

The Period of the Judges

- I. Review of the Period of the Judges
 - A. The tribal confederacy existed in the land of Canaan from the time of the conquest under Joshua through the time of Samuel
 1. The tabernacle (the worship of Yahweh) was central to their national identity
 2. The tabernacle appears to have moved from Gilgal to Shechem to Shiloh
 - B. Although God (through Joshua and the army of Israel) broke the strength of the peoples that inhabited the land of Canaan and gave the land to His people (Josh 21:43-45), the final chapters of Joshua and the early chapters of Judges revealed that the individual tribes were expected to occupy their allotted portions of the land (Josh 13:1)
 1. Not one tribe succeeded in occupying all the territory allotted to it, and some cities listed as conquered in the days of Joshua had to be re-conquered at a later time
 2. Judges 1:27-2:5 lists the areas that were not taken, and the angel of the Lord's judgment on the nation at Bokim
 - C. The period of the Judges, from Othniel (the first judge [ca. 1360 B.C.]) to the battle of Mizpah (lead by Samuel [1084 B.C.]) and onto the anointing of Saul (the first king of Israel [1051 B.C.]), is approximately 309 years
 1. By adding the figures given in the book of Judges - which specify the length of the oppressions, judgeships, and intervening periods of rest - the total is approximately 410 years
 2. Therefore, some overlapping of events (judgeships) is necessary
 - D. The cycle seen throughout the book of Judges is explained (Judges 2:16-23)
 1. God would raise up judges
 2. God was with the judge and saved the people
 3. When the judge died the people would return to their wicked ways
 4. God would hand them over to their enemies
 5. The cycle would repeat itself
 - E. The judges were by not of identical character; however, they all gave evidence to their fellow Israelites that the Spirit of the Lord was upon them, and they were able to rally the clans (tribes) against the enemy
 1. These individuals for selected and empowered by God alone to meet certain emergencies
 2. Their office was not hereditary
 3. The office was that of a military leader and protector

F. Judges listed in Hebrews 11

1. **Gideon** (ca. 1180 B.C.) – Judges 6 through 8
 - a. The Midianites and Amalekites violently oppressed the Israelites, creating terrible economic oppression
 - b. The Lord sent the Israelites prophet who rebuked the people
 - c. Gideon of Manasseh was chosen and filled with zeal for God
 - d. The Midianites and their allies assembled on the plain of Jezreel
 - e. Gideon with other Manassehite clans, along with the tribes of Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, were at the spring of Harod
 - (1) Those who trembled with fear were released, and the army was reduced by 22,000 men
 - (2) Of the 10,000 left, it was further reduced to 300
 - f. Gideon spied out the enemy camp, divided his men into three units with torches and jars and attacked the camp, shouting “For the Lord and for Gideon!”
 - g. The enemy turned on each other and fled toward the Jordan
 - (1) Gideon pursued Zebah and Zalmunna across the Jordan (see Ps 83:11)
 - (2) The cities of Succoth and Peniel denied refreshment to Gideon’s army; yet, they captured the enemy kings and routed their armies
 - h. Returning from battle, Gideon’s army beat the seventy-seven elders of Succoth with thorns and briars and pulled down the tower of Peniel
 - i. The people wished to make Gideon king, but he refused
 - j. During Gideon's lifetime, the land experienced forty years of peace
2. **Barak** (and Deborah) (ca. 1220 B.C.) – Judges 4 and 5
 - a. Jabin, the Canaanite king of Hazor, and Sisera, his army commander who lived in Harosheth Haggoyim, oppressed Israel for twenty years
 - b. Deborah of Ephraim, a prophetess, was leading Israel and held court between Ramah and Bethel
 - c. She encouraged Barak from Kedesh in Naphtali to engage Sisera in the Valley of Jezreel
 - d. Barak refused to go without Deborah
 - (1) She joined him on Mount Tabor
 - (2) Barak led 10,000 men from the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali in an attack

