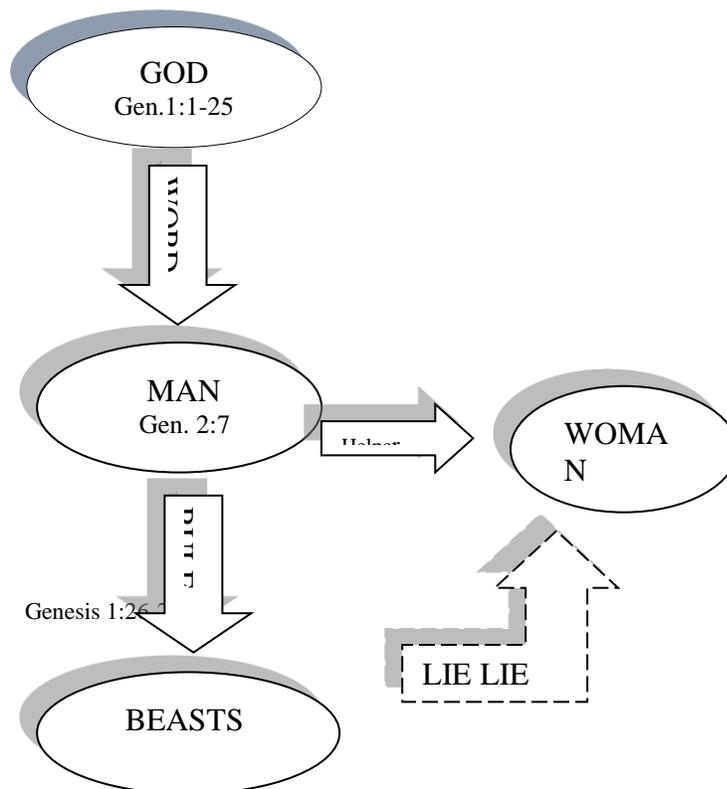


GENESIS SUMMARY

The Book of Genesis is a historical narrative which details the origin of human creation, the fall humanity, and Yahweh's plan to redeem fallen humanity. In each of the fifty chapters that comprise Genesis, Yahweh's character is highlighted as He works through human personalities to bring about His will for mankind. In effect, Genesis discloses Yahweh's story.

From the onset, the writer portrays Yahweh as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Such vital information sets the tone for the entire narrative. Yahweh spoke the world into existence. As Creator, Yahweh has irrevocable, intrinsic prerogatives. By Yahweh's own testimony, everything created by Yahweh, was good. In fact, the phraseology, "And Yahweh saw that it was good" is redundant throughout the first chapter. Genesis 1:26-28 is pivotal within the framework of Genesis: "Then Yahweh said, 'Let Us make man in our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'" This section of Scripture is a thesis statement of sorts which bespeaks Yahweh's modus operandi for creating man on the earth. This pericope intimates a tripartite explanation: (1) Man is made in Yahweh's image (2) Man is to rule on the earth (3) Man is to propagate the Yahweh-like image on the earth. The process of man's beginning is explained in chapter two. After Yahweh had created everything, He formed man from the dust of the ground and gave him the breath of life (2:7). Man, having been made in the image and likeness of Yahweh, and having been endowed with the breath of life, is distinct from the rest of Yahweh's creation. He

alone has been given Yahweh’s revelation and the responsibility to walk therein. Yahweh gave man a helper comparable to him in order to help him carry out the dominion mandate. They were to live in peace and harmony in the Garden of Eden enjoying Yahweh’s creation. Yahweh gave man but one prohibition: “And the LORD Yahweh commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you will surely die’” (2:16-17). In essence, disobedience would inevitably bring about a death sentence for man.



Chapter 3 introduces another key figure whose character is seen throughout the rest of the book. The serpent, Satan, converses with Eve, Adam’s wife. From the onset, he questioned Yahweh’s mandate. He undermined Yahweh’s plan for humanity. He convinced Eve to eat the forbidden fruit, who, in turn, convinced Adam to do likewise.

