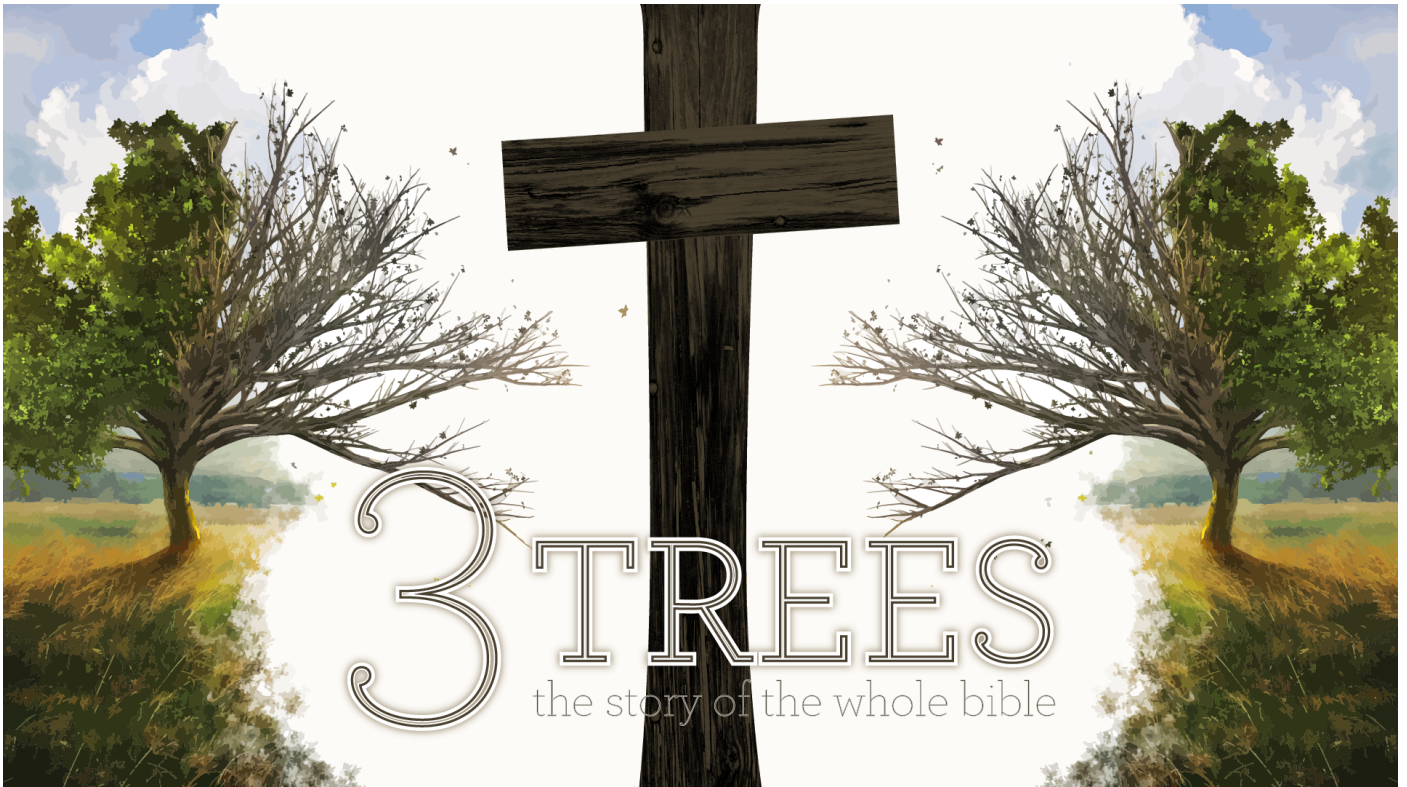


series companion
rockhampton presbyterian church



3 TREES

the story of the whole bible



3 TREES: the story of the whole bible

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Suggested Reading

Biblical Theology

Goldsworthy, G.

According to Plan: The unfolding revelation of God in the Bible.

Nottingham: IVP, 1991.

Goldsworthy, G.

Gospel And Kingdom in The Goldsworthy Trilogy. London: Paternoster, 2014

Hamilton Jr, J.M.

What is Biblical Theology?: A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism and Patterns.

Wheaton: Crossway, 2013.

Roberts, V.

