

# BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION SEMINAR

## WEEK 5

### ISRAEL IN THE BIBLICAL STORY

#### 1. PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE BIBLE

I want all of us to take a flight from Genesis (the beginning of the world system) to Revelation (Prophecy of the end of the world system and fulfilment of God's plan).

We shall approach this task by dividing the Bible into 4 parts: Creation, Fall, Redemption and Fulfilment or completion of God's plan.

#### CREATION

God created the heavens and the earth, time, seasons, sea creatures, birds, animals before creating human beings in His own image and likeness. He put human beings to oversee the world He has created (Gen 1:26-28). For a while human beings were dependent on God. They shared in God's vision and enjoyed His fellowship.

#### THE FALL

Then one sad day, Adam and Eve (the first human beings) decided to have their independence. They, of their own freewill, chose to disobey God. The consequences of that choice created an upheaval and humanity was never the same after that. Human beings, having lost the image of God, could no longer have fellowship with God. That desire of unregenerate human beings to be like God, which started on that day of rebellion, has continued from that day and will never stop until the end of the age.

#### REDEMPTION

Redemption encompasses God's actions from the day of the Fall till the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (John 3:16-18). God's promise was fulfilled when His Son died on the cross; anyone who accepts that sacrifice becomes God's child with a restored image of God, sharing in His vision and having fellowship with Him. As followers of Christ, they have Christ's mandate to preach the good news of God's redemption of all human beings to all the nations and to make disciples of those who believe.

#### FULFILMENT (COMPLETION) OF GOD'S PLAN

God has revealed what will happen at the end of the age: God will destroy the present world system and recreate a new earth and heavens. Human beings, with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, as the King of kings will oversee the earth and the heavens as God had purposed from the beginning (Gen 1:26-28).

## IMPORTANT NOTE

A FAITHFUL INTERPRETER READS THE BIBLE WITH THE PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE BIBLE BEFORE HIM OR HER.

An interpretation that does not tie into God's story and purpose is another gospel.

## 2.0 ISRAEL IN THE BIBLICAL STORY

### GENESIS

Genesis is the story of the creation of the universes, time, animals, sea creatures, animals and human beings. It is also about disobedience and its consequences, the call of Abraham and his descendants and how God protected them.

Genesis can be divided into 2 main parts; there are sub parts but we will list the main parts and characters.

Chapters 1-11: The creation of the heavens and earth, the fall of human beings, the progress of evil and God's enduring love in the midst of such great evil. Yet, despite all the evil, God makes a covenant with Noah and his descendants.

Chapters 12-50: Abraham's life, God's covenant with him and his descendants and radical obedience to God (11:27-25:11), Jacob, descendant of Abraham, his travails and triumphs (25:12-37:1) and Joseph's trials, temptation, sufferings and rise (37-50).

### EXODUS

It is the narrative of deliverance of a people in bondage. God shows His might as He delivers Jacob's descendants who had been enslaved in Egypt. It is also about the Covenant law given by God through the hand of Moses, institution of the tabernacle as place of God's presence, details of how He is to be worshipped, and rebellion by a stiff-necked people--always complaining despite being witnesses of God's miracles and love.

### LEVITICUS

Laws governing holiness before God, ritual cleansing, social obligations and sacrifices. The institution of the priesthood with Aaron as high priest and assignment of duties to the Levites.

### NUMBERS

The Israelites prepare to militarily enter the promised land after 40 years wandering in the wilderness because of disobedience. It is a narrative of the Israelites as they travelled from the foot of Mount Sinai to the East bank of the Jordan (plains of Moab). A journey that could have

taken less than a year from the Red Sea had Israel obeyed God and taken the more direct southern route at Kadesh. But they had refused, thereby incurring God's judgment (none of the disobedient generation entered the promised land).

## DEUTERONOMY

Moses rehearses the covenant between Israel and God to the new generation of Israelites while they were encamped on the banks of East Jordan, preparatory to entering the promised land. Deuteronomy is about God's demand that His people reflect His character. There are blessings for obedience and punishment for disobedience.

## JOSHUA

Joshua is a narrative about conquests and land distribution--God overturns the heathen nations using His chosen people. Josh 1:8-9 and 24:15 are very important verses that should be taken to heart in our generation.

Why didn't the Israelites drive out all the heathen nations?

## JUDGES

The book of Judges covers the period from the death of Joshua until the beginning of the monarchy. It was characterized by repentance, deliverance and more backsliding. Israel was unfaithful while God was forgiving and loving.

In those days *there was* no king in Israel; everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes (Jdg 21:25 NKJV).

The time of Judges is comparable to the present time in the church. Most Christians are doing what suits them. They either interpret or love to hear biblical interpretations that favor their selfish needs.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables (2Tim 4:3-4 NKJV).

## RUTH

The loyalty of a woman to her mother-in-law and to the God of Israel is rewarded. Ruth (a foreign woman) became the great grandmother of King David.

## 1 AND 2 SAMUEL

The period from Samuel's birth to the end of King David's reign. Israel asked for and got a king, Saul. For disobedience, God passed his line over and handed the kingdom to David. There is

emphasis on the ark of the covenant (which represents God's presence), God's promise to David, David's adultery, repentance, punishment, and God's forgiveness.

## 1 AND 2 KINGS

The 2 books cover the period from the death of David (970 B.C) to the 6th century exile of Judah (586 B.C.). It was a period characterized by wars and apostasy. The narrative traces the continuing decline from the peak of Israel's greatness under King David to the destruction of the temple, division into 2 kingdoms (Israel and Judah), the fall of the Israel (722 B.C) and Judah in 586 B.C. A key highlight is the erection of the temple and the manifestation of God's presence at its opening.

## 1 AND 2 CHRONICLES

It is a postexilic history of the Kings of Judah with emphasis on the temple and its worship. The narrative covers the kingdom of Judah from David (about 1000 B.C.) to the decree of Cyrus (539/8 B.C.). Running through the narrative is the fact that there is divine blessing for obedience and retribution for disobedience.

## EZRA-NEHEMIAH

Ezra-Nehemiah covers the period from the first return of the exiles (539/538 B.C.) to the end of the 5th century. The narrative centers on the completion of the 2nd temple and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem despite stiff opposition, problems arising from mixed marriages, Jewish identity, repentance and revival.

## ESTHER

A narrative of God's protection of His people in exile in Persia during the reign of Xerxes (486-465 B.C.). God uses Queen Esther, assisted by Mordecai, to overturn Haman's plot to wipe out the Jews throughout Persia.

Please spend time to read these notes.

## BLESSINGS