The beast who was supposed to be ruled by man has operated as ruler of man. The man who was supposed to rule the beast has become the one ruled by the beast. These actions were in diametric opposition to Yahweh's perfect plan for humanity. Consequently, each guilty party necessitated Yahweh's judgment. Yahweh cursed the serpent to crawl on its belly and eat dust all the days of its life (3:14). Furthermore, Yahweh would put strife between the serpent and the woman that would continue throughout the serpent's seed and the woman's seed. The woman's seed will bruise the serpent's head and in the process the serpent will bruise the heel of the woman's seed (3:15). The promise Yahweh made here has eternal ramifications. The promised seed from the woman will remedy the problem instigated by man's willful disobedience. For the woman, Yahweh multiplied sorrow in her conception. She now had the potential to bring about ungodly offspring. For the man, Yahweh cursed the ground that had been once blessed. In toil, man shall eat of it for the rest of his life, which incidentally, now has an end. To give an ocular demonstration of Yahweh's redemptive plan and to show Adam and Eve their inability to solve their own sin problem, Yahweh killed an animal to use its skin to cover their nakedness (3:21). The principle was simple – something innocent must die to cover sin. Self medication would prove to be ineffective.

Chapter 4 offers a glimpse of hope. Adam and Eve conceived a child. Based on Yahweh's promise in 3:15, Eve supposed she had given birth to the promised seed (4:1). Cain's actions in subsequent verses proved otherwise. Cain murdered Abel, the second child of the couple. Both sons apparently were aware of the Genesis 3:15 promise. Both were privy to Yahweh's foreshadow of substitutionary atonement by

killing the animal in Genesis 3:21. However, it was Abel who presented the LORD an offering commensurate to the revelation. Cain's offering showed no signs of an innocent sacrifice. That is why Yahweh did not respect the Cain's offering. In short, Cain's actions represented the seed of the serpent, while Abel's actions represented the seed of the woman.

In chapter 5, the writer details the genealogy of Adam. It serves as a litany of obituaries. Each character, with the exception of Enoch in verses 21-24, lived and eventually died. There is also a compelling dichotomy throughout chapter 5. Abel (4:2), Enoch (5:21-24), and Lamech (5:29) exhibited traits of the seed of the woman. Their actions displayed faith in the 3:15 promise. On the other hand, Cain, a different Enoch (4:17), and a different Lamech (4:23) exhibited traits of the serpent's seed by rejecting the 3:15 promise.

Genesis 6-11 deals with the result of man's original sin. The whole earth had been contaminated with wickedness. Yahweh destroyed humankind by way of the flood. Noah, a righteous man, found grace with Yahweh, due to his faith in the 3:15 promise. It was only Noah and his family that escaped Yahweh's judgment upon the earth. Noah's offspring attempted to centralize themselves and make a name for themselves by building the Tower of Babel. Such an action did not follow the mandate given to Adam to fill the earth. As a result, Yahweh scattered them and confused their language.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

From chapters 12-25, Abraham is a central character. Yahweh chose Abraham to leave his family and country en route to a land unknown by Abraham. Yahweh would,

in turn, bless him with a great name and innumerable descendants. Yahweh would use Abraham as a conduit to bless the entire world (12:1-3). Abraham obeyed Yahweh's voice by leaving Ur heading to a land of promise. Lot, his nephew travels along with Abraham and his wife, Sarah. Because the blessing of the Genesis 3:15 promise will come from Abraham, his life was under constant attack. At times, he vacillates from a life lived by faith to a life lived based on his own human reasoning. For example, his faith is evidenced by the fact that he left his country and father's house solely on Yahweh's command (Genesis 12). However, when Yahweh's promise for a seed was delayed, he listened to Sarah by going in to Hagar. Such an action resulted in Ishmael (Genesis 16). His faith seemed to lapse. Yahweh's promise was partially realized with the birth of Isaac in chapter 18. Yet in chapter 22, the promise seemed to falter when Yahweh told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, his only son of promise, on Mount Moriah. Due to Abraham's obedience, Yahweh once again pointed to substitutionary atonement by providing for Himself a sacrifice (Genesis 22:13).