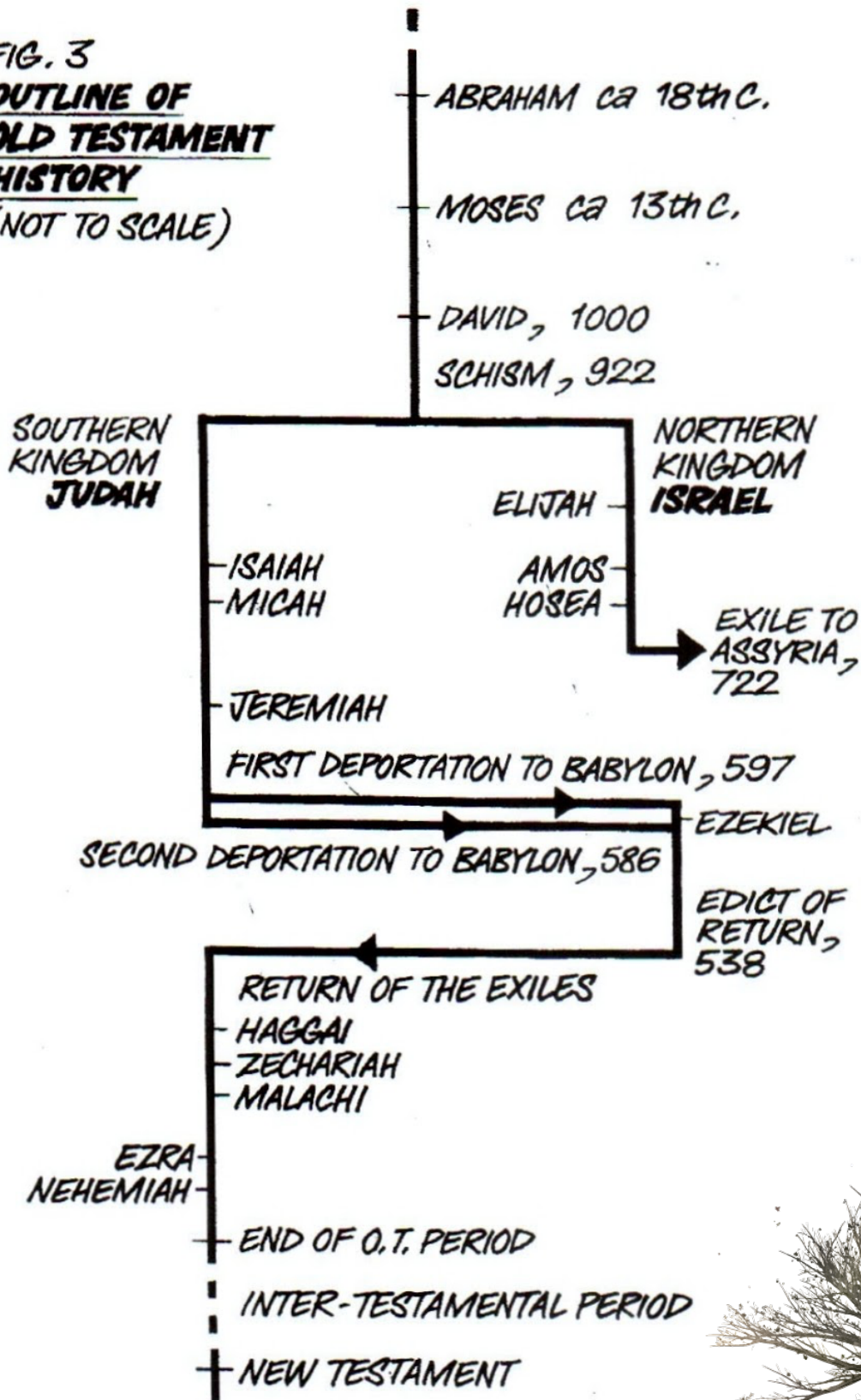
God's Big Picture: Tracing the storyline of the Bible.

Nottingham: IVP, 2002



Outline of Old Testament History

FIG. 3
OUTLINE OF
OLD TESTAMENT
HISTORY
 (NOT TO SCALE)



Talk 1. God: Maker & King

Genesis 1-2

Study 1. God: Maker & King

Genesis 1-2

Discuss

For those familiar with the Bible, if you had to choose just ten stories to explain the whole Bible, which ones would you choose (don't look at the contents page yet!)? If you're not very familiar with the Bible, what 'famous Bible stories' come to mind for you?

