

Interpreting OT Literature

**DRESSING
THE
STAGE**

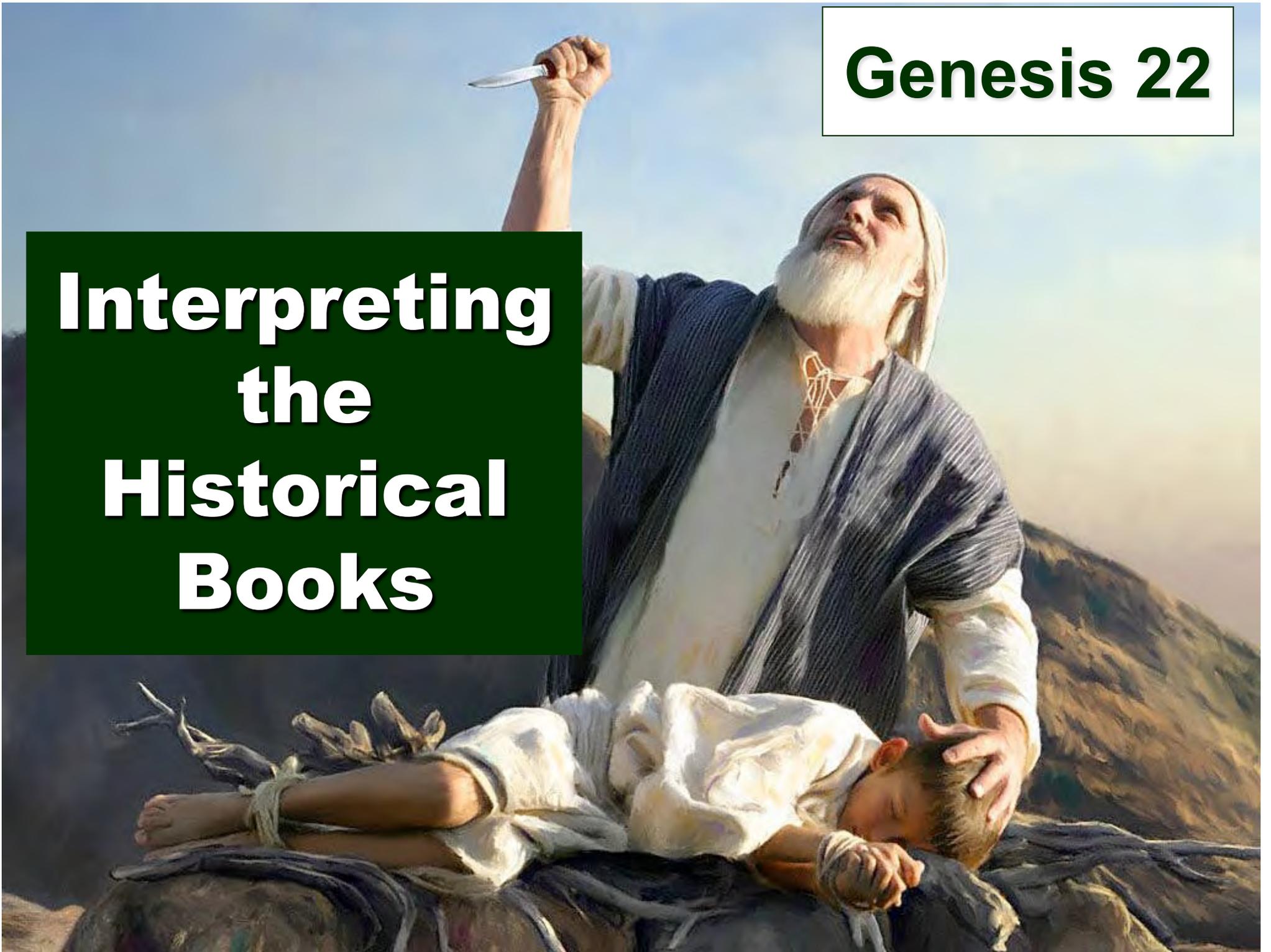


Interpreting the Pentateuch

**We Will Cover This
in Session 28**

Genesis 22

Interpreting the Historical Books



INTERPRETIVE TRAPS

- Moralizing
- Allegorizing
- Spiritualizing
- Imitating Bible Characters



NOT LESS BUT MORE

- The Bible is more than just commands. It reveals who **God** is and how He acts.
- We need to understand what God wanted the **first readers** to be and do so that we can accurately know what we should be and do.
- Most parts of the Bible are **not written as a set of commands** or propositions.

ALLEGORISING & SPIRITUALISING

➤ Allegorising

- There is no real historical story here; instead...
- Everything written is about me and my situation.

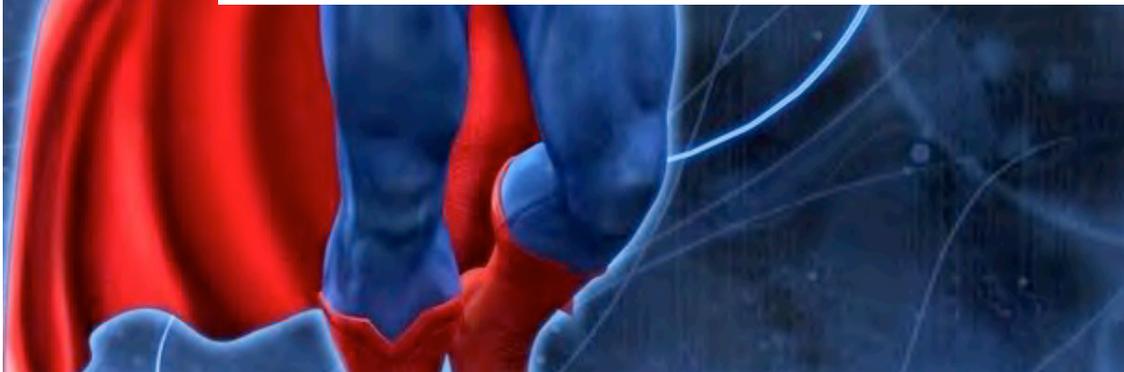
➤ Spiritualising

- There is a genuine story but...
- Significant elements of the text are about me.

INTERPRETIVE TRAPS



- Imitating Bible characters:
 - Always asking: Is this a hero to copy or a villain not to copy?



INTERPRETIVE TRAPS

IMITATE JESUS!



➤ **"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5 NASB)**

➤ **"You shall be holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16 ESV)**

➤ **"We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother" (1 Jn. 3:12 ESV)**

