

# **A PASSAGE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT**

*Year Two, Quarter Four  
“Wisdom Literature and  
Post-Exile Period”*



*a two year study in the  
books of the Old Testament*

*arranged into eight 13 lesson series*

*by  
J.S. Smith*



**Year One, First Quarter: "In The Beginning"**

1. Creation	Gen. 1-2
2. Sin	Gen. 3-4
3. Noah's Ark	Gen. 6-10
4. Promises to Abraham	Gen. 11-12, 15-18
5. Sodom and Gomorrah	Gen. 13-14, 18-19
6. Abraham, Sarah and Isaac	Gen. 20-24
7. Jacob and Esau	Gen. 25-28, 32-33, 36
8. Jacob and Rachel	Gen. 29-31, 34-35
9. Joseph Sold Into Slavery	Gen. 37-38
10. Joseph Imprisoned	Gen. 39
11. Joseph Interprets Dreams	Gen. 40-41
12. Providence	Gen. 42-45
13. Reunited	Gen. 46-50

**Year One, Second Quarter: "From Egypt to Canaan"**

1. Call of Moses	Exod. 1-5
2. The Nine Plagues	Exod. 6-10
3. The Passover	Exod. 11-13
4. Crossing the Red Sea	Exod. 14-18
5. The Ten Commandments	Exod. 19-31
6. The Golden Calf	Exod. 32-40
7. Nadab and Abihu	Lev. 1-10
8. Holy Living	Lev. 11-27
9. Leaving Sinai for Canaan	Num. 1-10
10. Loyalty and Disloyalty	Num. 11-21
11. Balaam and Balak	Num. 22-36
12. Moses's Review	Deut. 1-4
13. Moses's Final Charge	Deut. 5-34

**Year One, Third Quarter: "Taming Canaan"**

1. Entrance Into The Land	Joshua 1-4
2. Jericho	Joshua 5-6
3. Ai and Other Conquests	Joshua 7-21
4. Covenant Matters	Joshua 22-24
5. Failure to Drive Out Canaanites	Judges 1-2
6. Deborah and Other Judges	Judges 3-5
7. Gideon	Judges 6-9
8. Jephthah	Judges 10-12
9. Samson and Delilah	Judges 13-16
10. Tribal Depravity	Judges 17-21
11. The Courtship of Ruth and Boaz	Ruth 1-4
12. Samuel's Beginnings	1 Sam. 1-3
13. The Ark of the Covenant	1 Sam. 4-6

**Year One, Fourth Quarter: "The Throne of David"**

1. Institution of the Monarchy	1 Sam. 7-12
2. The Reign of Saul Begins	1 Sam. 13-16
3. David and Goliath	1 Sam. 17
4. Saul Persecutes David	1 Sam. 18-20
5. David's Flight and Fight	1 Sam. 21-24
6. Abigail and David	1 Sam. 25
7. Saul's Downfall	1 Sam. 26-28
8. David's Rise	1 Sam. 29-31
9. David Becomes King	2 Sam. 1-5
10. David's Successes	2 Sam. 6-10
11. David and Bathsheba	2 Sam. 11-12
12. Absalom's Rebellion	2 Sam. 13-19
13. David's Demise	2 Sam. 20-24

**Year Two, First Quarter: "Israel and Judah"**

1. David's Demise	1 Kings 1-2
2. Solomon's Splendor	1 Kings 3-10
3. Solomon's Demise	1 Kings 11
4. Rehoboam and Jeroboam	1 Kings 12-16
5. Elijah	1 Kings 17-19
6. Ahab and Jezebel	1 Kings 20-22
7. Elisha	2 Kings 1-4, 6
8. Naaman the Leper	2 Kings 5
9. Bloody Reigns	2 Kings 7-12
10. Fall of Israel	2 Kings 13-17
11. Hezekiah	2 Kings 18-21
12. Josiah	2 Kings 22-23
13. Fall of Judah	2 Kings 24-25

**Year Two, Second Quarter: "The Major Prophets"**

1. Isaiah, Part A	Isa. 1-39
2. Isaiah, Part B	Isa. 40-55
3. Isaiah, Part C	Isa. 56-66
4. Jeremiah, Part A	Jer. 1-20
5. Jeremiah, Part B	Jer. 21-39
6. Jeremiah, Part C	Jer. 40-52
7. Lamentations	Lam. 1-5
8. Ezekiel, Part A	Ezek. 1-24
9. Ezekiel, Part B	Ezek. 25-32
10. Ezekiel, Part C	Ezek. 33-48
11. Daniel, Part A	Dan. 1-3
12. Daniel, Part B	Dan. 4-6
13. Daniel, Part C	Dan. 7-12

