Isaiah's later statement about the Christ to come: "*And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*" (Isa. 53:6). It also symbolizes that once God removes sin because of the finished work of Christ, it is gone forever and the guilt of it never returns to the person."

Author and Date

Moses. Between 1450 and 1410 B.C.

Central Message

Leviticus is a book about holiness. It is a book about consecration. It is a book about God and His ordinances for man. Through Moses, God was giving His People a way to access Him—to fellowship with Him; a way of atonement for their sins. God is holy and for sinful man to have access to Him there must be a blood sacrifice in atonement for sin. This book points to Calvary and the atoning redemptive work of Christ—His Blood shed for mankind's sins. What a loving God we have! Throughout Leviticus God is preparing His People to be able to live within His best *for* them. The laws, the regulations, the precepts are a way *for* the people of Israel to be separate and set apart for Him. The conditions that God sets forth for obedience are not to chastise or confine the people but to bless and safeguard them! We see the purpose of God throughout the description of the Offerings: The Burnt Offering (ch. 1); the Meal Offering (ch. 2); The Peace Offering (ch. 3); The Sin Offering (ch. 4); the Trespass Offering (ch. 5). The main duty of the Levite Priests is to present themselves as consecrated vessels to God so they may be effective mediators between the people and God. Jesus is our High Priest today as He mediates for us with the Father—He gave us access to the throne by His shed blood and resurrection! The themes of purity and holiness are ever before in this book. There is a command, **Leviticus 18:4** “*Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.*” There is the reason

behind the command: “*Ye shall be holy,, for I the LORD your God am holy*” (19:2).

For without holiness no one will see God! In chapter 26 there is the promise of blessing for obedience and the promise of curses through disobedience. God warns His People if they disobey Him and turn their hearts away from Him, “*I will set My face against you*”

(26:17).

It is the prevalent “if” “but” theory of the Old Testament. “*If you walk in My statutes ... then I will give you rain ... peace ...*” (26:3-6). “*But if ye will not harken unto Me*” (26:14)!

Central Events

The giving of the Divine Laws. The regulations for the Offerings and Sacrifices.

Central Figures

Aaron and his sons the priests, Moses.

Central Verse

Leviticus 18:4 *Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God..*

Central Application

The key application for today's Christian can be found in the way **we have** access to God. He alone is holy. He alone is God. We are sinful humans. For sinful humanity to access Him there must be a blood sacrifice for atonement of sin. Praise God that Jesus did this for us and through His atoning blood and resurrection we too have access to the Father! We must be careful in this present dispensation to “be holy” and “be thankful” for what Christ has done for us! We too must be “set apart” and live holy, consecrated lives to Him who shed His blood for us.

NUMBERS

Numbers means “numbers” having to do with census figures.

Length

36 Chapters

Places to Pronounce

Amon (AHR nahn)
 Baal Zephon
 (BAY un-zEE fahn)
 Bamoth (BAY mallth)
 Bashan (BAY shan)
 Beer (BEE ehr)
 Dibon (DIGH bahn)
 Eshcol (ESH kan)
 Hamath (HAY math)
 Hazeroth (huh ZEE rahth)
 Hebron (HEE bru tm)
 Heshbon (HESH bahn)
 Hormah (HAWR muIr)
 Kadesh (KAY desh)
 Kehelathah (KEE hih LAY thuh)
 Kibroth Hattaavah
 KIB rahth-hat TAY uh vuh)

Makheloth (mak HEE lahth)
 Marah (MAH ruh)
 Mattanah (MAT uh null)
 Medeba (MED uh bull)
 Meribah (MEHR ih butI)
 Nahaliel (nuh HAY hh el)
 Paran (PAY ruhn)
 Rehob (REE hallb)
 Rephidim (REF ih dim)
 Rimmon Perez
 (RIM uhn PEE rez)
 Pi Hahiroth
 (PIGH-huh HIGH rahth)
 Succoth (SUHK ahth)
 Zoan (ZOH an)

Names to Pronounce

Abihu (uh BIGH hyoo)
 Balaam (BAY luhm)
 Balak (BAY lak)
 Eleazar (EL ih EE zuhr)
 Eliab (ih LIGH ab)
 Ephraim (EE fra ihm)

Issachar (ISS uh KAHR)
 Ithamar (ITH uh mallr)
 Korah (KOH ruh)
 Merari (mih RAY righ)
 Nadab (NAY dab)
 Zebulun (ZEB yu luIn)

Historical Insights

“The Israelite standards and banners were used to gather the tribes in one place, behind or around the standard. In military battles in the past, standards were important devices to let the soldiers know where their division was. Often when the battle was going against them, they would be commanded by trumpets or other means to gather around the standard, sometimes as defense and sometimes to reform themselves for another attack.”