	Bible Story	Bible Passage	Why Include This One?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Comparing your answers with the contents page and with the group, what's surprising about the stories included in these studies? What do you think the big omissions are?

In wanting to understand the story of the whole Bible, the best place to start is... In the Beginning.

Read Genesis 1:1-2:3

Notice the following pattern in this passage.

- And God said: Let there be...
- God called...
- And it was so...
- And God saw that it was good...
- And there was evening and there was morning... the first/second/... day.

1. What do you think this pattern tells us about God?
2. What do you think this pattern tells us about God's Word?



Notice also the following pattern in the passage.

- Day 1. Light & Darkness
- Day 2. Sky & Water
- Day 3. Land & Vegetation
- Day 4. Stars, Sun & Moon
- Day 5. Birds & Fish
- Day 6. Animals & Man

3. What do you think this pattern tells us about the World?

4. What do you think this pattern tells us about our place in God's World?

Read Genesis 1:26-28

5. What is different about the creation of humankind?

6. What does it mean for us to be image bearers of God?

Read Genesis 2:4-25

7. What is the role of humankind in Eden?

8. How would you describe the Garden of Eden?

In Genesis 1-2 we've already discovered our first two trees; the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 1:31 says God looks at his world and says it's very good... but how would you describe the world you look at and live in?

Genesis 1-2 describes for us a world that is familiar to the longing of our hearts but distant from our present experiences.

Read Romans 8:18-25

9. What is the hope of Creation?

10. How does the hope and expectations of creation square with the things you are presently hoping for and expecting?

Prayer

How might God's very good world and our present sufferings change the way you pray and the things you pray for?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 2. The Fall

Genesis 3

Study 2. The Fall

Genesis 3

Discuss

In your own words how would you describe the story of the whole Bible up to this point?

World Wars, Cold Wars, Global Financial Crisis, Chernobyl, NASA Challenger, Exxon-Valdez Oil Spill, Fukushima... History is full of bad decisions and big mistakes.

Can you think of some others?

What are some bad decisions or big mistakes you have made in your history?

Read Genesis 3:1-7

1. How does the passage describe the Serpent?
2. How does the Serpent distort the Word of God?
3. What did God actually say?
4. Compare Genesis 1:31 with 3:6. How does the woman take on the role of God?
5. Compare Genesis 2:25 with 3:7. What has changed now?

Genesis 1-2	Genesis 3
God	
Man	
Woman	
Creation	

The story of the fall unravels all that is good and very good in God's World. God's Word has not only been distorted but now disobeyed. Order has been thrown into chaos. One tree in Eden has been selected over the other. Life was on offer in Eden but humankind chose death. In eating of the forbidden tree, intimacy is exchanged for explosion and unashamed and naked now turns to exposure, shame and the blame-game. And this pattern of sin and self-justification and blame is not only repeated throughout the story of the whole Bible but repeated daily the whole world over.



Read Genesis 3:8-24

6. Considering the order of the curses and the order the characters have entered into the narrative of Genesis 3, how has sin turned God's good ordered world upside down?

7. How effective do you think Adam and Eve's attempts are at hiding themselves with fig leaves?

8. Why are Adam and his wife expelled from the Garden?

9. Reading through the curses, does that sound similar to your experience?

10. Is there any hope in this passage?

Sin is the unlawful exchange of our rightful place in God's World. Sin takes what is not ours, believing it will elevate us, but only leaves us deflated. Sin promises so much but only delivers guilt and shame. Adam and Eve were tempted into taking something that wasn't theirs or even offered to them by the one who possessed it. Ignoring God, Adam and Eve wanted to be God, masters of a world that wasn't theirs, determiners of good and evil in a world that was up until this point only very good.

O Adam, what have you done? For though it was you who sinned, the fall was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants. For what good is it to us, if an immortal time has been promised to us, but we have done deeds that bring death? And what good is it that an everlasting hope has been promised to us, but we have miserably failed?

2 Esdras 7:18-20 (Apocrypha)

Read Romans 1:18-32

11. How does Romans 1:18-32 define what sin is? (Note especially v.32)

12. What things do humans exchange God for?

13. What does God do about our rebellion?

Prayer

The problem with sin is that it is easier to see it in others than it is to see it in yourself. Why do you think this is and how might we become more aware (expose) of the sin in our own life so we can confess it rather than try to hide it (fig leaves)?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 3. Abraham: The Promise

Genesis 12, 15

Study 3. Abraham: The Promise

Genesis 12, 15

Discuss

What's it like to move interstate or overseas? If you've done it tell us about it.