**Year Two, Third Quarter: "The Minor Prophets"**

1. Joel
2. Jonah
3. Amos
4. Hosea
5. Micah
6. Zephaniah
7. Nahum
8. Habakkuk
9. Obadiah
10. Haggai
11. Zechariah
12. Malachi
13. Review

**Year Two, Fourth Quarter: "Wisdom Lit./ Post-Exile"**

1. Psalms	
2. Proverbs	
3. Job, Part A	Job 1-3
4. Job, Part B	Job 4-42
5. Ecclesiastes	
6. The Song of Songs	
7. Esther, Part A	Est. 1-4
8. Esther, Part B	Est. 5-10
9. Ezra, Part A	Ezra 1-6
10. Ezra, Part B	Ezra 7-10
11. Nehemiah, Part A	Neh. 1-5
12. Nehemiah, Part B	Neh. 6-13
13. Intertestamental Period	



# Lesson 1: Psalms

## Background for the Book

The book of the Psalms is a collection of praises and prayers that was assembled over a very long period of Israel's history. While some of them date as far back as the reign of David, others appear to have been written around the time of the exile. The 150 works are divided into five units:

- Book One: Psalms 1-41
- Book Two: Psalms 42-72
- Book Three: Psalms 73-89
- Book Four: Psalms 90-106
- Book Five: Psalms 107-150

Scholars have identified some subtle differences between these units, but subject matter is not among them. Each unit of the Psalms contains messages of petition, praise and thanksgiving. Certain psalms even appear more than once. Psalms 14 and 53 are identical, as are parts of Psalms 60 and 108 and Psalms 70 and 40. Furthermore, some psalms are recorded elsewhere in the Old Testament.

## Authorship

The Hebrew psalms were not written to rhyme, but to create a sense of balance between positive and negative statements. Both sides of a coin are often examined to give a better understanding of the writer's motivation. They are generally lyric poetry, designed to be sung rather than read, and run the gamut of human emotions: joy, sorrow, gratitude, confusion, anger.

Many of the psalms are obviously very personal, but most seem to have been written for public consumption and use. Certain themes are troubling to the mind of one living under the new covenant, as the psalmists seem to plead for quick vengeance to be exacted on their enemies.

As to authorship, the Psalms break down this way:

- 50 Anonymous
- 73 David
- 12 Asaph
- 10 Sons of Korah
- 2 Solomon
- 1 Heman
- 1 Ethan
- 1 Moses

Tradition says that the Psalms were collected and arranged by Ezra and his cohorts around 450 B.C., but that some later additions were also made. It could be said that the Psalms was the Hebrew hymnal.

## Conclusion

Certain psalms stand out:

- Psalm 23 is the most memorized as it tells of the Lord as Shepherd while man walks through the valley of the shadow of death.
- Psalm 51 is David's mea culpa in confessing his sin with Bathsheba.
- Psalm 16 is quoted by Peter in the New Testament in describing Christ's ascension to the throne of the kingdom of God.
- Psalm 2 makes it clear that God begat Jesus by raising him from the dead, when coupled with its use in the New Testament.

## Questions

1. (Psalm 23) Explain how the Lord is one's shepherd, with appropriate New Testament citations.
2. Explain the significance of Christ's rod (Heb. 12:1-11) and his staff (2 Cor. 5:7).
3. Describe how Christ ensures a Christian may dwell in the house of the Lord forever (John 14:1-6, 1 Peter 1:3-5).
4. (Psalm 51) What man inspired this outpouring of sorrow in David's heart? Why?
5. How does God create a new heart in an "old" man (Rom. 10:17, 6:5-11, 17)?
6. David understands that God desires a broken spirit and a contrite heart. What did Jesus say belonged to those of such an attitude (Matt. 5:1-10)?
7. (Psalm 16) Where did Peter quote Psalm 16:10 in the New Testament? About whom did the prophecy ultimately speak?
8. What did he have in mind?
9. What event then did David prophesy in the psalms that would cause Jesus to be placed on his throne?
10. (Psalm 2) There is some confusion over the phrase in verse 7, "Today I have begotten you." Paul clears it up in Acts 13:33-35. What did God mean by this begetting?

# Lesson 2: Proverbs

## Background for the Book

The book of the Proverbs is a collection of very brief, pithy statements about a godly life. Proverbs, then is a practical instruction manual for the soul.

The first nine chapters is a series of short poems that contain practical lessons on a wide variety of subjects. The proverbs actually commence in chapter 10.