- e. The rapid and unexpected rise of the Kishon River immobilized the chariots of Sisera
 - f. Sisera fled to the tent of Jael and was killed by her (fulfilling the prophecy of Judges 4:9)
 - g. The Song of Deborah is recorded in Judges 5
 - (1) Provincial nature of the oppression
 - (2) The lack of tribal unity
 - h. The land had peace for forty years
3. **Samson** (ca. 1104 B.C.) – Judges 13 through 16
- a. Ammonite and Philistine oppression on Israel commenced in ca. 1124 B.C.
 - b. Samson was of the tribe of Dan, a tribe pressured by the advance of the Philistines, who were ruling over Israel (Judges 14:4)
 - c. Border incidents did much to provoke the Philistines (Judg 14:4 – “...for [the Lord] was seeking an opportunity against the Philistines”)
 - (1) Samson killed thirty men in Ashkelon and stripped them of their belongings and gave their clothes to those who answered his riddle
 - (2) He released three hundred foxes, tied in pairs with torches tied to their tails, into the standing grain of the Philistines
 - (3) Killed a thousand men with the jawbone of a donkey
 - (4) Tore the doors off the city gates of Gaza and carried them to Hebron (forty miles)
 - (5) Pulled the temple of Dagon down upon himself, killing thousands of Philistines
 - d. He led Israel twenty years
 - e. Samuel (born ca. 1116 B.C.) was a contemporary of Samson (ca. 1123 to 1084 B.C.)
4. **Jephthah** (ca. 1106 B.C.) – Judges 10:6 through 12:7
- a. The Ammonites were one of many nations that oppressed Israel at this time
 - b. Jephthah, although initially rejected by his half-brothers because he was the son of a prostitute, was asked by the elders of Gilead to be their leader and fight against the Ammonites
 - c. Jephthah sent a message to the king of the Ammonites explaining the legitimacy of Israel’s claim to former Amorite land

- (1) Jephthah asserted that “the Lord, the God of Israel,” himself was the one who dispossessed these peoples from before Israel (Judg 11:21,23-24) and that Israel was not an aggressor (Judges 11:15)
 - (2) During the time the Israelites under Moses were preparing to enter the land, the Ammonites attempted to hinder Israel, prompting God’s help in dispossessing them
 - (a) Israel was not to take Ammonite land, since God had expressly forbidden it (Deut 2:19)
 - (b) Sihon, king of the Amorites, had taken some of what was Moabite and Ammonite territory, and Israel had taken this and other territory of Sihon (Num 21:25-26)
 - (c) In addition, the Ammonites never really had true claim to the land to begin with; rather, it was the land of the Amorites (Judg 11:19-22)
 - (d) In addition, the Ammonites were making this claim after Israel had possessed the land for three hundred years (Judg 11:26)
 - (3) Judges 11:28 - *“But the king of the Ammonites did not listen to the words of Jephthah that he sent to him.”*
- d. Jephthah made a vow and fought the Ammonites

“And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD and said, “If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whatever comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites shall be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.” (Judges 11:30-31)

- (1) Either Jephthah literally sacrificed his daughter as a burnt offering
 - (2) Or, Jephthah dedicated his daughter to perpetual virginity, as a figurative sacrifice
- e. Jephthah’s conflict with Ephraim
- (1) Recalls Ephraim’s earlier challenge to Gideon (8:1-3), in which Gideon was able to pacify Ephraim
 - (2) Jephthah fought Ephraim, and the men of Gilead killed 42,000 Ephraimites
 - (3) Ephraim never again played any important role in Israel’s history
- f. Jephthah judged Israel six years

- G. *"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."* (Judges 21:25)
- H. The book of Ruth traces the ancestry of David back to Judah and Bethlehem
 - 1. As a Moabite, Ruth is a descendant of Lot
 - 2. By her identification with the people of Israel (*"For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God."* [Ruth 1:16]), Ruth affected a reunification with the Abrahamic clan from which Lot had separated
 - 3. Ruth is one of four women mentioned in the genealogical list of Matthew 1
- I. First Samuel begins with the story of Samuel's birth
 - 1. Eli (who was high priest at Shiloh and was leading Israel) blessed Hannah, wife of Elkanah (1 Sam 1:17)
 - 2. Samuel lived at Shiloh with Eli after he was dedicated to the Lord
- J. After the tragic battle at Aphek, where 30,000 Israelites were killed (including Eli's wicked sons) and the ark of the covenant was captured by the Philistines, Eli died having led Israel 40 years
 - 1. The ark was taken to Ashdod and placed in the temple of Dagon
 - 2. The ark was then sent to Gath, then to Ekron
 - 3. After seven months, the Philistines returned the ark to Israel
 - a. First, to Beth Shemesh
 - b. Then to Kiriath-jearim (in the house of Abinadab)
- K. As Samuel matured, he stepped into the leadership void that existed in Israel
 - 1. Fearing the rise of nationalistic hopes, the Philistines marched on Mizpah; however, the Lord gave Israel a great victory (1 Sam 7:11)
 - 2. Israel experienced a season of peace under the judgeship of Samuel
 - a. Samuel eventually appointed his two sons as judges
 - b. They were dishonest; therefore, the elders of Israel asked Samuel to appoint a king over them
 - 3. Samuel was displeased
 - a. Not with kingship (Deut 17:14-20)
 - b. With the character of the kingship demanded by the people (1 Sam 8:5 - *"Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations"*)