When do you find it hardest to trust God? Are there certain times or seasons or events in your life where it has been hard to trust God?

In your own words, what's the story of the Bible so far?

Read Genesis 12:1-9

1. What does God command Abram to do?
2. What three things does God promise to Abram?
3. Compare Genesis 11:4 with Genesis 12:2. What conflict can you see unfolding between God and humankind?
4. Compare God's promises to Abram with Genesis 1:26-28. If Genesis 1 was "the beginning", how do God's promises to Abraham represent a "new beginning"?

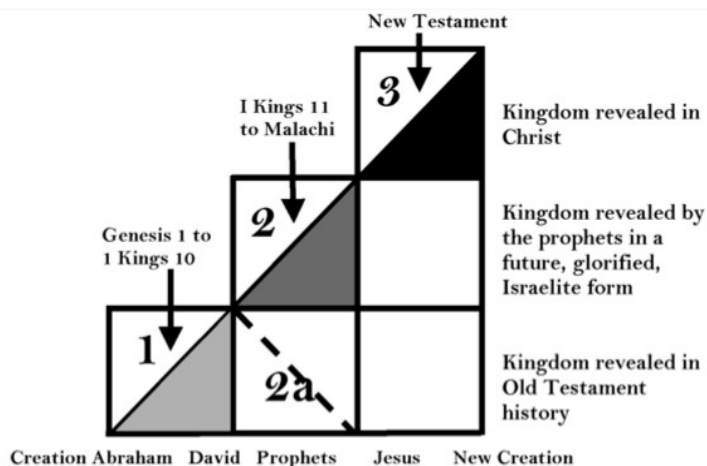
Sometimes when we read the Bible it can feel like we've read this before but only this time the characters and the settings have changed. We can often be reading one story in the Bible but in reading, it recalls a similar story with similar elements.

That's what we are starting to see here in God's promises to Abraham. The promises of blessing in Eden are now being repeated and progressed. The Bible is a book that often repeats itself by establishing a pattern and then repeating it in order to advance the story towards fulfilment (Promise & Fulfilment).



If we divide the Bible into three stages - Genesis to 1 Kings 11; 1 Kings 11- Malachi; New Testament or, to put it another way, The Law; The Prophets; and the New Testament, we can see the pattern and its repetition moving towards fulfilment.

The diagram to the right helps to explain this, the second stage (The Prophets) recapitulates and progresses the first stage of the Bible's story (The Law), while the third stage of the diagram shows how the New Testament recapitulates and progresses both the first and the second stages of the Bible.



Read Genesis 15:1-6

5. According to Abram, what seems to be the problem with God's promises?

6. What does God promise to Abram tell us about God?

7. How is Abram's response to God's promises different to what we've seen so far in the story of the whole Bible?

You don't need to read to much further in Genesis to see that Abraham's faith was not only tested but weakened. Just like Adam and Eve doubted God's Word, Abraham and Sarah doubted God's promises by taking matters into their own hands. This is the pattern of Abraham's descendants as the conflict with God continues throughout the Bible.

But for now the Scriptures tell us that Abram believed God's promises and it was credited to him as righteousness, and that Abraham's faith is how we need to respond to God's promises to us in Jesus.

Read Romans 4:16-25

8. Despite all the obstacles, what was Abraham fully persuaded to do?

9. In fulfilment to God's promises to Abraham, how does God now credit us as righteous?

Prayer

There are many obstacles in life that obstruct our view that God is at work in keeping his promises to us and fulfilling his purposes in life. Despite these many obstacles how can we make sure our faith doesn't waiver but remains firm?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 4. David: King of God's People

2 Samuel 7

Study 4. David: King of God's People

2 Samuel 7

Discuss

Have you ever made plans only to have God change them completely? How has God changed your plans? Tell us about it.

The Story So Far...

We've missed a big chunk of the Bible to pick up the story again in 2 Samuel. So here's a quick recap of what's happened so far... After Adam and Eve rejected God in Eden, God promises to continue to bless his people through one man: Abraham. God promises three things to Abraham: People, Land and Blessing. These promises to Abraham can be summed up as **God's people in God's place under God's rule**. And so from Genesis to 2 Samuel two things have remained constant: God is keeping his promises and God's people continually disobey God.