Religion obviously is the guiding force in Israel's proverbs. Every nation and every generation has had its own proverbs, but Israel's were special because they were actually inspired by the wisdom of God that excels the thoughts of man. America still repeats the proverbs of Benjamin Franklin and his generation, but even many of those statements were inspired by the Bible.

Family was of great importance to Israel, and for this reason, the Proverbs should find a home in America's families as well. The Proverbs paint a picture of the ideal man: loving husband, concerned father, dedicated disciple. They craft the image of the ideal woman: submissive wife, tireless mother, dedicated disciple. They draw a vision of the ideal child: obedient and honoring his parents.

The date of the completion of Proverbs is highly uncertain. Proverbs 25:1 indicates that some of the material did not enter the canon until after Hezekiah's reign in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. A reasonable dating puts the book's completion at around the fifth century B.C.

## Authorship

The first verse of the Proverbs ties the entire book to Solomon, the most famous man of wisdom in the history of the world. It is axiomatic to cite "the wisdom of Solomon," especially regarding the decision between the two mothers. The first section of short poems is attached to his name, as well as the second section of actual proverbial statements.

The book of 1 Kings 4:30 says that "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt." We have a sampling of some of the 3000 proverbs he is said to have created. People from around the world came to hear Solomon speak, just as we gather around this book to hear the wisdom of God he revealed.

Other wise men in his tradition contributed to the Proverbs. The words of the wise are recorded in 22:17-24:34 and the words of King Agur and King Lemuel occupy chapters 30 and 31.

## Great Themes

Perhaps five great themes could be gleaned from the entire book of the Proverbs:

- Yearning for Wisdom in Life
- Work, Wealth and Poverty
- Sin of the Tongue, Flesh and Mind
- Friendship
- Family

The book goes to great lengths to prove that a search for wisdom is wise itself and that wisdom will change the way one lives. The Proverbs are thankfully old-fashioned in the realm of necessary work and the dangerous desire to be rich. The Proverbs are very frank on issues of sexual immorality, sins of the tongue and a wayward mind. We are blessed with the wisdom of God regarding interpersonal relationships and relationships inside the home.

Attention to the Proverbs would probably change your life and surprise you as to just how little you knew before you cared.

## Questions

1. (Prov. 1:1-7) Summarize the theme of the book of Proverbs.
  
2. (Prov. 6:16-19). List the seven things that are abominable to God. Circle the ones that are not serious enough to cost a man his soul.
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.
  - 6.
  - 7.
  
3. (Prov. 7) What kind of person is a particular danger to a young man? How did she overcome him? How could he have prevented his downfall?
  
4. (Prov. 11:1) What is an application of this proverb?
  
5. (Prov. 11:22) What is the meaning of this proverb?
  
6. (Prov. 13:1) Why do many children have to learn lessons the hard way?
  
7. (Prov. 14:30) Why does envy harm the person with it more than the one who is its object?
  
8. (Prov. 15:1-2) How should a person defuse a volatile conversation?
  
9. (Prov. 16:18-19) How can pride be so devastating?
  
10. (Prov. 23:29-35) What is the best way to guard against alcoholism?
  
11. (Prov. 31) Where did Lemuel learn this proverb about the worthy woman?



## Lesson 3: Job, Part A

### Job 1-3

1. (Job 1:1-5) What four traits are attributed to Job?
2. Describe the happiness of Job.
3. (1:6-19) Where had Satan been prowling? Does he continue to prowl there today (1 Peter 5:8)?
4. How much did Satan think of Job's faith and obedience? Why did he feel this way?
5. What did God permit the devil to do?
6. What did the devil take from Job?
7. (1:20-22) How did Job react to the news? Was this what the devil anticipated? Was it what God anticipated?

8. (2:1-10) To what did Job hold fast in his loss, according to God? What is this?

9. What did the devil propose now? Did God allow it?

10. What kind of encouragement was Job's wife?

11. Did Job heed her?

12. (2:11-13) List Job's three friends. Why did they come to see Job?

13. (3:1-26) How low was Job?

## Lesson 4: Job, Part B

### Job 4-42

1. (Job 4:1-5:27) To what did Eliphaz attribute Job's despair (verse 7-8)?
2. (6:1-30) What did Job want God to do to him?
3. (7:1-21) Did Job find any comfort while asleep?
4. (8:1-22) Why did Bildad think Job's children were killed?
5. (11:1-20) Why did Zophar believe Job was being punished?
6. (13:28-14:14) What was Job's concern about the afterlife?
7. (21:1-34) Job dissented from his friends' opinion about the wicked always suffering and the righteous prospering. What was his contention?
8. Think back to the beginning of the book. What had Job done to bring this suffering on himself?
9. (31:1-4) What does Job mean by making "a covenant with [his] eyes"?