The United Monarchy (ca. 1050 to 931 B.C.) - 1 Sam 10:1 through 1 Kings 12:15

- I. King Saul (1051 to 1011 B.C.)
 - A. The first king of Israel was Saul, son of Kish, from the tribe of Benjamin
 - 1. He belonged to a clan in Gibeah, a town which dominated the highroad from Judah to Mount Ephraim

2. Gibeah became the first capital of Israel and was henceforth known as "Gibeah of Saul"
- B. Saul's appointment was by prophetic designation and popular acclaim, but he was accepted as king primarily because of his victory over Nahash the Ammonite, who had invaded Israelite lands in the Trans-jordan and laid siege to Jabesh-gilead (1 Sam 11)
 - C. Saul's entire reign was spent at war (1 Sam 14:47,48,52) with the nations surrounding Israel
 1. Moab
 2. Ammonites
 3. Edom
 4. The kings of Zobah (to the north: Arameans)
 5. Philistines
 - D. Saul made no change in the internal structure of Israel
 1. The tribal organization was left as it was
 2. No administrative bureaucracy was adopted
 - E. Saul had no splendid court - Gibeah of Saul was a fortress rather than a palace
 - F. Saul faced odds that would have taxed the capacity of the most balanced of minds - his very position placed him under the strain of having to exhibit charismatic leadership qualities continuously
 1. The continued Philistine threat
 2. The fierce independence of the tribes
 3. The non-dependability of his army
 4. Samuel's rejection
 5. Fits a demonic oppression and depression (1 Sam 16:14-23)
 - G. Saul's intense jealousy over the popularity of the young hero David (1 Sam 18:7) finally drove him beyond the bounds of rational behavior
 1. Driven by insane jealousy, Saul turned against David and repeatedly tried to kill him
 2. David eventually fled to Philistine territory and took refuge in Gath
 - H. The Philistines had taken advantage of the weak situation in Israel to advance into the Jezreel Valley, threatening to dominate the plain between the hill country of Ephraim and the northern tribes of Galilee
 1. Saul move north from Gibeah to meet the Philistines and encamped at the foot of Mount Gilboa
 2. The Israelite army was defeated by the Philistines
 - a. Saul and his three sons were killed on Mount Gilboa
 - b. Saul's head and armor were sent throughout the land of the Philistines
 - c. His body and the bodies of his sons were hung on the walls of Beth-shean

- I. With the death of Saul, along with his three older sons, on Mount Gilboa, and with the earlier death of Samuel at Ramah (1 Sam 25:1), there was a vacuum left among the Israelite tribes as to who would rule Israel
- J. The claims of the house of Saul were perpetuated by his surviving son Ish-Bosheth
 - 1. Ish-Bosheth (also referred to as "Ish-Baal") had been taken to Mahanaim in the Trans-jordan by Abner (Saul's cousin [1 Sam 14:50,51] and commander of Saul's forces)
 - 2. The fact that he was taken to Mahanaim in Gilead shows that conditions did not permit a new government to be established west of the Jordan River
- II. David King Over Judah (ca. 1011 to 1004 B.C.)
 - A. "After this" (2 Sam 2:1), David (who was in Ziklag) went up to Hebron in Judah and was anointed king over the house of Judah (
 - 1. This was probably done with Philistine consent
 - 2. The Philistines viewed David as a vassal
 - B. The land was now given an enduring political form – the state of Judah emerged as a separate entity alongside Israel (to which Ish-Bosheth laid claim)
 - C. Ish-Bosheth reigned two years as king of Israel (2 Sam 2:1)
 - 1. This was a period of political intrigue, civil war with Judah, and bitter personal feuds within the household of Saul
 - 2. Rechab and Baanah murdered Ish-Bosheth (2 Sam 4)
 - D. David demonstrated his righteousness throughout this period by his sincere actions designed to convince the people of Israel and Judah that he harbored no hostility toward the house of Saul; these actions included:
 - 1. David's execution of the Amalekite who claimed to have killed Saul and had brought to David the king's crown and arm band (2 Sam 1:1-16)
 - 2. His lament for Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam 1:17-27)
 - 3. His reaction to the murder of Abner (2 Sam 3:22-39)
 - 4. His execution of Rechab and Baanah
 - E. David gained strength throughout this entire period, while the house of Saul grew weaker
 - 1. David demanded the return of Michal, daughter of Saul, his first wife (2 Sam 3:14-16) – a male born from this union could have united the claims of both houses
 - 2. It was not to be (2 Sam 6:16-23)
- III. David King Over All Israel (1004 to 971 B.C.)
 - A. With no one left to further the claims of the house of Saul, the elders of Israel traveled to Hebron and implemented the terms of the treaty that was first initiated by Abner years earlier