God is keeping his promises. As the book of Exodus begins we see that God has blessed Abraham's descendants - they are now too numerous to count. God continues to bless those who bless his people and to curse those who curse them. And when it comes to the promise of land, we see that God has led his people out of Egypt and into the promised land of Canaan.

And God's people continually disobey God. Even with all of God's faithfulness to the descendants of Abraham (aka. Israel), the children of Abraham have repeatedly rejected God's rule over them. You might remember the Golden Calf incident at Sinai (Exodus 32)? And just recently, Israel rejected God as ruler over them again by asking for their own King - one like all the other nations. Despite the continued rejection of God through the sin of his people, God remains committed to fulfilling his promises.

Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17

1. How does the mention of "rest" in verse 1 remind us of the beginning of the story of the whole Bible?
2. What does David want to build?
3. What does God want to build instead?
4. What is significant about the tent and the temple? What does this represent? What does it remind us of?
5. Where have we heard these promises before?
6. What's new or different about God's promises to David?



Prayer Points for this week



Talk 5. Solomon: A Royal Failure

1 Kings 3-11

Study 5. Solomon: A Royal Failure

1 Kings 3-11

Discuss

Tell us about a time when your experience didn't match up to your expectations.
(Maybe it was a holiday or an event you'd been looking forward to.)

In your own words, tell us the story of the whole Bible so far...
Are things going according to plan?

With God's promises to David in 2 Samuel 7, that a son of David would reign over God's people as King forever and that David's son would be the Son of God who built the temple, all eyes and expectations are now focused firmly on David's son - King Solomon. If Solomon gets it right all of God's promises will be fulfilled...

Read 1 Kings 4:29-34

1. How is Solomon like Adam? What hints are there here that we are returning to Eden?

Read 1 Kings 3:1-4

2. What signs are there in this passage which suggest to us that what happened in Eden might repeat itself again?

Read Deuteronomy 17:14-17 and 1 Kings 10:26-28, 11:1-8

3. In Deuteronomy what things has God forbidden the King of Israel to have? And in 1 Kings, how is Solomon going at being obedient to God's commands?

King Solomon's Report Card

Deuteronomy 17	Forbidden	Pass / Fail
v.16	Horses	Failed. 1 Kings 10:26
v.17		
v.17		

4. What has happened to Solomon's heart?



With all of Solomon's wisdom and splendour in naming the animals and talking about plant life, he's just like a repeat of Adam. And that's the problem, isn't it? It's not a great looking report card for the wisest King of Israel! Solomon, for all his potential and for all of his promise, is just like Adam.

Compare Genesis 3:7 and 1 Kings 11:9-11

5. How has God's judgement on Adam repeated itself again with God's judgement on Solomon?

Read 1 Kings 11:12-13

6. In his judgment, God was gracious to Adam and Eve by providing them clothes and promising the Serpent crusher. As God brings judgment against Solomon, how do we see him being gracious again?

Read 1 Kings 10:14-29 and Matthew 6:19-34

7. Given all that Solomon grasped and accumulated for himself, how do the words of Jesus serve as a corrective to us concerning the desires and anxieties of our own hearts?

In Matthew 12:42, Jesus says the Queen of the South (Sheba) will rise up at the judgement and condemn this generation because they ask for a sign. Sheba's Queen came from the ends of the earth (Ethiopia?) to listen to the wisdom of Solomon but now, says Jesus, one even greater than Solomon is here.

8. Knowing that Jesus is soon to be crucified just outside the temple built by Solomon, in what sense do you think Jesus is greater than Solomon?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

9. Where do we see Jesus as the wisdom of God?

Solomon's heart was led astray: he exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator (Romans 1:18-32).

10. How might we protect our hearts from storing up treasures for ourselves on earth and trying to serve two masters?

Prayer

What things other than God are contending to capture your heart and lead you astray?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 6. Exile - Separated From God

2 Kings 24:8-20

Study 6. Exile - Separated From God

2 Kings 24:8-20

Discuss

Does God's patience with us and his forgiveness of our sins ever simply run out? You might like to consider but not limit your discussion to passages like: 1 John 1:9-10, Romans 1:18-32 and Hebrews 10:26-31. (Don't talk for too long though... this is a good study!)

The Story So Far...