HAVE A GO

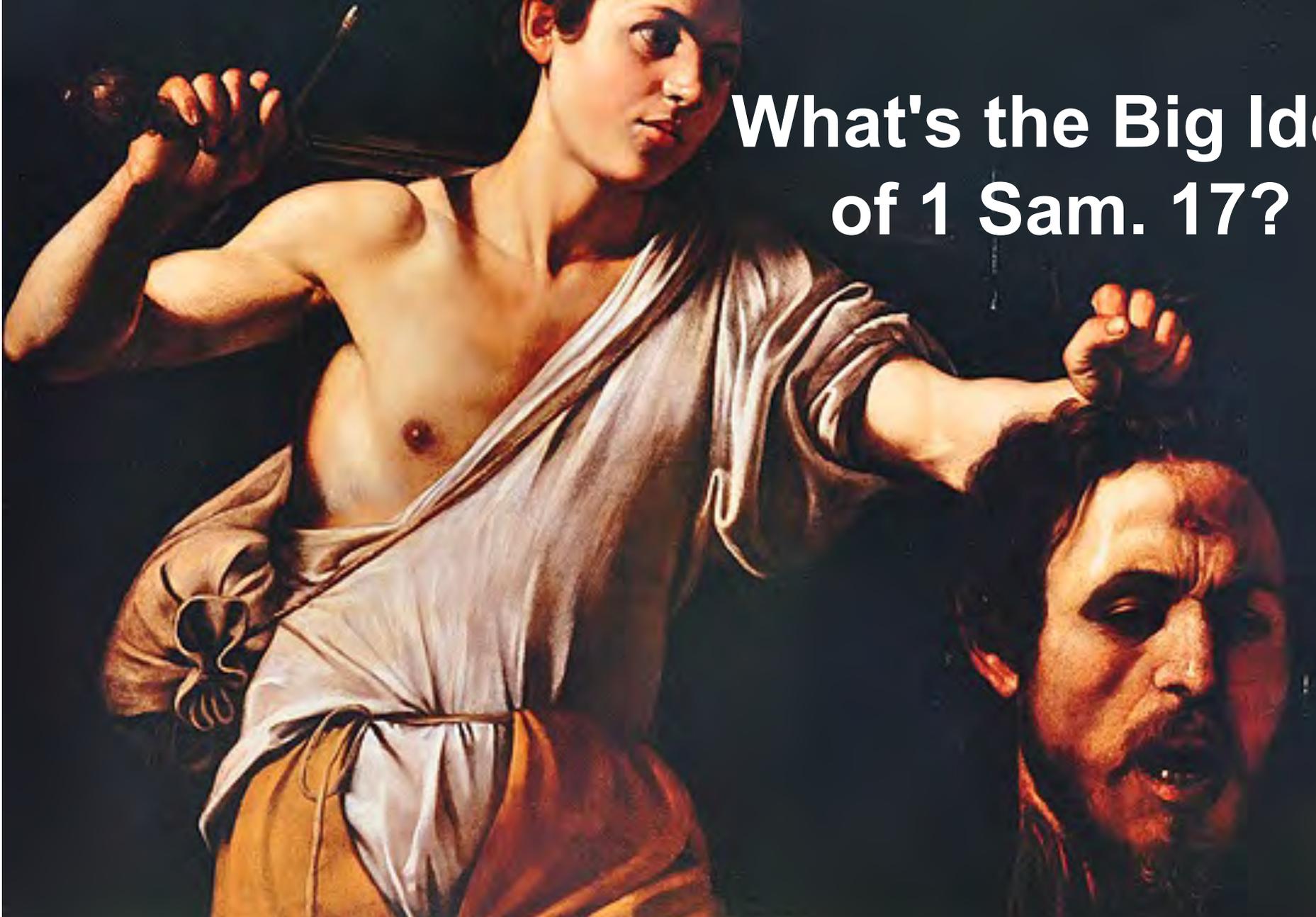
- Read 1 Samuel 17
- Look at the interpretation on the sheet
- Match the error to the interpretation

HOW DO I INTERPRET CORRECTLY?

- Follow the good ways of doing Bible study
- Look at the various contexts of a passage
- Find the author's emphasis and message in the passage.

FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP...

**What's the Big Idea
of 1 Sam. 17?**



Some Big Ideas for 1 Sam. 17

- David through his word and deed showed the world the power of His LORD
- God never fails to help Israel out of their problems.
- God is showing Israel and the surrounding countries the power of God through His presence in Israel that God is more powerful than the other gods revealing ^{that} God ev/ Israel of is sufficient.
- Trust in God wholeheartedly because He never fails
- God is almighty & He will grant victory over His enemies
For His own glory

More Big ideas for 1 Sam 17

- **God is asserting His kingship and establishing David so that all peoples will know He is God.**
- **God is rescuing Israel to assert His Kingship, secure / advance the messianic line and show the world that He alone is God.**



From OT to NT: Principles

- Find a citation of this text in the NT
- Connect it to the larger passage & Bible's story.
- Take these NT truths into view:
 - ▣ Jesus' death and resurrection
 - ▣ The new covenant
 - ▣ Israel and Church



OT quotes / allusions in the NT



- ❑ **Does the author quote the OT exactly?**
- ❑ **Is the NT author using it to say the same thing as the OT did?**
- ❑ **If it is different, what difference did that make to the message of the quote?**
- ❑ **How do the OT and NT contexts fit in the overall picture of the Bible?**

Case Study:

Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15

- Who does “son” refer to in each passage?
- What difference does this make?
- What is Matthew's message for us?
- Is it faithful to the OT context and message?



Case Study:

Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15

- Hosea called Israel God's "son," but Israel was a **disobedient** son.
- Matthew calls Jesus God's Son, but He is an **obedient** Son. Unlike Israel, Jesus was perfect in every instance where Israel failed.



What about 1 Samuel 17?

- **Since there is no direct citation from 1 Sam 17 in the NT, we need to ask some questions:**
 - **Who is David paralleled with in the NT?**
 - **In 1 Samuel 17, how was David a type of Jesus?**



How was David like Jesus in 1 Samuel 17?



- **David won the victory FOR Israel, and their chasing the Philistine army was only the mop-up job.**
- **Jesus is completely victorious over sin and death FOR us.**
- **David saw things as God did and trusted in God. Jesus did all that perfectly.**

Recommended
Resource

COMMENTARY
on the
NEW TESTAMENT Use
of the OLD TESTAMENT



G. K. BEALE
and D. A. CARSON
EDITORS

Look up the Scripture index

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE AND OTHER ANCIENT WRITINGS

Old Testament

Genesis

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“shepherd” terminology not only to kings and sages but also to both God and his firstborn Son or Word (*Agriculture* 50–54; *Posterity* 67–68).

Jesus elaborates that the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (10:11). Young David, first shepherd, then king, literally risked his life for his sheep (1 Sam. 17:34–37; cf. Sir. 47:3). The phrase “to lay down one’s life” is rare in Greek and may reflect the Hebrew idiom “to hand over one’s life” (possible parallels include Judg. 12:3; 1 Sam. 19:5; 28:21; Job 13:14; Ps. 119:109). Several OT passages hint at the Messiah’s self-sacrifice (see esp. Isa. 53:12). In a cluster of messianic references, Zechariah refers to a figure who is “pierced” and for whom people mourn.

Observations for Application

- **The battle was God's and He won it.**

However, David still had to:

- **See things God's way.**
- **Be obedient.**
- **Defeat Goliath while imperfect.**



- **David is compared to Jesus:**

- **Jesus saw things God's way perfectly.**
- **Jesus was perfectly obedient.**
- **Jesus perfectly defeated sin and death for us.**

Applications



- **We should be like Jesus**
 - ▣ **John 13:13-17; 1 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1-2; 1 John 2:6**

- **We should live in Jesus' victory over sin and death**
 - ▣ **Rom. 6:5-14; Eph. 4:1ff; Phil. 1:27; 3:17ff; Col. 3:1ff**

- **David, Jesus, and we have the Holy Spirit. We need to be filled with the Spirit and see things God's way, knowing that He has the victory.**
 - ▣ **Col. 3:1ff; Heb. 12:1ff**

Applications



- **We can have confidence that God is able to deal with anything and anyone who stands in His way. We have a mighty God!**
- **God fought though David so the whole world would know that He alone is God.**
- **Jesus alone is God and one day the whole world will know it.**
 - ▣ **We must live and do things so that the world will know that Jesus is the LORD our God (= for the glory of God).**