Author and Date

Moses. Between 1450 and 1410 B.C.

Central Message

Numbers deals with: the census of Israel; the **complaining** of Israel; and the failure of Israel to enter Canaan.

J. Sidlow Baxter said of this book, "It took only forty hours to get Israel out of Egypt; but it took forty years to get Egypt out of Israel!" This is seen clearly throughout this account of the disobedient and discouraged Israelites who give up on God at the very edge of their destination—Canaan, the Promised Land. They were willing to only go so far with God and then fell into an utter collapse of faith! How tragic this book is. How valuable it is to us today as we study it since they were examples unto us. In this "wandering" period of wilderness travels we observe two generations of people: **1) those who perish in the wilderness because of their unbelief and disobedience to God.** 2) the generation **of children, whose parents refused to take possession of the land, now inherit the Promised Land and take possession of it under Joshua.** The children of Israel are numbered twice in this book, hence the name—"Numberings" or "Numbers". Numbers gives us a "big glimpse of God" and we see both his tender care for His people Israel in leading them with the cloud and the fire. We see also His **unwavering justice** as He issues judgment and death penalties for those who disobey His commands! This book also gives us a clear portrait of Moses as he **leads the people**, as he loses his temper with the people, and as he **lays on his face in intercession for the people.** Between the ceremonial

laws and the description of the various offerings we have a sad portrait of a disobedient people who continually have to be reminded of what God has done for them and what He has promised to them. Appropriation is the key word of this book of Numbers. Canaan is there ready to be appropriated by faith. It is not attained because faith is not exercised!

Central Events

The pilgrimage of Israel as they fail to "inherit" the Promised Land and the discipline of the wilderness wanderings. This also can be labeled, "the book of murmurings"!

Central Figures

Moses and Aaron. Miriam. Balak and Balaam. Caleb and Joshua.

Central Verse

Numbers 14:23 *Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:*

Central Application

The key application for today's Christian believer is found in the word, "appropriate". Canaan for the Israelites was a physical "Promised Land" given to them by God. Canaan, for us, represents our victory here on this earth as we live out our Christian life. We too can fail to "appropriate" our Canaan and experience a life of victory over the flesh! Obedience, faith, and appropriation is what we need today. We will have our battles with the enemy as we take possession of the fullness of the Holy Spirit and enter Canaan here on earth in our spiritual walk with the Lord. We can choose to "murmur" like Israel or "possess" what is already ours!

DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy means "second law-giving" .

Length

34 Chapters

Places to Pronounce

Chinnereth (KIN ih reth)

Dizahab (DIZ uh hat))

Edrei (ED nh igh)

Ezion Geber (EE zih ahn-GHEE bullr)

Gilead (GIL ih uhd)

Gilgal (GIL gal)

Hazeroth (huh ZEE rahth)

Jabbok (JAB ahk)

Kadesh Barnea (KAY desh-bahr NEE uh)

Nebo (NEE bah)

Paran (PAY rutin)

Pisgah (PIZ guh)

Seir (SEE uhr)

Suph (SOOF)

Tophel (TOH fel)

Names to Pronounce

AbRam (uh BIGH ram)

Amalek (AM uh lek)

Caleb (KAY lullb)

Canaanite (KAY nuhn Mt)

Eliab (ih LIGH ab)

Hivite (HIGH vMt)

Jair (JAY uhr)

Jebusite (JEB y@ sMt)

Machir (MAY kibr)

Manasseh (muIr NASS uh)

Perizzite (PEHR ih zebt)

Sihon (SIGH hahn)

Historical Insights

“Grove of Trees. Idol temples and altars were surrounded by thick groves and trees, which became the resort of the abandoned of both sexes, and in which, under the plea of idolatrous worship, excesses of the vilest kind were committed. For this reason God forbade the planting of trees near His altars, lest His people become, or seem to be, like the heathen.”