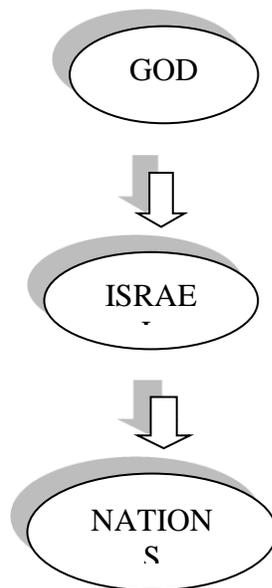
Isaac's character is somewhat overshadowed by Abraham, his father. He is seen in chapter 24 marrying Rebekah, a barren woman, who eventually gives birth to Jacob and Esau. Each represents a separate nation. By Yahweh's plan, the older son shall serve the younger son (25:23). Hitherto, this order was not practiced. Rebekah's actions, though deceitful, proved she believed in the Yahweh's word concerning her sons. Jacob is a major piece of Yahweh's puzzle. His name became Israel, the moniker by which Yahweh's chosen nation will forever be known. Jacob, by several wives, was father to twelve sons, who in turn represent the twelve tribes of Israel.

Yahweh's promise to Abraham in 12:1-3 has become clearer. Yahweh promised protection, land, and descendants. Joseph's role in chapters 37-50 proved to be instrumental in the realization of this promise. Yahweh used Joseph to sustain Jacob's family during a famine in Canaan. It was Yahweh who was with Joseph who protected him each time a situation occurred that threatened Yahweh's promise. Joseph's summation in Genesis 50:20 captures the entire significance of the protagonist/antagonist relationship between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman: "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but Yahweh meant it for good, in order to bring about as it is this day, to save many people alive." When Yahweh placed Adam and Even in the garden, they were to live and rule. Yahweh continued to protect those who would eventually bring about the Promise – the One who will live and rule on the earth forever.

Exodus Summary

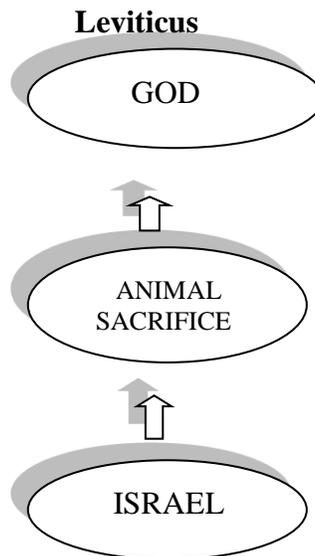
Jacob's family multiplied and became mighty in strength and number.

The Pharaoh in Egypt feared Jacob's family – now known as Israel – and the presumptuous likelihood of Israel revolting against Egypt. Consequently, he placed them in bondage, imposing cruel labor practices upon them. As Yahweh's chosen nation, Israel cried out to Him for deliverance. Yahweh heard their cry and saw their affliction. Yahweh calls Moses as an agent to rescue Israel from slavery. The book of Exodus records Israel's deliverance from Egypt and their journey en route to Canaan as a constituted nation. The covenant people received the Ten Commandments, which served as their benchmark for living.



According to Exodus 19, Israel's responsibility is to keep the covenant established by Yahweh Himself: "Now therefore, if you will indeed keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people...And you shall be to me a

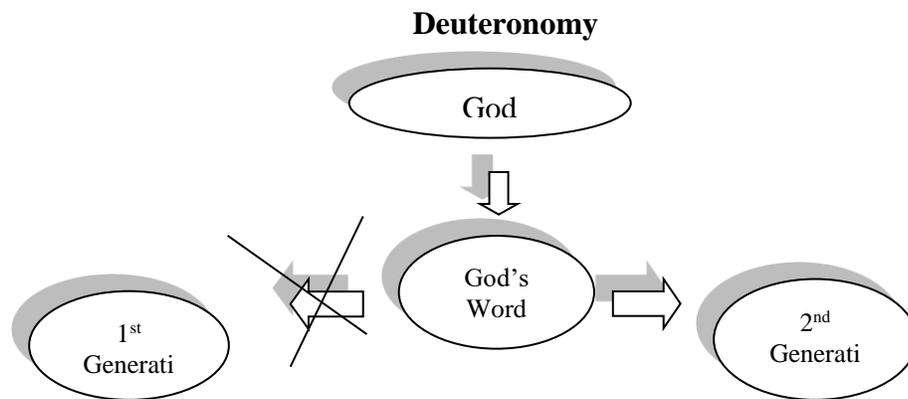
kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:5-6). Woven into the tapestry of their responsibility is how they would approach Yahweh in worship, thus the building of the tabernacle is an intricate theme within the Exodus pericope.