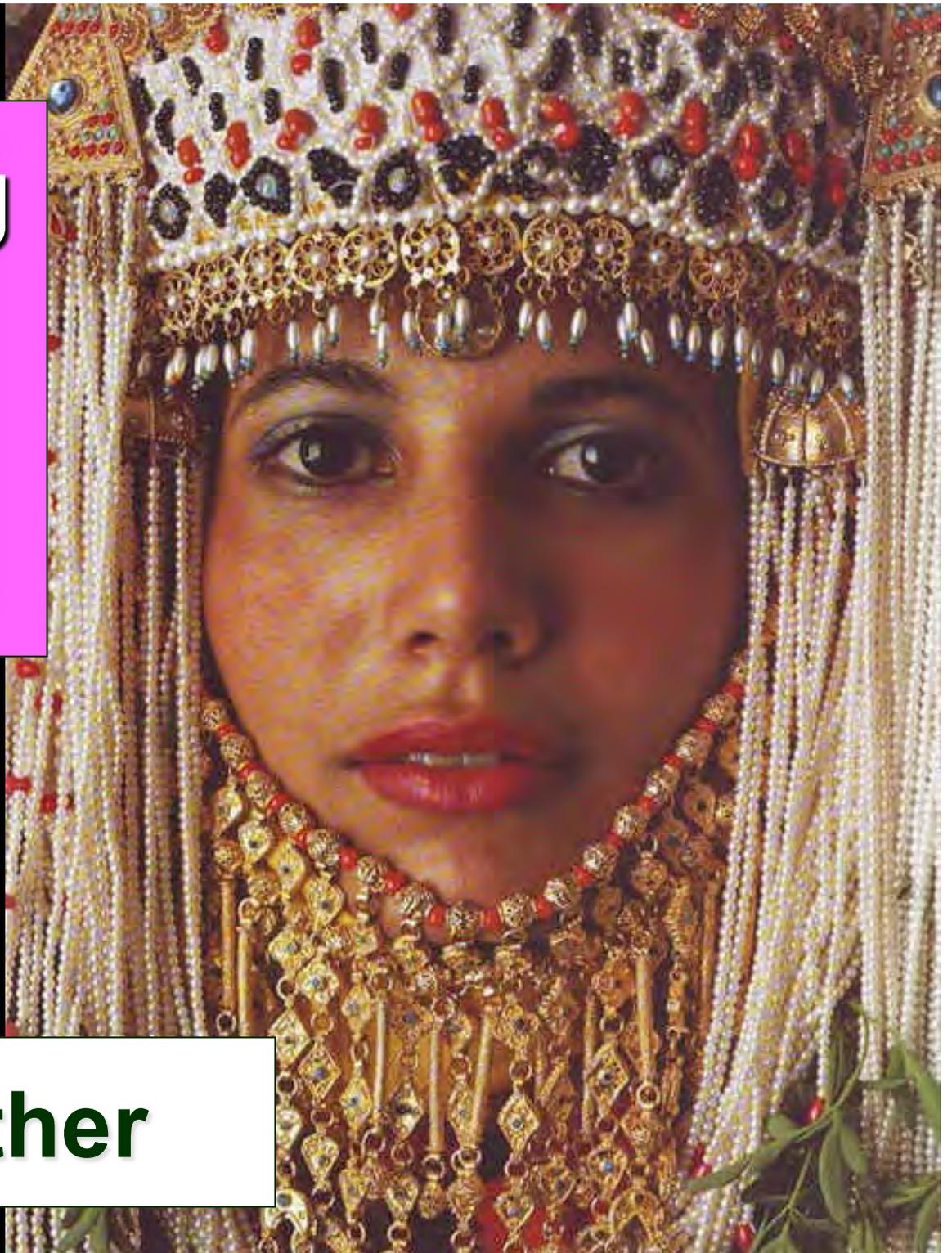
Applications



- **David risked his life to give victory for Israel.**
- **Jesus gave his life and achieved victory over sin and death for all people.**
- **Are you willing to risk your life to show that God is supreme over the world?**

Interpreting the Historical Books

Esther





Did Esther act honorably?

Plot–Characterization– Climax–Resolution

(Mordecai to Esther)

"For if you remain silent at this time, relief & deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you & your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"

(Esther 4:14).



**"...for
such a
time as
this"**



**"...for
such a
time as
this"**

Interpretive Approaches to Esther: Seeking a "Deeper Meaning"

1. **Response:** Nothing is mentioned of the "times of the Gentiles" & the account is presented in a straightforward manner.

2. **Response:** presents narrative

3. **Response:** that it r

Historical—Esther records God's providential care of His chosen people as evidence of His commitment to the Abrahamic Covenant. The following "Argument" section will demonstrate this to be the best option.