1. The leadership of Israel acknowledged David's proven record as a leader and his divine appointment by God
 2. After seven and a half years as king of Judah, David (at the age of 37) was anointed king over all Israel at Hebron
- B. David established a new capital at Jerusalem
1. Hebron, although historically significant (though the patriarchs and Caleb), was located too far south to serve as a national capital over all Israel
 2. Jerusalem, located just south of the Central Benjamin Plateau, was the perfect choice
 - a. It was located just beyond the tribal allotment of Judah (in the territory of Benjamin)
 - b. It was a Jebusite enclave, allowing David to take and occupy the city without offending tribal rights
 - c. The Jebusite fortress was captured and became "the City of David" (entirely his by right of conquest)
 3. David took up residence in the fortress and began enlarging the city, as he secured and consolidated his kingdom
- C. David made Jerusalem the religious as well as the political capital of the kingdom
1. He brought the ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6)
 2. David sought to build a "house" for God

2 Sam 7:11-14, 17 - "...the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. (12) When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. (13) He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. (14) I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son....(17) And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever."

3. David sought to establish a permanent place for the ark and for the priesthood
- D. David unified the people of Israel and gained victory over all enemies
1. Beginning with his defeat of the Philistines (2 Sam 5:17-25), David led a series of conquests that transformed Israel into a major power
 2. With no major powers (in Egypt or Mesopotamia) to interfere with the internal affairs of Israel, the tribes united into a well-organized kingdom
 3. David controlled an empire of respectable size (including areas conquered and occupied or dominated by vassal treaty)
- E. As a result of his sin in the case of Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam 11:1 to 12:25),

Nathan's prophecy that calamity would come upon David's household begin to manifest

1. Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam 15-19)
 2. The rebellion of Sheba (2 Sam 20)
- F. 2 Sam 21:1 - *"Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year. And David sought the face of the Lord. And the Lord said, 'There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gibeonites to death.'"*
- G. David's command to take a census of Israel and Judah (2 Sam 24) was viewed as sin by God (putting confidence in the flesh)
1. God judged the nation with three days of pestilence, resulted in the death of 70,00 people from Dan to Beersheba
 2. However, it was in the context of God's judgment against David that the future site of the Temple was revealed (the threshing floor of Araunah [Ornan in 1 Chron 21:20])
- H. The Succession of Solomon to the throne (1 Kings 1)
1. Adonijah was the oldest living son of David
 - a. Adonijah was supported by Joab and Abiathar
 - b. He had himself proclaimed king at En Rogel
 2. Informed of what Adonijah had done, Solomon was blessed by his father by David, proclaimed king and anointed by Zadok the priest at the spring of Gihon, supported by Nathan the prophet and Benaiah, chief of David's body guard
 3. Solomon pardoned Adonijah, Joab, and Abiathar, provided that they would show themselves worthy
 4. Prior to death, David charged Solomon to obey the commandments of the Lord and also settle the score with Joab and Shimei
 5. David died and was buried in the City of David (1 Kings 2:1)
- IV. King Solomon (971 to 931 B.C.)
- A. Solomon moved to remove all challenges to his authority and firmly established the kingdom he inherited from his father David (1 Kings 2:46)
 - B. The Lord appears to Solomon (1 Kings 3:6-15)
 - C. Solomon was a gifted administrator and builder
 1. Solomon was able to develop the full potential of the kingdom he inherited - time of great material prosperity
 2. See 1 Kings 4:20-34
 - D. Temple built in Jerusalem (completed in 966 B.C.)
 - E. Queen of Sheba - *"...behold, the half was not told me"* (1 Kings 10:7)
 - F. Solomon turned from the Lord in later life, resulting in God's judgment against the kingdom

1 Kings 11:1, 3-4 - *"Now King Solomon loved many foreign women...He had*

700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. (4) For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father...(11) Therefore the Lord said to Solomon , ‘Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. (12) Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. (13) However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen.’”