The Book of Leviticus establishes the priests, those who would monitor and seek to maintain the standard for holy living for God’s chosen nation. As the covenant people are to enter the Promised Land, they are to represent Yahweh by living distinct lives from those who occupied the land into which Israel was to enter and possess. From God’s perspective of holiness, Israel’s sinfulness is clearly seen throughout the book. The sacrificial system is instigated as a means for the sinful people to offer penitence. In chapter 26:17-22, God prescribes punishment for the covenant people for their disobedience. Such punishment is manifested in three distinct ways – war, famine, and death. The purpose, however, was not to destroy the people, but rather to bring them back to Yahweh.

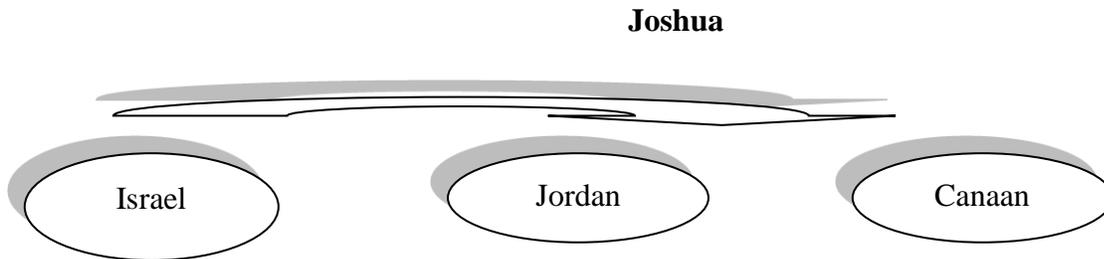
Numbers

The Book of Numbers highlights the “numbering” of the covenant people in chapters 1-4 and chapter 26. Numbers likewise describes Israel’s thirty-eight year wandering from Mount Sinai to the plains of Moab. In Numbers, God caused a disobedient, unbelieving generation to die in the wilderness only to raise a new generation that would obey and trust Him. The first generation refused to enter Canaan at God’s word. Consequently, all adults age twenty and over (except Caleb and Joshua) were to die. The death of the first generation gave reason for the second “numbering” in chapter 26.



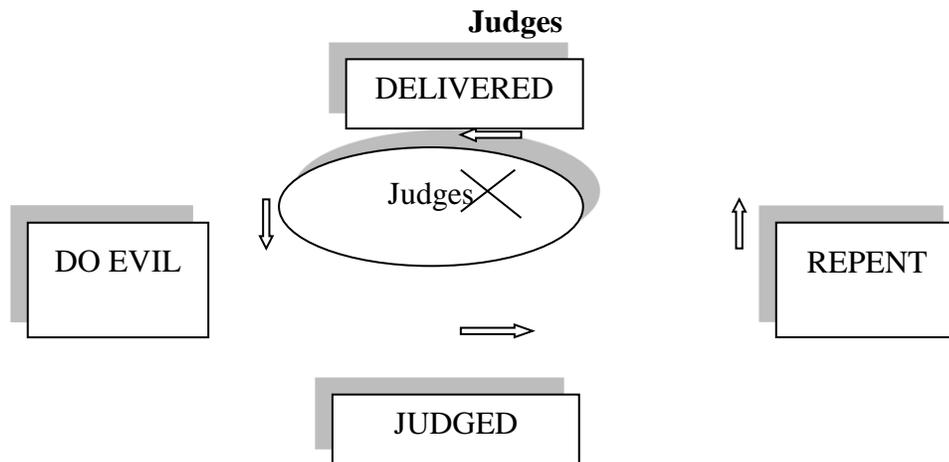
The Book of Deuteronomy is Moses’ address to the new generation of covenant people after the demise of the previous generation. Moses was to pass the leadership baton to his understudy, Joshua, who will be responsible in ushering God’s covenant people to the Promised Land, Canaan. The promised Messiah is mentioned in 18:15, “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren.” In this book of sermons, Moses apprises the people of the blessings