Synthesis

Extermination plot foiled

1-4 Plot planned—threat

5-10 Plot foiled—triumph

Interpreting the Wisdom & Poetic Books



Historical

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

POETIC BOOKS

Job

Psalms

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Song of Solomon

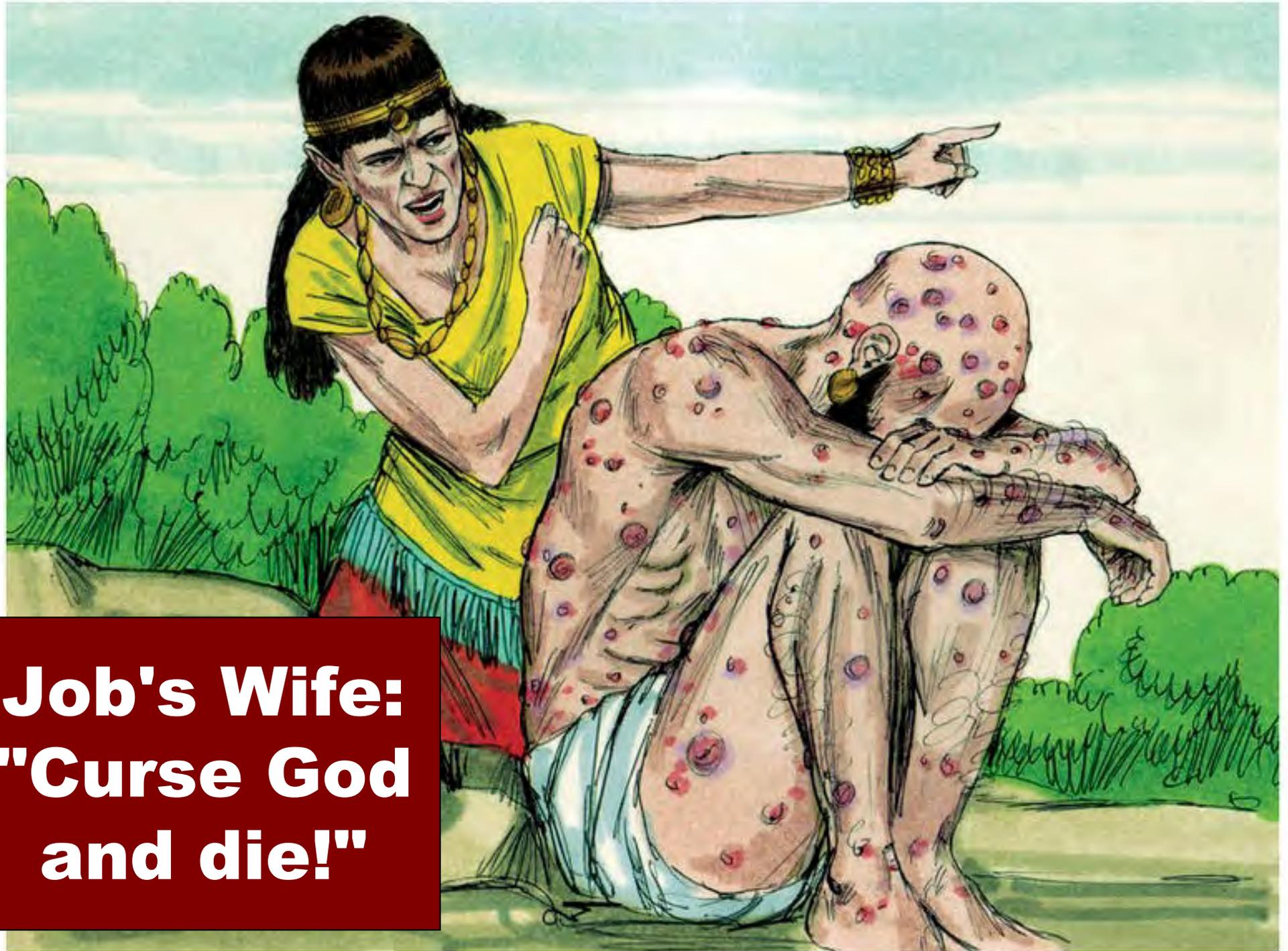
Prophetical

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel

Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

Wisdom vs Poetic

Contents of Writing	→	<i>Style of Writing</i>
Principles to live by	→	<i>Repetition of Thought</i>
Logic	→	<i>Total Being</i>
Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes	→	<i>Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Psalms, Song, Lamentations</i>
Smaller Category (Subset)	→	<i>Larger Category</i>



**Job's Wife:
"Curse God
and die!"**

The Cycles of Debate in Job





Perspectives of Job's Friends

Bruce Wilkinson & Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible*

	Eliphaz	Bildad	Zophar	Elihu
Characteristic	Theologian	Historian, legalist	Moralist, dogmatist	Young theologian, intellectual
Relies on	Observation, Experience	Tradition	Assumption	Education
Personality	Considerate	Argumentative	Rude, blunt	Perceptive, some conceit
Voice	Philosophy	History	Orthodoxy	Logic
Argument	"If you sin, you suffer"	"You must be sinning"	"You are sinning"	"God purifies and teaches"
Advice to Job	Only the wicked suffer	The wicked always suffer	The wicked are short-lived	Humble yourself and submit to God
Key Verse	4:8; 5:17	8:8	20:5	37:23
Concept of God	Righteous; punishes wicked, blesses good	Judge; immovable lawgiver	Unbending, merciless	Disciplinarian, teacher



Proverbs

**"As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a
beautiful woman who lacks discretion"
(Proverbs 11:22)**



**VERY
Descriptive!**

Interpretation

- This genre of Proverbs requires greater discernment in interpretation
- Are proverbs absolute, unconditional promises? In other words, are they principles with no exceptions?

Hermeneutical Guidelines

1. Do not consider the proverbs as promises from God, but rather as general observations and principles that are usually valid but not always
 - e.g. Proverbs 22:6, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Hermeneutical Guidelines

2. OT teaching must be understood in line with revelation given directly to the church (Acts and Epistles) in this dispensation.
 - a. Reiterated Statements
 - "Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Exodus 20:16)
 - "Stop lying to one another" (Ephesians 4:25)

Hermeneutical Guidelines

2. OT teaching must be understood in line with revelation given directly to the church (Acts and Epistles) in this dispensation.
 - a. Reiterated Statements
 - b. Quoted Statements
 - Proverbs 25:21, "If your enemy hungers, feed him," reappears in Romans 12:20

Hermeneutical Guidelines

2. OT teaching must be understood in line with revelation given directly to the church (Acts and Epistles) in this dispensation.
 - a. Reiterated Statements
 - b. Quoted Statements
 - c. Parallel Statements
 - Proverbs 6:24 and 1 Thessalonians 4:3

Hermeneutical Guidelines

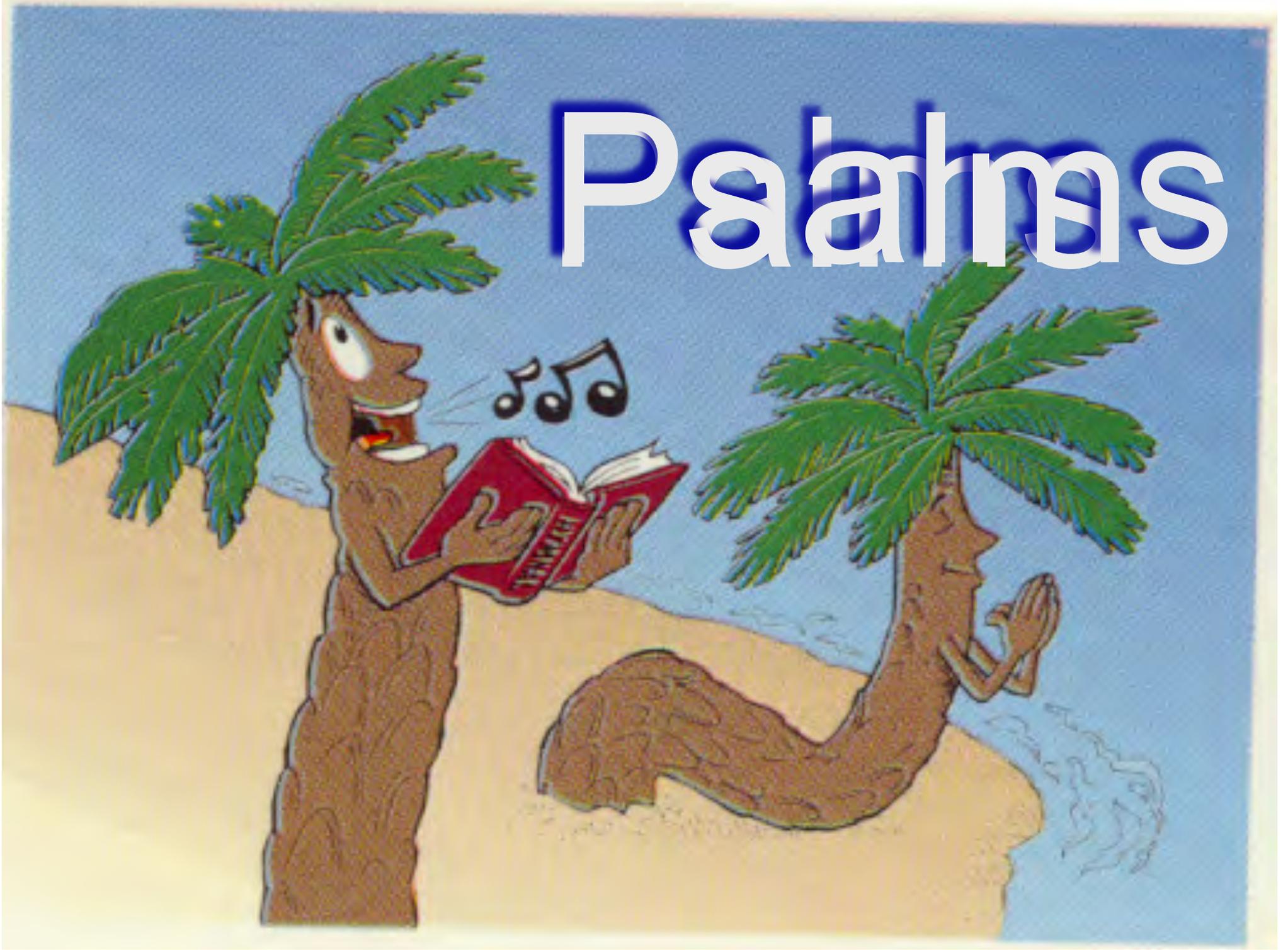
2. OT teaching must be understood in line with revelation given directly to the church (Acts and Epistles) in this dispensation.
 - a. Reiterated Statements
 - b. Quoted Statements
 - c. Parallel Statements
 - d. If not *a-c*, should not be treated as commands but principles

What is Poetry?