God has abandoned Israel, he has simply just had enough of them. I know it sounds harsh but that's what God has done. In the story so far we have seen that God is nothing but faithful to an unfaithful people. The descendants of Abraham and David who were promised that they would forever be **God's people in God's place under God's rule** now find themselves abandoned, alone and in exile.

If we're being completely honest with ourselves, it's not like we didn't see this coming. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and so were exiled from Eden. God's promises to Abraham and more promises to David were full of promise for Israel but the sons of Abraham and the sons of David disobeyed God too. After God's promises to David, all of our expectations focused on Solomon - the Son of David. Would Solomon be the promised Son of God who not only built the temple in Jerusalem but reigned as King forever over God's people?

Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the LORD'S command. So the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates.

1 Kings 11:10-11

From here, with a few exceptions, it has been the same sad and familiar tale. King after king 'did evil in the eyes of the Lord'. God has just simply had enough of Israel. But even though Israel are abandoned in a foreign land under a foreign king, they are not without hope.

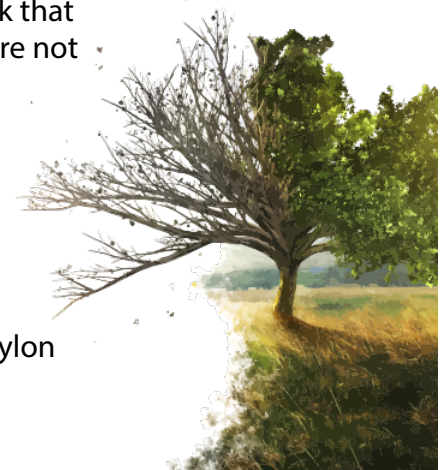
Read 2 Kings 24:8-20

1. What repeated phrase is used to describe these last two kings before the exile?
2. What words in 2 Kings 24:20 remind us of what happened in Eden? In what way is this repeated idea significant? (see the diagram on p.14)

Read Lamentations 1

Lamentations was a book written during the time of the Exile. It is a book that details the great and terrible suffering of God's people. However, Israel are not suffering unjustly.

3. What reasons are given for Israel's suffering?
4. What has happened to Jerusalem and her people?
5. What indications can you see in Lamentations 1 that the Exile to Babylon is like the expulsion from Eden?



Read 2 Kings 25

6. Historically, who brought this destruction on Jerusalem and its people?

Read Lamentations 2:1-8

7. Whom does Lamentations attribute the destruction on Jerusalem and its people?

8. God made some great promises to Abraham and David, but what are things like for Israel in exile?

God's Promised Expectations	Israel's Exile Experience
Israel as God's people	
Israel in the promised land	
God's dwelling place with his people	The temple is destroyed
David's son as King forever	
David's Son to rule over God's people	
Rest from their enemies	

Read Lamentations 3:1-21

9. Describe the suffering of the Man of affliction.

10. Does his suffering sound familiar?

Read Lamentations 3:22-33

11. What hope is there for God's people?

Read Romans 5:1-11

12. What hope is there for us when we sin?

Prayer

Coming back to the opening discussion, when might God's patience and forgiveness run out with us?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 7. Jesus: The Coming King

Matthew 1

Study 7. Jesus: The Coming King

Matthew 1

Discuss

Christmas is full of surprises. Even with facebook, Christmas is a time when you hear from people you haven't heard from all year or even for many years. What's it like to hear news from someone you haven't heard from in a long time?

The story so far...

After the Babylonians destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple, they carried the people away into exile (597-586 BC). It has been a colourful history for Israel. Forty years in the wilderness followed by seventy years in exile and now four hundred years of nothing but silence from God. Israel have been shut out of the presence of God. Expelled from his presence and his blessing; God has said nothing, he hasn't spoken to them. The promised land that was their inheritance is occupied by foreigners, first it was the Babylonians, then the Greeks and now the Romans. Even though the exiles have returned and reconstructed the city, the walls and even rebuilt the temple, the people of God still have no rest from their enemies and are ruled by a foreign king.

God has been quiet now for four hundred years! We know that it was the unfaithfulness of God's people that put them in this position. Israel stopped listening to God, so God stopped speaking. We know what unfaithful Israel are like, but what about God's faithfulness to his promises? What about God's promises to Abraham? What happened to God's promises to David?

It is into that deafening silence that Matthew now speaks.