of obeying Yahweh and the consequences of disobeying Him. These sharp contrasts are clearly seen in chapters 28-30.



The name “Joshua” means “Jehovah saves” or “the LORD is salvation,” and is directly connected to the name “Jesus.” As the covenant people had been promised of God the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:7; 15:18-21), Joshua was responsible for them entering and possessing it. The people were to enter the land and drive out the other people groups who were previously there. The Land was to be divided among the tribes of Israel. In effect, if Joshua and the people obeyed Yahweh’s word, He would cause them to succeed in all they were commanded to do. This theme is mentioned clearly in the first chapter of the book: “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Joshua 1:8). Another key theme is the actual possession of the Land, a vital ingredient necessary to fulfill the Abrahamic covenant. The book discloses their lapse of faith and their disobedience in totally driving out the other people groups, which proved detrimental in their overall “success.” In spite of traits of disobedience in the book, Joshua proves himself to be an effective leader who followed God’s command in leading

the people.

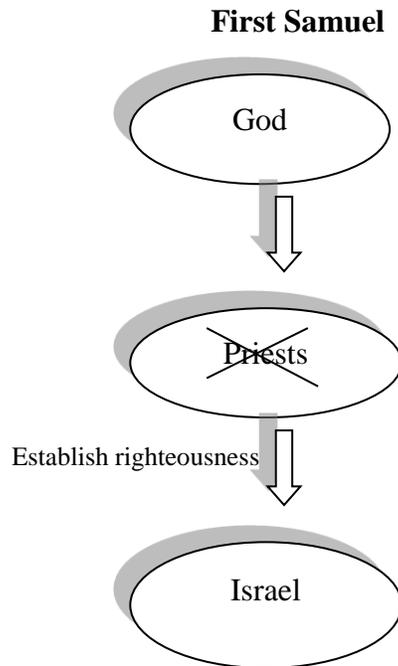


The Book of Judges records a dismal time in the covenant people's history. As seen in the first two chapters, Israel's failure to drive out the other people groups had a cataclysmic effect on them. They were disobedient, idolatrous, and apostate. In terms of establishing righteousness in the Land, the judges were not successful.

Ruth

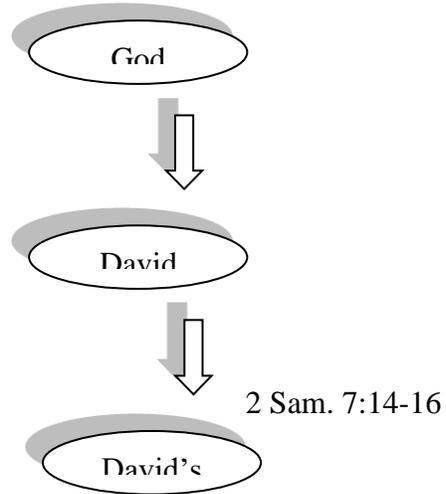
The Book of Ruth records the strategy Yahweh employed to preserve Ruth, an alien from Moab, and how Yahweh prepared the way for David's birth, an integral event in the lineage and ultimate arrival of the Messiah. The fact Ruth was a Moabitess is indicative of God's redemptive plan extending beyond the Israelites to include Gentiles as well. A more prominent theme, Boaz illustrates Christ-like characteristic as he is Ruth's kinsman-redeemer. Throughout the narrative is the connection to the Book of

Leviticus, particularly the command to leave a portion of the field for poor and aliens (Lev. 23:22). Boaz, aware of the covenant, demonstrates his understanding and obedience to the command. As Yahweh had blessed him, Boaz – in turn – was a blessing to Ruth.