In the next 30 seconds define poetry to the person next to you



Palmes



Categories of Psalms

- 
- Praise
 - Messianic
 - Lament
 - Testimonial
 - Pilgrim (Ascent)
 - Wisdom
 - Imprecatory
 - Penitential
 - Historical
 - Nature

Tips for Interpreting the Psalms

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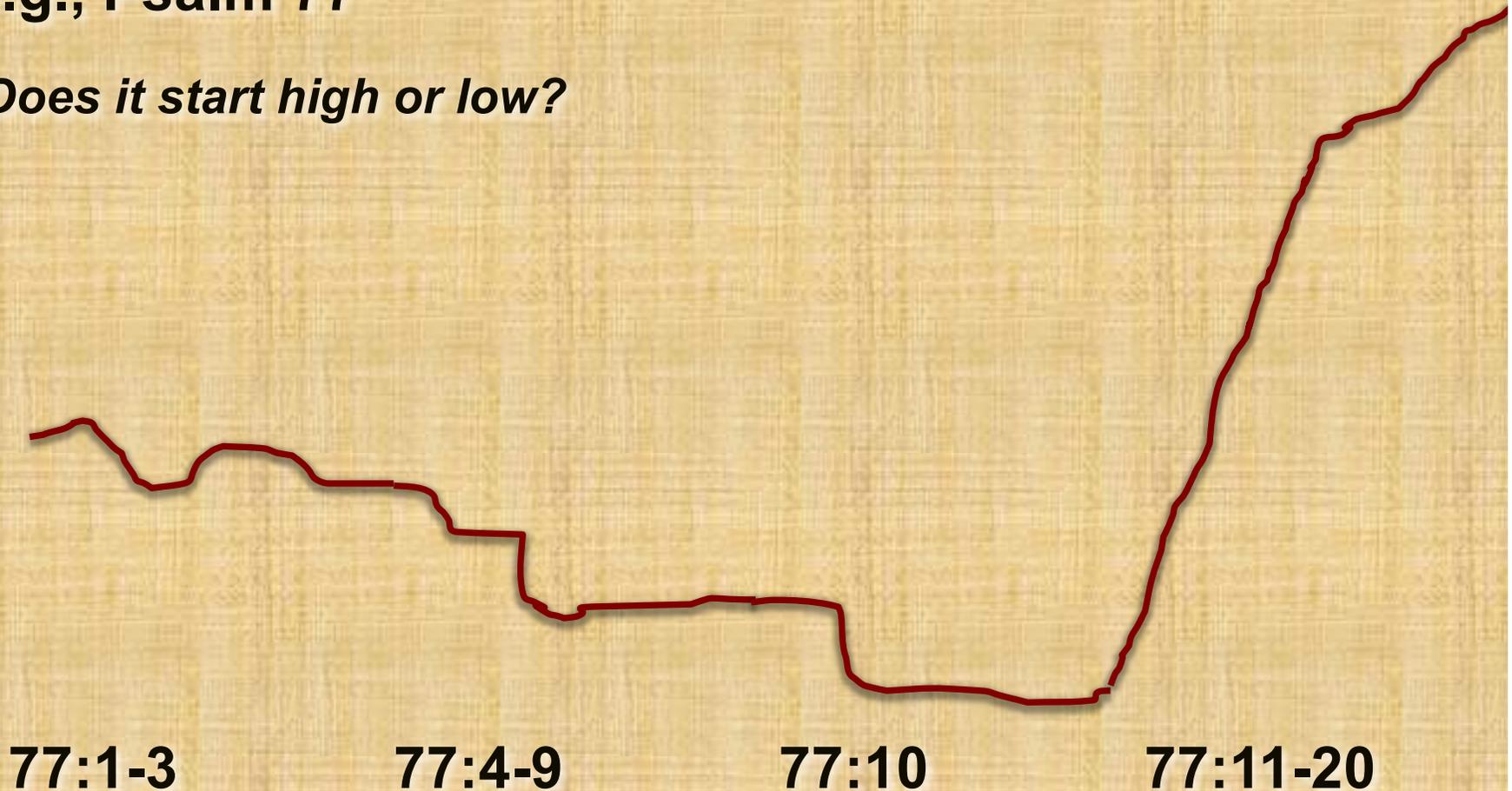
- 1. Pay attention to structure**
- 2. Summarize the psalm in a sentence (p. 387)**
- 3. Consider titles and background information in their superscriptions**
- 4. Classify the psalm using Lindsey's p. 386**
- 5. Interpret the psalm's incomplete theology in light of NT revelation (e.g., Ps. 51:11)**
- 6. Reword figures of speech and parallelisms**
- 7. Use NT allusions and/or quotations but don't read back into the text what the OT author would not have understood (e.g., Ps. 16:10 expanded in Acts 2:25-31)**

Tips for Interpreting the Psalms

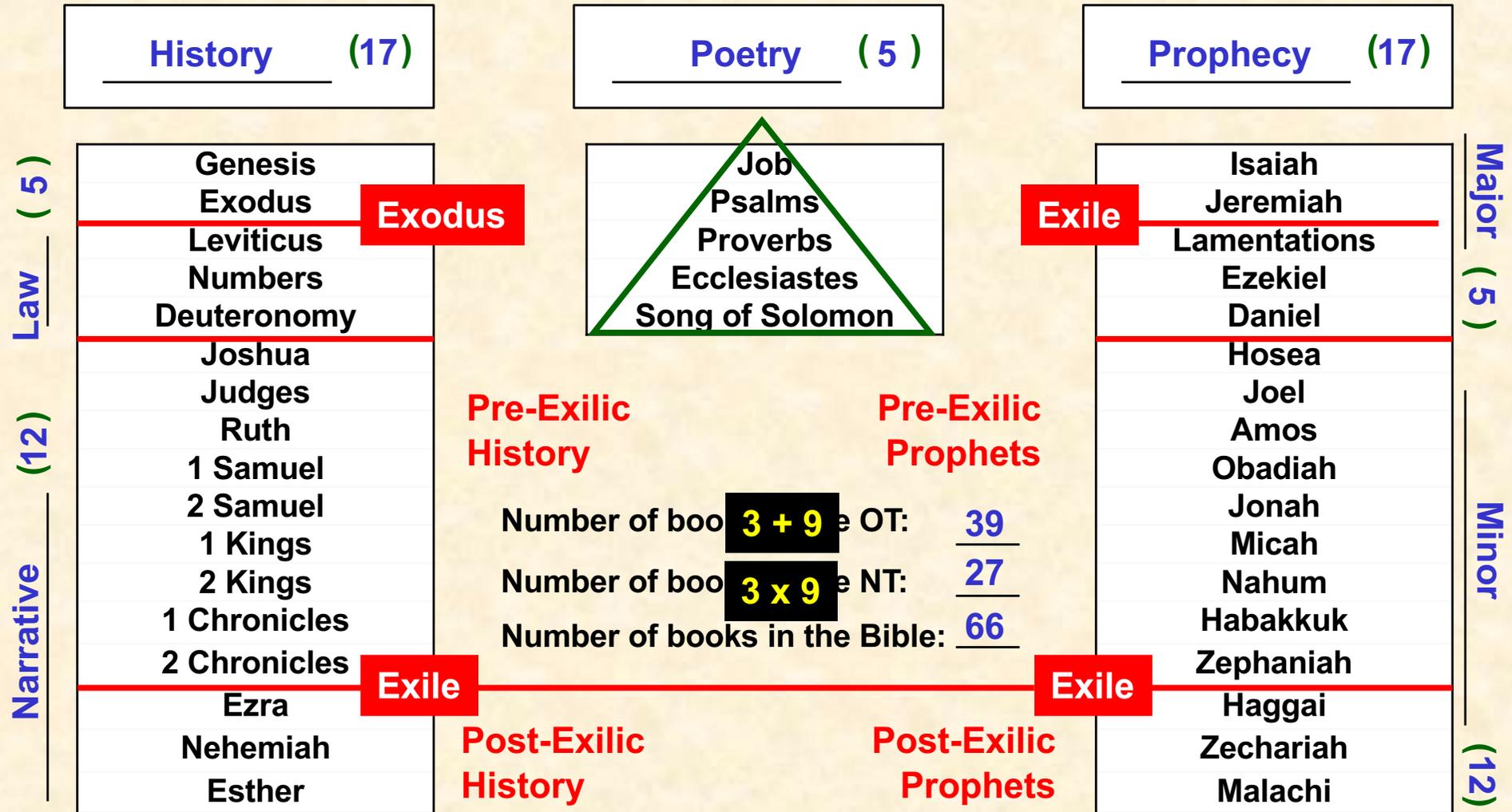
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8. Read psalms slowly (in our speed-reading day).
9. Graph the emotional outline of the psalm.
e.g., Psalm 77