Read Matthew 1:1-17

1. In recording the family tree of King (Messiah) Jesus, what two names does Matthew include in the introduction? Why do you think this is significant?
2. What did God promise to Abraham?
3. What were God's promises to David?
4. In our last study we saw that the Old Testament closed its books with God's people in exile. Why do you think Matthew wants to highlight this event (v.12, v.17) in introducing Jesus?
5. What's surprising about the names Tamah (Genesis 38), Rahab (Joshua 6:20-25), Ruth (1:6-22), and Uriah's wife (2 Samuel 11:1-17), in Jesus' family tree?



Read Matthew 1:18-25

6. According to Deuteronomy 22:23-24, what could Joseph have done with Mary instead of divorcing her quietly?
7. What's significant about Joseph in v.20?

Under the judgement of God because of their many sins, Israel (Judah) were in Babylonian exile when Isaiah the prophet spoke God's word of promise that God would not abandon his people but provide them a sign that God would be with them.

8. What is significant about the name Jesus and Immanuel?

Born into a Family of Sinners

Matthew tells us that Jesus is the Son of Abraham and the Son of David, Jesus is the promised King (Messiah) of God's people. Despite this, Jesus was born into a family of sinners, not just those surprising names in his family tree but all of them were sinners. So far in the story of the whole Bible we've seen Adam, Abraham, David, Solomon and all of Israel have failed to obey God's Word.

But Jesus was born into this family of sinners because despite our unfaithfulness, God is faithful to his promises. His name means Saviour - Jesus saves his people from their sins. After four hundred years of silence from God - Jesus is the King we've been expecting. The virgin now with child is the sign that God does not abandon us because of our sin, instead he saves us from it.

Compare Matthew 1:21-23 with Matthew 28:19-20

9. From start to finish, what is the promise Matthew wants us to know about Jesus?

Read Hebrews 2:14

10. What difference does it make that Jesus was made like us in every way but was without sin? Notice who it is that he helps!

Prayer

Jesus is God with us; God has not abandoned us in our sin but saves us from our sins. How might reflecting on this shape the way you pray and the things you pray about this week?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 8. Jesus: The Death of The King

Galatians 3:1-18

Study 8. Jesus: The Death of The King

Galatians 3:1-18

Discuss

What role does the law have in the life of a Christian?
(Remain calm and use scripture to support your point of view.)

The story so far...

So far the story of the whole Bible has been a story of great promise in search of fulfilment. A God who makes promises to a people who break them. A faithful God to an unfaithful people. From the beginning, the human problem is sin. Sin brings death and separation (exile) from God. But so far, no one has obeyed God, no-one has dealt with our sin problem, in fact up until now everyone has shown themselves to be a sinner and not a Saviour.

Adam and Eve were promised life in Eden but they ate of the wrong tree. Abraham was promised great blessings of land and descendants; David was promised a kingdom and a Son who would be king forever. But Abraham failed. David failed, David's son Solomon failed too. Israel failed and were sent into exile and separated from God for over 400 years..

God's promise of a King and Saviour who deals with sin is fulfilled in the birth of a baby boy in Bethlehem - the town of David. But in an act of repeated history, God's people reject Jesus as their King and crucify him.

Was the death of Jesus all in vain?

Read Galatians 3:1-18

1. Why does Paul call the Galatians foolish; what seems to be the issue?
2. Compare Galatians 3:6 with Genesis 15:6. How was Abraham credited as righteous?
3. So who can become the children of Abraham? How?
4. How can we who were under God's curse now become part of the blessings promised to Abraham?



5. What did Jesus do that the law could not do?

6. Why did Christ die?

Re-read Galatians 3:10-11

7. What then was the purpose of the law?

8. How can trying to obey the law now be considered an act of disobedience towards God?

9. How do all of God's promises become ours?

Read Romans 8:1-4 & 8:31-39

10. How does the death of Jesus undo the curses of Eden?

11. What was the law powerless to do that Christ did?

12. What can separate us now from the love of God?

Prayer

There is no condemnation left, no one left to accuse us. All our condemnation and accusation was borne by Jesus in his death on the cross. The cross is the tree that brings us from death (tree of knowledge of good and evil) to life (Cross) and grants us eternal life (Tree of life). In Christ Jesus we are now more than conquerors over sin and death. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus!