10. (32:1-5) Why was Elihu angry?

11. (34:10-15) How did Elihu defend God's honor?

12. (38:1-40:2) How did God answer Job?

13. (40:7-16) What did God think of the three friends' opinions?

14. How did God end Job's sad story here?

## Lesson 5: Ecclesiastes

1. (1:1-2) Who is the preacher? What did he say?
2. (1:3-11) Summarize the preacher's first speech.
3. (1:12-18) Explain what he means by "grasping for the wind."
4. (2:1-11) In what did the preacher seek meaning, only to be disappointed?
5. (2:12-26) How did the preacher feel when he realized that no amount of wisdom can sustain man on Earth forever?
6. (3:1-11) Explain what the preacher is trying to convey in this speech.
7. (3:12-22) For what also is there a time and purpose?
8. (4:1-6) Who is better off than both the living and the dead, according to Solomon?
9. (4:7-16) How did the preacher describe loneliness?
10. (5:1-9) What warning does he give concerning speech?
11. (5:10-20) Will a covetous man ever be satisfied with his gain?

12. (6:1-12) What is true of a man who labors only in this life for his mouth?

13. (7:1-14) What is better than precious ointment? What is better to hear than the song of fools? What does he say is an unwise question to ask?

14. (7:15-29) What has the preacher discovered about man's nature from God's creation?

15. (8:1-17) What happens when a sentence is not executed speedily?

16. (9:1-18) What does he recommend to the man who finds good to do?

17. (10:1-11:10) How much folly does it take to spoil a wise man's reputation?

18. (12:1-8) When should young people turn to the Lord?

19. What happens to the body and spirit at death?

20. (12:9-14) What is man's all? Why?

# Lesson 6: The Song of Songs

## Background for the Book

Perhaps the most neglected book of the Bible is the Song of Songs (or Canticles, or Song of Solomon). No doubt, this is a strange book and has baffled many as to its inclusion in the canon. But a proper understanding of the book reveals divine insight on a subject far less treated elsewhere—romantic love.

The love between a man and a woman is not a shameful thing; it is a beautiful bond and a gift from above. Although man has sought out many ways to cheapen this emotion, when purely pursued, it is glorious. The Song of Songs is for every young person experiencing romance for the first time, as well as for every old married couple that still has a spark of youthful romance in them. When read together, it has the power to remind us why we fell in love in the first place and why we are still there.

No one is really certain when this book was written, nor if it was written by, for or about Solomon. It is clearly a Hebrew work, though, and upholds the points of Old Testament law in a practical way. Nowhere does it mention God and yet his influence is unmistakable.

The greatest difficulty in reading the book is figuring out who is speaking when. There are obvious clues in the Hebrew use of number, person and gender, but that does little to help us understand. Some editions of the Bibles have researched the linguistic clues and annotated the text to show the progress of the dialogue. This makes it much simpler to understand.

Basically Song of Songs is a romantic love story. The main female character is the Shulamite woman, a country girl who is dark and lovely, unlike the city girls. The main male character is called the Beloved, a young suitor who sweeps the Shulamite off her feet. In the background is a chorus of the Daughters of Jerusalem, a gathering of the Shulamite's brothers, and some friends of the Beloved.

## The Plot

The plot is hard to nail down; it is really just a series of love letters and soliloquies between the Shulamite and her Beloved. The Shulamite is just a young girl, inexperienced in love and uncertain about her own physical appearance when her Beloved becomes engrossed with her features, both physical and spiritual (Songs 1:5-6). They shower each other with compliments and pledge their devotion to the other (1:15-2:3). Although her father does not appear, her brothers take a paternal care for their young sister (2:15).

As their love grows, she fears being separated from him in a dream (3:1-3). But the fourth chapter returns her to reality and his loving words until the fifth chapter makes her nightmare come true (5:2-8). When he comes to her door, she makes excuses to keep it closed and when she finally opens it, he is gone. Such illogical actions come from one who is lovesick.

The two lovers are reunited in chapter six. Their love matures over time and they commit themselves to one another forever.