Does it start high or low?



Structure of the Old Testament



Events
Actions
What people *did*

Experience
Axioms
What people *felt*

Expectation
Alarms
What people *should do*

Kingdom & Covenants Timeline



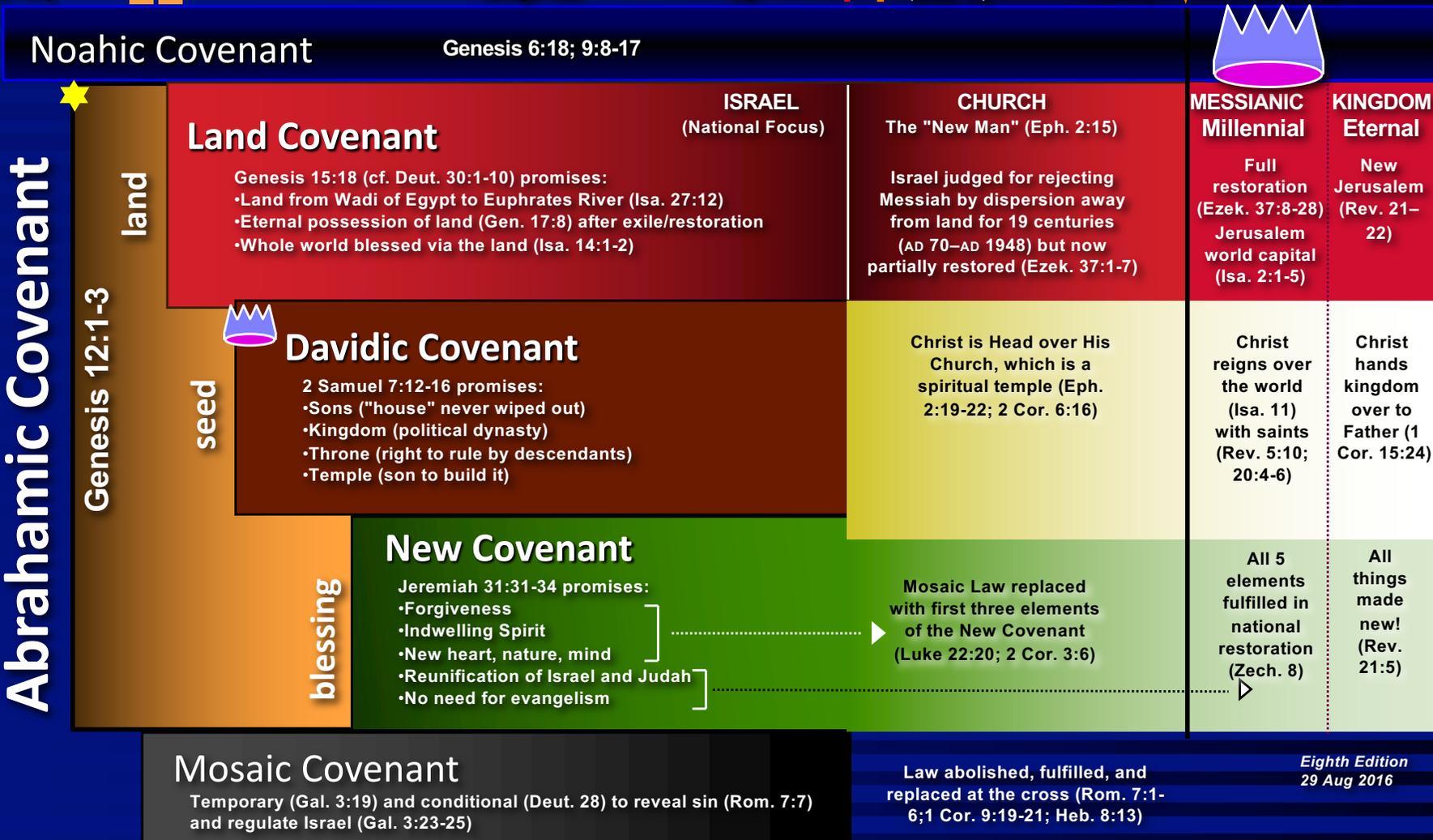
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Dr. Rick Griffith • Singapore Bible College • BibleStudyDownloads.org

Kingdom Teaching...

Adam rules with God (Gen. 1:26, 28; 2:19) ↓
Satan begins rule as god of this world (Gen. 3:15; 2 Cor. 4:4) ↓
God covenants with Abraham to reestablish man's rule via Israel as a "kingdom of priests" (Gen. 12:1-3; Exod. 19:6) ↑
Israel's failure to witness to nations as a kingdom of priests is judged via exile under foreign rule ↓
Israel rejects Messiah's offer of kingdom (Matt. 12:41-42; 23:37-39) ↓
Jesus extends His kingdom in mystery form to the Church (Matt. 13) ↑
Christ subdues Israel's enemies and nation believes (Rom. 11:26-27) ↓
Christ rules over everything with saints (Eph. 1:9-10; Rev. 20:1-6; 22:5b) ↓

Fall of Man (Gen. 3)