How might you pray in response to God's promises to us?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 9. Jesus: The Risen King

Acts 2:22-49

Study 9. Jesus: The Risen King

Acts 2:22-49

Discuss

When it comes to Jesus, the Bible teaches the miraculous! A virgin birth, walking on water, water into wine, feeding 5000 people with 5 loaves and two fish, raising the dead, healing the sick, casting out demons and believing in the resurrection.

Is it hard to believe in the resurrection of Jesus? Why?

The story so far...

Over the last two studies, we've seen that Jesus is not only the son of Abraham but also as the son of David, Jesus is the promised King we've been expecting. Where all others have failed, only Jesus has obeyed God's Word, an obedience demonstrated in his death. By his death for us, Jesus undoes all the curses of Eden: sin, death and separation from God are now all removed - there's no condemnation left for us! Despite the unfaithfulness of his people, God is keeping his promises.

There's just one small problem with these promises... how can a dead Jesus be the son of David who will reign forever over God's people?

Read Acts 2:24-41

1. After his death on the cross, what does v. 24 say God did for Jesus?

Read 2 Samuel 7:12-14

2. What did God promise to David?

3. Acts 2:25-28 are taken from Psalm 16:8-11, which was a psalm written by King David. According to David, why can he speak with confidence about death?

4. Does God abandon Jesus in death? Does God abandon David? Why do you think God won't abandon you in your death?

5. What two things does Peter say about David?



6. In v. 34-36 the apostle Peter quotes King David again from another psalm, Psalm 110:1. What other promise to David do we see God keep through Jesus' resurrection?

7. What does v.38-39 tell us the appropriate response is to Jesus being both Lord and King? Is there anything in this response that you need to do?

The Resurrection Community

Those who repent and are baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of sins receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The exile is now over as God is gathering his people into his presence with him (the gift of his Spirit). These people who were previously scattered are now being gathered together. This gathering of the resurrection community is what we call Church!

Read Acts 2:42-47

8. What is the shape of life together in the resurrection community?

Read Matthew 28

9. How do the women respond to the news of the resurrection? What do you think our response should be?

10. What similarities do you see with Jesus' words in v.18-20 and God's promises to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3? How is this significant for us?

11. Look at v.20. How are Jesus' words "I am with you always" the fulfilment of God's promises in the story of the whole Bible?

Prayer

Just as God promised Abraham to bless all the people of the earth through him, so now we who are blessed are called to make disciples of people in all the earth.

What place does Jesus' mission have in your life and in your prayers?

Prayer Points for this week



Talk 10. The New Creation

Revelation 21-22

Study 10. The New Creation

Revelation 21-22

Discuss

What do you think heaven will be like? What are you looking forward to the most?

The story so far...

We started the story of the whole Bible in a garden but this story ends in a City. We started with two people but end with a multitude. We started with God dwelling with his people but we finish with people dwelling with their God.

We started with two trees in Eden but we ate of the tree that brought us death. That wrong choice meant we needed another tree at Calvary and so now there is only one tree left remaining - the tree of life. God has dealt with the problem of our sin and the curse of death. We've now come full circle. We are back to the start again, only this time it is different. The end of the story is like the beginning, only it has a different outcome. God makes all things new! God's faithfulness to all of his promises to Abraham and to David are now fulfilled in Jesus. Death is conquered, rest from our enemies is secured, nothing in all creation can separate God's people from his love in the new Creation.

Read Revelation 21-22

1. How does John describe the New Jerusalem?
2. How is the New Jerusalem the fulfilment of God's promises?
3. What can separate God's people from God? Why?
4. Given all that we've seen about the story of the whole Bible, what is significant about Jesus' claim that he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end?
5. Compare Genesis 2:8-14 with Revelation 21:10-21. What similarities do you see between Eden and the New Jerusalem?
6. What has happened to the Temple?
7. What does the tree in the heavenly city provide?



Read Romans 8:18-39

8. Compare your present sufferings and frustrations to the New Creation. How will the New Creation resolve these present struggles?

Present Sufferings & Frustrations	New Creation

Read Matthew 28:16-20

9. How do the final verses of Matthew’s gospel sum up the picture we’ve just seen in Revelation 21-22?

10. What new picture do we have in these verses of what it means to be fruitful and multiply?

11. What does it mean to you to be a disciple of Jesus?

Prayer

Because God is faithful to his promises, God is now gathering people into a loving and eternal community. How should this shape our prayers and our lives?

Prayer Points for this week