V. Hebrew Poetry and Wisdom Literature

- A. During Solomon’s reign, the nation of Israel reached the height of her “golden age”
 - 1. The nation experienced a sudden rise in the standard of living
 - 2. Prosperity led to a flowering of Israelite culture
- B. Old Testament poetry books (the **Psalms** and **Song of Solomon**) and the majority of wisdom literature (**Proverbs**, **Ecclesiastes**) was written at this time (**Job** is dated to an earlier period [ca. 2000 B.C.]

The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah

- I. The Divided Monarchy (**First Kings 12:1** through **Second Chronicles 36:21**)
 - A. Solomon had heavily taxed his subjects (1 Kings 12:4,14) and reorganized the land into twelve administrative districts, each with a governor responsible to the king (1 Kings 4:7-9)
 - 1. These districts in some cases coincided with the old tribal areas; but in most cases, they were disregarded
 - 2. Each district was to furnish provisions for the court for one month of the year (1 Kings 4:27) – great strain on district, judging from 1 Kings 4:22-23
 - 3. The twelve districts of “all Israel” (4:7) did not include Judah
 - 4. Solomon also inaugurated the corvee in Israel (1 Kings 5:13-17)
 - 5. Thus, the appeal from the elders of Israel gathered at Shechem, following Solomon’s death to his son Rehoboam, “*Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve you*” (1 Kings 12:4)
 - B. Under Solomon’s son Rehoboam, the kingdom was divided – the northern tribes (led by Jeroboam I) secede from the house of David (ca. 930)
 - C. The north kingdom was called “Israel”
 - 1. Ten dynasties rule from 930 to 722 B.C.
 - 2. Their histories are recorded in First and Second Kings

- a. Chronicles also records the story of Israel's history and, in fact, is often identical to the books of Samuel and Kings
 - b. However, the author of Chronicles views the northern kingdom of Israel as totally illegitimate and does not comment on the kings of Israel unless it is necessary to the story of the southern kings of Judah)
3. Among the most famous (infamous) kings of Israel
- a. Jeroboam I (930-910 B.C.) was the first king
 - (1) Capital was Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim
 - (2) Jeroboam set up an alternative worship – two calves
 - (3) Jeroboam sin is mentioned throughout the history of Israel
 - b. Omri (886-874 B. C.)
 - (1) Capital was moved to Samaria
 - (2) He entered into international alliances
 - (3) His son is Ahab was married to Jezebel (daughter of the Phoenician king, Ethbaal)
 - c. Ahab (874-853 B.C.) – *“There was none who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the Lord like Ahab , whom Jezebel his wife incited. (26) He acted very abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the Lord cast out before the people of Israel.”* (1 Kings 21:25-26)
 - d. Jehu (841-814 B.C.) – anointed to purge the house of Ahab
 - e. Jeroboam II (793-753 B.C.)
 - (1) Great grandson of Jehu
 - (2) Kingdom of Israel reached its zenith of power
4. The northern kingdom of Israel was eventually destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.
5. The majority of the population was deported
- a. The poorest remained in the land and mixed with the peoples that came into the land from other nations
 - b. The mixed population became the “Samaritans” of later biblical history
- D. The southern kingdom was called “Judah”
- 1. One dynasty ruled – the house of David
 - 2. The account of the southern kingdom is recorded in both the books of Kings and Chronicles
 - 3. The capital was Jerusalem
 - 4. The various kings of Judah were evaluated in relation to David
 - a. 2 Kings 16:2 – *“...he did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord his God, as his father David had done”*
 - b. 2 Kings 18:3 – *“And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord,*

according to all that David his father had done”

5. Good kings from the line of David
 - a. Jehoshaphat (872 to 848 B.C.) [fifth from David]
 - b. Hezekiah (715 to 686 B.C.) [fourteenth from David]
 - c. Josiah (640 to 609 B.C.) [seventeenth from David]
 - (1) Josiah led the nation in reform
 - (2) During the repairs to Solomon’s temple that occurred during his reign, the book of Deuteronomy was discovered (2 Kings 22:8-13)
 - (3) 2 Kings 23:25 – “...there was no king like [Josiah], who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor did any like him arise after him.”
6. Eventually, the southern kingdom of Judah was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