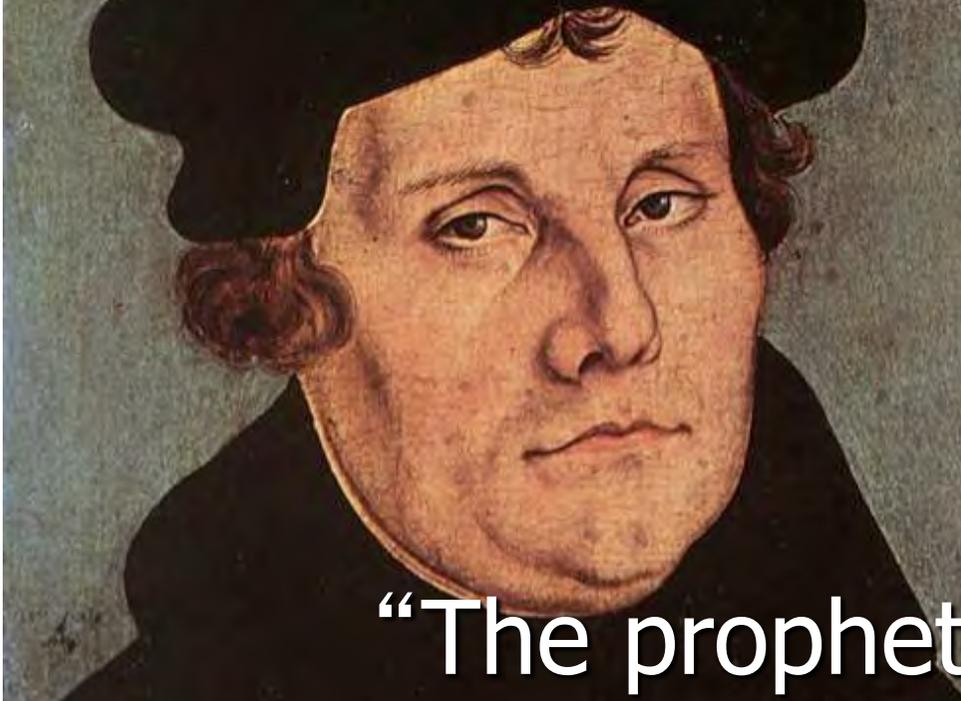
*Eighth Edition
29 Aug 2016*

Scripture has a dual kingdom-covenant theme. Israel's role from Abraham to Christ expands to include the Church (continuity) yet the Church never replaces the nation as the "new Israel" (discontinuity). Israel will again enjoy world prominence after trusting Christ at His second coming.

Interpreting the Prophets



Luther on the Prophets

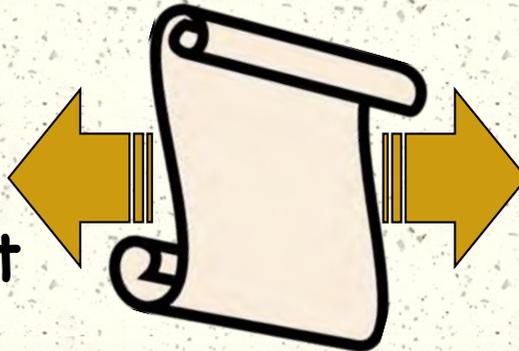


“The prophets have a queer way of talking, like people who, instead of proceeding in an orderly manner, ramble off from one thing to the next, so that you cannot make head or tail with them or see what they are getting at.”

Problems & Tips in Interpreting Prophecy

Inaccurate Presuppositions

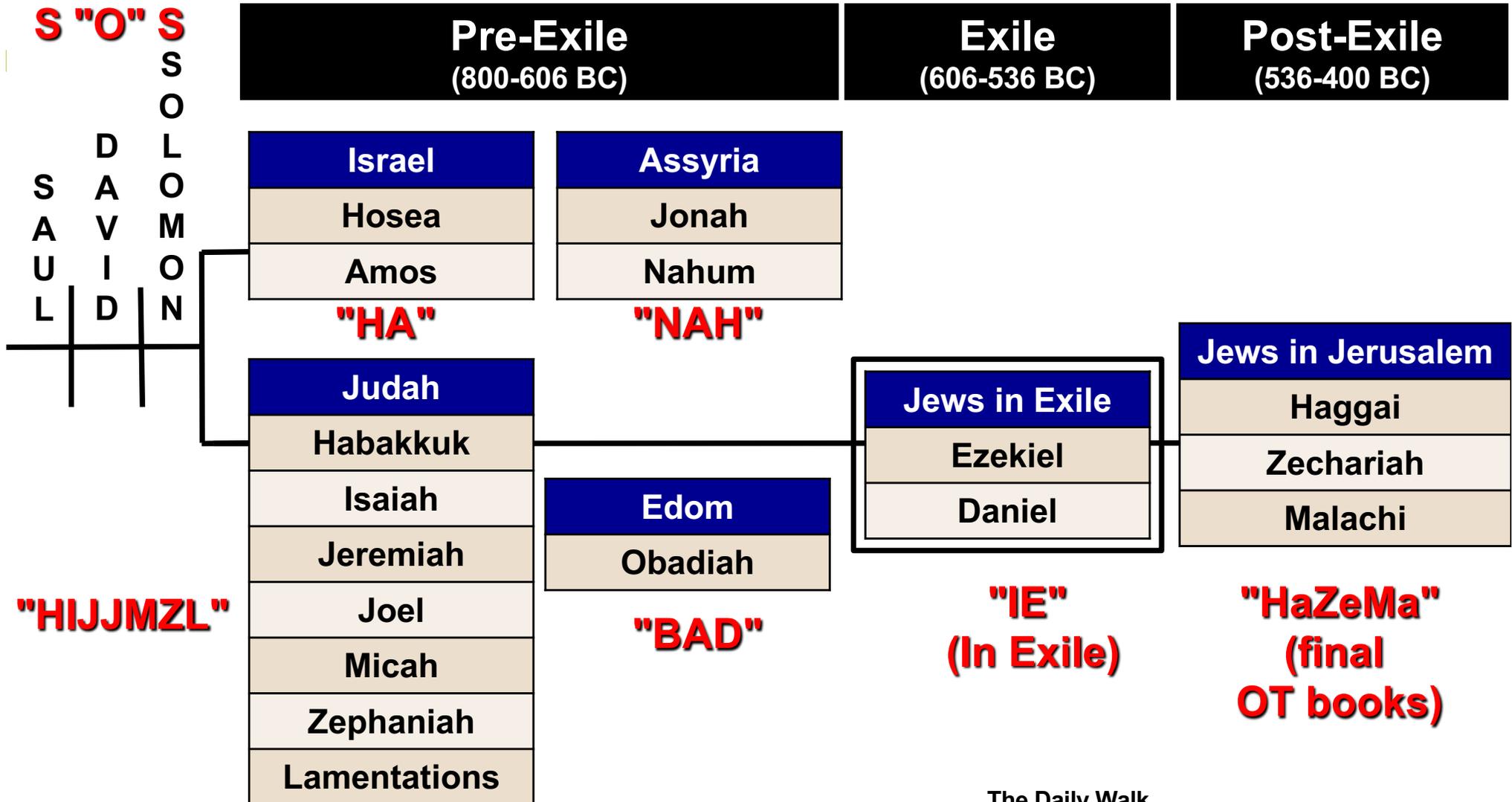
Ethical
Forthtelling
Mosaic Covenant



Predictive
Foretelling
Abrahamic Covenant

Prophets were mainly covenant enforcers based on the Mosaic law

Placing the Prophetic Books



Difficulties Interpreting Prophets

- D. Incomplete Background Data
- E. Historical Distance
- F. Lack of Appreciation for Poetry
- G. Unfamiliarity with Prophetic Books
- H. Ignorance of Eschatology
- I. Dual Eschatological Viewpoint

Approaching a Summit



Isaiah:

