



■ = A rough approximate map of the lands inhabited by Israelites or under *direct* central royal administration during the United Monarchy (according to the Bible). This is basically what is referred to by the recurring Biblical phrase “from Dan to Beersheba”. ■ = The central core of ancient Judea. This area was part of a Jewish kingdom, or a Jewish province within a larger empire, almost continuously from the days of King David down to 135 CE.

Biblical Periods

The Bible As Historical Narrative

NAME of PERIOD	TIME/EVENTS COVERED	DATES	RELATED BOOKS
Antediluvian	Creation—Flood creation, Adam and Eve, Garden of Eden, fall into sin, punishment, Cain and Abel, first murder, genealogy of Adam, Cain, Seth, wickedness of man, flood	Creation - 2350 B.C.	Genesis 1-5, Job (?)
Postdiluvian	Flood—Call of Abram ark, flood, sacrifices, rainbow and covenant, repopulation of earth, genealogy from Noah to Abram, tower of Babel	2350 B.C. - 1950 B.C.	Genesis 6-12
Patriarchs	Call of Abram—Joseph in Egypt, Abram's call and promise, leaving Ur, leaving Haran, Canaan, Egypt, Eliezer, birth of Ishmael, birth of Isaac, death of Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, birth of Jacob and Esau, selection of Jacob, birth of 12 sons, Joseph sold into slavery	1950 B.C. - 1700 B.C.	Genesis 12-45
Egyptian	Joseph in Egypt—Exodus Joseph in Potiphar's house, in prison, interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, years of abundance, years of famine, Joseph's brothers in Egypt (2 trips), Jacob and family move to Egypt, Jacob dies, Joseph dies, new Pharaoh, Israel in slavery, birth of Moses, Exodus	1700 B.C. - 1500 B.C.	Genesis 45- Exodus 12
Wilderness Wandering	Exodus—Jordan Crossing 10 miracles against "gods" of Egypt, Passover, exodus, crossing of Red Sea, Mt. Sinai, giving of law, Levitical and Aaronic priesthood, tabernacle, sacrificial system, spies to Canaan, wilderness wandering, murmurings against Moses, God, Aaron, 2nd giving of the law, Aaron and Moses die	1500 B.C. - 1450 B.C.	Exodus 12-40, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
Conquest of Canaan	Jordan Crossing—1st Judge Joshua succeeds Moses, crossing Jordan, fall of Jericho, Ai, Achan, conquest of land of Canaan, division of land of Canaan by tribes, exhortation by Joshua for Israel to follow the law of God, death of Joshua	1450 B.C. - 1400 B.C.	Joshua
Judges	1st Judge—1st King the judges were: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah (Barak-captain of army), Gideon, Abimelech, Tolah, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzon, Elon, Abdan, Samson, Eli and sons, Samuel; they ruled, politically, militarily, and spiritually, as appointed by God; Israel, however, lapsed into sin between judges	1400 B.C. - 1040 B.C.	Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel
United Kingdom	1st King—Rehoboam reigns of Saul, David, Solomon (40 yrs. each), Saul at first pleased God, but no direct successors; David was a mighty soldier, psalm writer, but sinned also; Solomon, wise and rich, allowed himself to be influenced to sin by his many wives	1040 B.C. - 920 B.C.	1 Samuel 9-1 Kings 11; 1 Chron 10-2 Chron 9; Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes
Divided Kingdom	Rehoboam—Fall of Samaria kingdom split during reign of Rehoboam due to his lack of wisdom; Jeroboam reigned first in the northern kingdom of Israel; he led Israel to sin by establishing idols and different system of worship; for 200 years Israel was led by wicked kings	920 B.C. - 722 B.C.	1 Kings 12-2 Kings 20, 2 Chron 10-22, Jonah, Joel, Amos*, Micah, Nahum, Isaiah, Hosea*
Judah Alone	Fall of Samaria—Fall of Judah Israel fell in 722 B.C. when the capital city of Samaria fell to Assyria; a religious revival occurred in Judah during the reign of Josiah, but it was not long lasting; God allowed Babylon to take Judah into captivity through three successive invasions	722 B.C. - 606 B.C.	2 Kings 21-25; 2 Chron. 33-36, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Obadiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah
Captivity	Fall of Judah—Cyrus' Decree Judah and Jerusalem are captured by Babylon and Jews are taken into captivity; in captivity Daniel interprets dreams of Nebuchadnezzar; fiery furnace; Daniel in lion's den; Belshazzar's feast; prophecy of restoration of Israel; Jeremiah's letter (ch.29)	606 B.C. - 536 B.C.	Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
Restoration	Cyrus' Decree—Close of OT Babylon fell to Persia; Cyrus, king of Persia, allowed Jews to return to Jerusalem; Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah led three successive pilgrimages to return to Jerusalem; the temple and the walls of the city were rebuilt and worship was restored	536 B.C. - 400 B.C.	Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
Intertestamental Period	Close of OT—John the Baptist Hasmonean, Maccabean history, Antiochus Epiphanes, desecration of temple, Hanukkah, Roman control, development of Jewish sects (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes), angel appeared to Zechariah, birth of John	400 B.C. - 4 B.C.	No inspired revelation, only apocryphal writings, e.g. Maccabees
Preparation for Christ	John the Baptist—Jesus' Baptism birth of John to Zechariah and Elizabeth, birth of Jesus, ministry of John, baptizing in Jordan, repentance and remission of sins, baptism of Jesus	4 B.C. - 30 A.D.	Isaiah 40, Malachi 3-4, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
Christ	Jesus' Baptism—Pentecost Jesus baptized in Jordan, public ministry, teaching, miracles, training apostles, betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion, burial, resurrection, 40 days on earth, ascension	30 A.D. - 33 A.D.	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
Church-Kingdom	Pentecost—2nd Coming of Christ establishment of church, growth through Roman empire, prophecy of falling away, falling away, completion of God's revelation in New Testament (biography, history, epistles, apocalypse), establishment of false religious systems (initially in small steps, but subsequently via wholesale changes in doctrine and practice)	33 A.D. - Judgment Dates are general estimates.	Acts, Rom., 1-2 Cor., Gal., Eph., Phil., Col., 1-2 Thess., 1-2 Tim., Tit., Philm., Heb., James, 1-2 Pet., 1-3 John, Jude, Revelation