Lam 1:1,6,12 – *“How lonely sits the city that was full of people...From the daughter of Zion all her majesty has departed...Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted on the day of his fierce anger.”*

II. The Rise of the Classical Prophets

- A. During the reigns of Jeroboam II (793 to 753 B.C.) in the north and Uzziah (792 to 740 B.C.) in the south, a new phenomenon came into existence in Israel – the rise of classical prophets
- B. Of the hundreds of prophets in ancient Israel in Old Testament times, only sixteen were chosen to speak oracles (messages from God) that would be collected and written up into books
- C. The message of the prophets was clear: God will judge His people for their sin; yet, He will also restore a remnant of His people and they would experience His great salvation (future hope)
- D. The classic prophets as they appeared in Israel and Judah
 1. **Jonah** (800-750 B.C.)
 2. **Amos** (760-750 B.C.)
 3. **Hosea** (750-715 B.C.)
 4. **Isaiah** (740-681 B.C.)

*“For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*(7) Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this" (Isa 9:6-7)*

5. **Micah** (735-700 B.C.)

*"But you, O Bethlehem...
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days...
(4) And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.
(5) And he shall be their peace" (Mic 5:2-5)*

6. **Zephaniah** (640-609 B.C.)

7. **Nahum** (635-620 B.C.)

8. **Habakkuk** (620-600 B.C.)

9. **Obadiah** (605-585 B.C.)

10. **Joel** (no dates given; linguistic parallels to Amos, Micah, Jeremiah)

11. **Jeremiah** (626-585 B.C.) [also wrote Lamentations]

*"For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I
will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to
this place. (11) For I know the plans I have for you..." (Jer 29:10-11)*

The Babylonian Exile and Post-Exilic Period

- I. The people of Israel were exiled from the land for seventy years
 - A. There were four deportations of Judeans to Babylonia between 605 B.C. and 582 B.C.
 - B. After a long siege, Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C. and Solomon's temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 B.C.)
 - C. Most of the exiles were settled in various villages on the Chebar River near Nippur and Babylon (Jer 40:9-10; 25:11)

- D. The Exilic Prophets
 1. **Ezekiel** (593-571 B.C.) lived among the Jews in Babylon
 2. **Daniel** (605-530 B.C.) was a high official in the court of Babylon and the Medo-Persians
- II. Return to the Land and the Reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah
 - A. Cyrus, king of Persia, issued an edict in the first year of his reign, having conquered Babylon (538 B.C.), allowing the exiled Jews to return to Judea (2 Chron 36:23; Ezra 1:1-4)

Isa 44:24,28 - *"Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer...who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose'; saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'"* (prophesied 150 years earlier)

Ps 126:1-3 - *"When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. (2) Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.' (3) The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad"*

- B. Sheshbazzar "the prince of Judah" (Ezra 1:8,11), Zerubbabel, and Jeshua lead the first return (42,360 people of Israel, plus 7,337 slaves and 200 singers)
 1. The altar is built (538 B.C.)
 2. Two years later the Temple foundation is laid (536 B.C.)
 3. The work is hindered by adversaries
- C. The prophets **Haggai** and **Zechariah** encourage the people
- D. A letter is written to King Darius I, who finds Cyrus' decree and rules in support of the Jews
- E. The Temple is completed and dedicated in 515 B.C.
- F. **The Book of Esther** (486-464 B.C.)
 1. Takes place among the Jews living throughout the Persian empire
 2. King Ahasuerus is better known by his Greek name, Xerxes I
- G. In 458 B.C., **Ezra** the priest and scribe arrives in Judea (the community had become discouraged and morally lax)
- H. **Nehemiah** (cupbearer to Artaxerxes I) arrives in 445 B.C. with a vision to rebuilt the walls of the city of Jerusalem and reorganize (with Ezra) the community around God's law, as well as the temple
 1. The Jewish community was recognized by the Persians to regulate its internal affairs in accordance with the Law
 2. This arrangement became the norm between the Jewish people in Judean and the nations which dominated the region for the next 500 years
- I. The prophet **Malachi** ministered to this community in 420 B.C.