442

7-8

39-40

52-53

2, 11

25:8



Prophet's Own Time

Exile & Return

Christ's First Coming to Suffer

Christ's Second Coming to Reign in Millennium

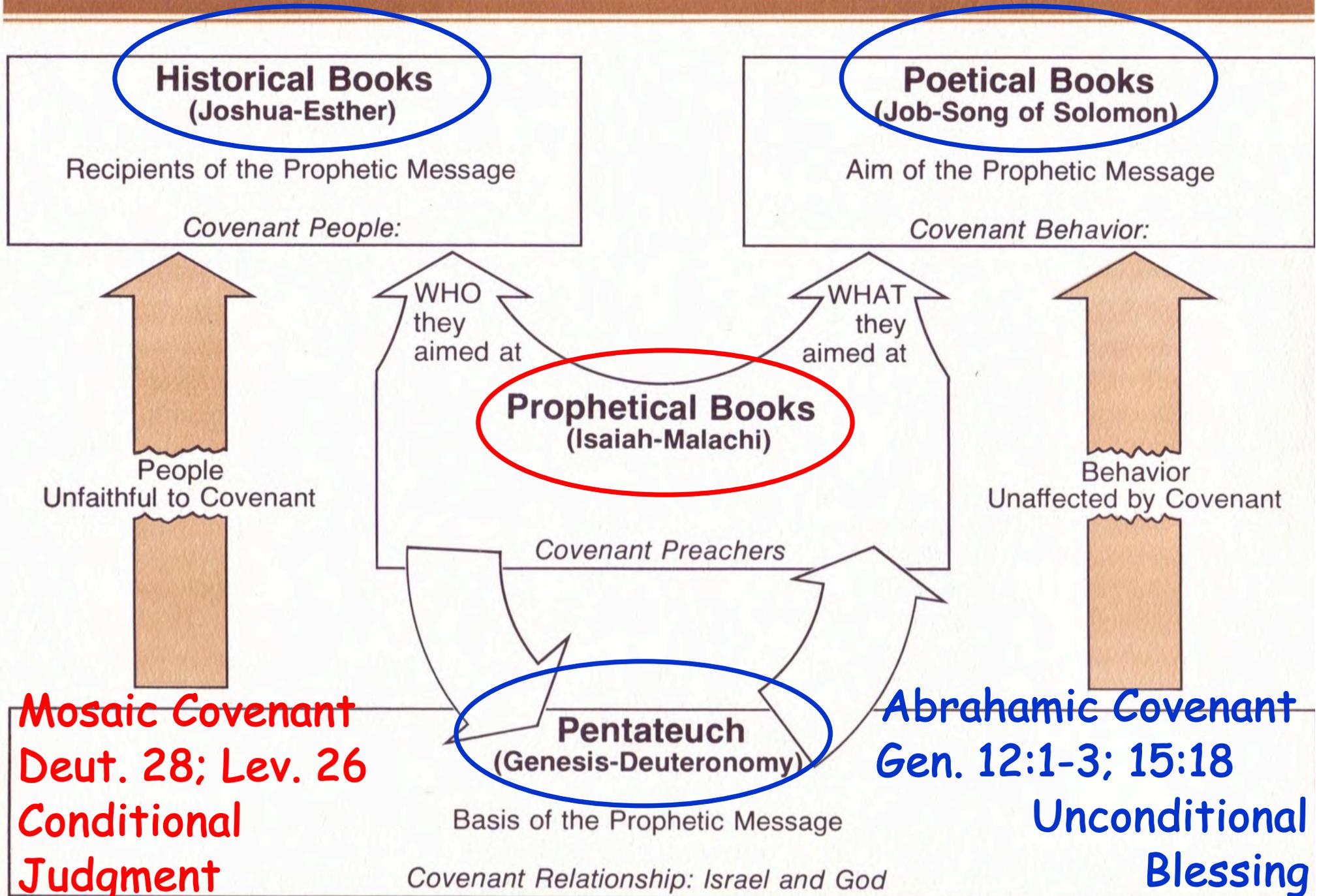
New Heavens & New Earth

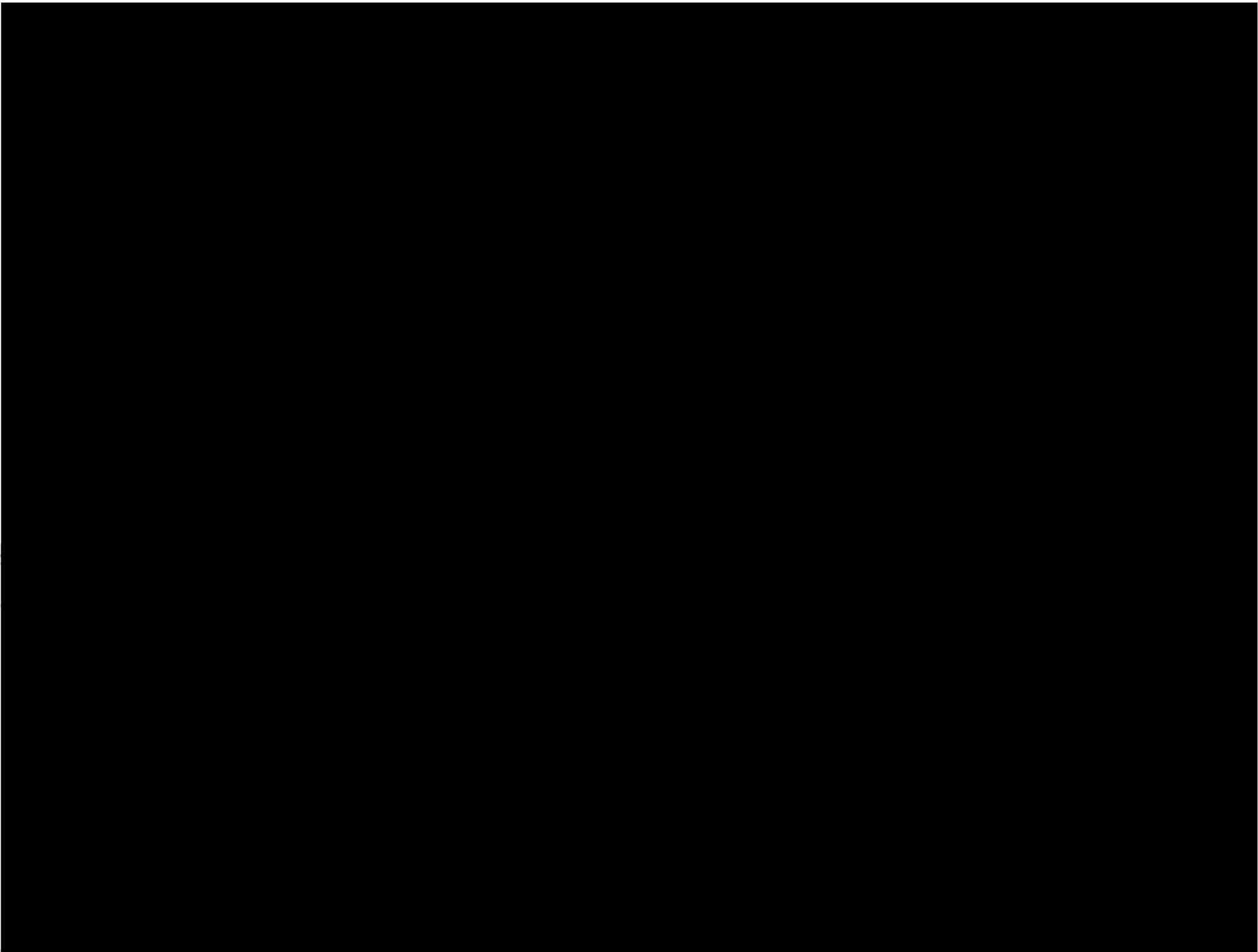
Time Periods of the Prophets

Adapted significantly from Salem Kirban, *Charts on Revelation* (1979), 49

We See the Valleys







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