Name of Biblical Period

Starting/Ending Points

Antediluvian

Creation - Flood

Postdiluvian

Flood - Call of Abram

Patriarchs

Call of Abram - Joseph

Egyptian

Joseph in Egypt - Exodus

Wilderness Wandering

Exodus - Jordan Crossing

Conquest of Canaan

Jordan Crossing - 1st Judge

Judges

1st Judge - 1st King

United Kingdom

1st King - Rehoboam

Divided Kingdom

Rehoboam - Fall of Samaria

Judah Alone

Fall of Samaria - Fall of Judah

Captivity

Fall of Judah - Cyrus' Decree

Restoration

Cyrus' Decree - Close of OT

Intertestamental Period

Close of OT - John the Baptist

Preparation For Christ

John the Baptist - Jesus' Baptism

Christ

Jesus' Baptism - Pentecost

Church/Kingdom

Pentecost - 2nd Coming of Christ

The Bible As Historical Narrative

What Narratives Are

- They retell historical events
- Intended to give meaning and direction for a given people in the present.
- Three basic parts: characters, plot, and plot resolution.
- Assume conflict that needs resolving.
- The characters: the protagonist (the lead character in the story), the antagonist (the person who brings the conflict), the agonists (other major characters involved in attention)
- Ultimate biblical protagonist is God, Satan, or his minions, are the antagonists, and God's people are the agonists
- Basic plot: how God's people must serve him
- Plot resolution centers on redemption

The Bible As Historical Narrative

What Narratives Are Not

- Not necessarily allegories with hidden meanings.
- Not necessarily teaching moral lessons
- Primary objective: teaching how God acts for Israel

Three Levels of Narrative

- Top level: Meta-narrative/Superstory
- Mid-level: How God works out his will/providence.
- Bottom/street level: what we see every day

The Bible As Historical Narrative

Characteristics of Hebrew Narrative

The Narrator

- Chooses what to say in the story
- Appears as comparatively omniscient (he speaks for God)
- He tells the story to draw you into the narrative
- Is responsible for the point of view of the story

The Scene(s)

- Hebrew narrative is primarily scenic
- Action: a series of scenes makes the whole (like a play)

The Bible As Historical Narrative

Characteristics of Hebrew Narrative

The Characters

- In Hebrew narrative characters are central
- Character presentation usually about status, profession
- Two features of characterization stand out:
 - Characters often presented in contrast or parallel
 - Characters often appear in their own words/actions

Dialogue

- Initial dialogue gives clues to the plot
- Contrastive dialogue reveals characters
- Repetition by narrator emphasizes crucial parts

The Bible As Historical Narrative

Cautions

Plot

- Narratives: include plot resolution, beginning middle & end
- These elements lead to tension and eventual resolution

Features of Structure

- Narratives use structural features to catch the hearer's attention. Note the term hearer.
- Some structural features are:
 - Repetition
 - Inclusion
 - Foreshadowing

The Bible As Historical Narrative

Cautions

- Allegorizing
- Decontextualizing
- Selectivity
- Moralizing
- Personalizing
- Misappropriation
- False appropriation
- False Combination
- Redefinition
- Subjectivity

The Bible As Historical Narrative

Principles For Interpreting Narratives

- They do not always teach doctrine directly.
- They usually illustrate doctrine taught elsewhere.
- They often simply record what happened.
- Their actions are not always good examples.
- Their characters are not perfect.
- They do not always tell us what is good or bad.
- They are selective, but we have what we need.
- They do not necessarily address theological questions.
- They may teach implicitly or explicitly.
- They always present God as the hero.