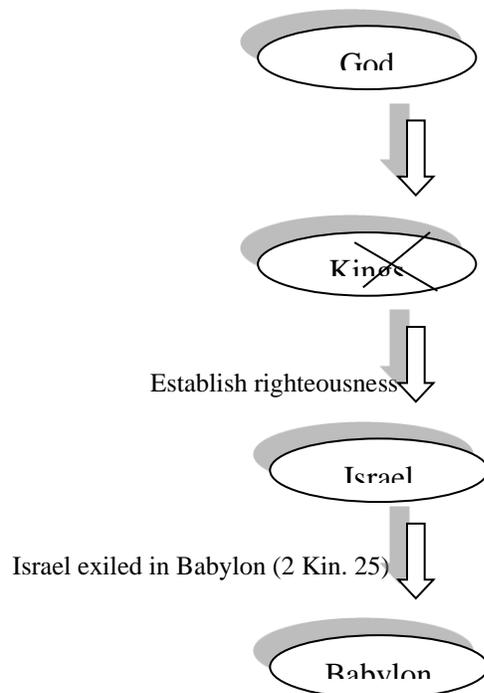
Just as the judges had proven to be unsuccessful in establishing righteousness in the Land, the priests do likewise. Eli, the High priest virtually ignored the corrupt behavior of his sons, who were also priests. According to Eli, his sons instigated transgression among the covenant people (2:24). God judged Eli and his sons for their failure to properly represent Him (1 Sam. 2:12-17, 22-25; 3:10-14; 4:17,18). Yahweh, in response to the recalcitrant people, raised Samuel – a righteous judge and prophet – to anoint a king to lead His chosen people (1 Sam. 8:5). The king’s role, like that of the judges and priests was to establish righteousness in the Land.

Second Samuel



The central character in 2 Samuel is King David. After Saul's failure, David – a man after God's heart – was God's choice for Israel's king. God established a covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:14) ensuring that David's Seed would sit on the throne forever. Such a covenant is a direct reference to the coming Messiah.

1 and 2 Kings



The Book of 1 Kings records Israel's history under Solomon, David's son. The Book of 2 Kings discloses a litany of corrupt kings who propagate sin in the united kingdom (2 Kings 17:21, 22; 21:11). Because of Israel's perpetual sin, Yahweh exercised His wrath upon them. Because of Solomon's sinful practices, Yahweh divided the kingdoms into two – Israel, the northern tribes, and Judah – the southern tribes. Eventually the people's sin caused them to be carried into Babylonian exile (2 Kings 17:13-23; 21:10-15). Solomon, along with the majority of the kings, undoubtedly failed in establishing

righteousness.

1 and 2 Chronicles

The Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles record Israel's history after returning from their seventy year exile in Babylon. The Book of 1Chronicles is akin to 2 Samuel, while 2 Chronicles is akin to 1 and 2 Kings. The book focuses on the kings associated with the southern kingdom, Judah.

Ezra

The Book of Ezra focuses of the covenant people's return from Babylon after the seventy year exile. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, the people returned to the Land after Cyrus –governor of Persia – signed a decree allowing them to return. The main agenda upon the return was to rebuild the temple for the worship of Yahweh. Ezra, the priest is a central figure in the book.

Nehemiah

The Book of Nehemiah, like the Book of Ezra, records the covenant people's history in the Land after the exile. The focus, however, is not on the rebuilding of the temple, but rather the walls. Nehemiah is a central figure in the restoration process in the face of extreme opposition. The reading and obeying Yahweh's word is a major theme throughout the book (8:1, 8; 10:29).

Esther

The events recorded in the Book of Esther take place during the Persian period in world history. Esther chronicles how world powers tried to eliminate the covenant people from the earth, thus preempting the birth of the promised Messiah. Like God used

Moses to deliver the people from Egypt, He used Esther as a human agent to save the Jewish people from genocide. The invisible hand of God working in the background to preserve the people is the central theme of the book.