## Practical Lessons

A handful of practical lessons might be taken from the Song of Songs:

- There is a difference between infatuation and love
- Love develops over time
- Love is physical and emotional
- My sister, my friend, my spouse
- Do not stir up love before its time
- Marriage is devotion

## Questions

1. (Songs 1:1-2:17) Love often starts as infatuation and there can be little doubt that the two lovers are deeply infatuated with one another. What are the dangers of taking infatuation too seriously?
2. What makes the distinction between infatuation and the true love of a man and a woman?
3. (2:1-7, 3:5, 8:4) If two people are deeply in love and have decided to spend their lives together, but have not yet wed, will God look the other way if they commence a sexual union?
4. How can unmarried people guard against this enticement?
5. (4:1-8) This chapter is consumed with physical attraction. Is that enough to form a lasting marriage? Consider 1 Peter 3:1-7: what is even more important?
6. (4:9-16) Who has ravished the heart of our hero? He calls her by two words.
7. How can a couple considering marriage enjoy this deep of a relationship?
8. What does he mean by calling her his “garden enclosed”?
9. (7:1-13) The events of the book have proven their love to be genuine and strong. What does it take to prove that love will last and that two people should marry?
10. (8:1-7) How strong should the love of husband and wife be? What does that entail?



# Lesson 7: Esther, Part A

## Esther 1-4

1. (1:1-12) Describe one good quality and one bad quality exhibited by Ahasuerus in the first eight verses. Responses may vary.

- Good:

- Bad:

2. What does the king command of the queen and why? How does she respond?

3. (1:13-22) Ahasuerus asks his advisers what to do with his wife. What insight does Memucan provide?

4. (2:1-18) What is the plan described in verses 1-4?

5. How does verse 7 describe Esther?

6. How is Esther treated before she came into the presence of the king?

7. What did the king think of Esther?

8. (2:19-23) What was Esther's secret?

9. What was Mordecai's discovery?

10. (3:1-6) Who was Haman? How did Mordecai aggravate him?

11. How did Haman hope to find revenge?

12. (3:7-15) With what testimony did Haman accuse the Jews?

13. What did Haman advise? What actions did the king take?

14. (4:1-12) Esther sent Hathach to discover what troubled Mordecai. What message did Mordecai return? Was Esther immediately prepared to act?

15. (4:13-17) How did Mordecai persuade Esther to act? How did she respond?

## Lesson 8: Esther, Part B

### Esther 5-10

1. (5:1-14) When is Esther planning to do what she must?
2. Describe Haman's feelings according to verses 9 and 11-12.
3. Was Haman satisfied now? What does his wife advise?
4. (6:1-5) What did the king do about his insomnia?
5. Who entered the court and what was his purpose?
6. (6:6-11) What did the king ask him? About whom was the king speaking? Whom did this person think Ahasuerus wanted to honor?
7. How do you think Haman reacted to verse 10? What did he do in verse 11?

8. (6:12-14) What advice does Haman receive now?
  
9. But what event is about to occur?
  
10. (7:1-10) How does Esther accuse Haman? What takes place in verses 7-8?
  
11. What is Haman's ironic fate?
  
12. (8:1-17) Disaster still lurks for the Jews under Haman's decree. What do Esther and Mordecai do to avert this in verse 11? What conversion takes place in verse 17 and why?
  
13. (9:1-17) What side did all the government officials take and why? Who was to prevail on this day and the next?
  
14. (9:20-24) What Jewish holiday was established by Mordecai?
  
15. (10:1-3) What becomes of him?

## Lesson 9: Ezra, Part A

### Ezra 1-6

1. (1:1-11) Summarize what the decree of Cyrus commanded. Did the Jews obey?
2. What else did Cyrus do?
3. (2:1-70) How large was the group?
4. In what manner did they give to the treasury of the work?
5. (3:1-13) What did Jeshua and Zerubbabel do in verse 2?
6. Contrast the emotions of the younger people and the older people when the temple foundation had been laid.
7. (4:1-5) How did Judah's adversaries (the Samaritans) react to the temple restoration?

8.(4:6-16) Later they wrote to the king to stop the rebuilding of Jerusalem. How does the letter describe Jerusalem in verse 12 and what is the accusation made in verse 13?

9. (4:17-24) Whose side did the king take and why? What happened to the work?

10. (5:1-17) Whose prophetic work gets the reconstruction going again? From your studies, about when did these men work?

11. Is the work now without opposition?

12. (6:1-12) Summarize what the decree of Darius did to help the Jews.

13. (6:13-22) Describe what took place as the temple was completed.

# Lesson 10: Ezra, Part B

## Ezra 7-10

1. (7:1-10) What do we know about Ezra?
2. (7:11-26) Why is Ezra going to Jerusalem, according to verses 14, 15 and 25?
3. What two sets of laws must the people obey and what is the punishment for disobedience?
4. (8:1-31) Why did Ezra proclaim a fast? Did this prove wise, according to verse 31?
5. What law is given in Deuteronomy 7:1-4?
6. (9:1-15) What was the crime of the people?

7. What class had been foremost in this transgression?

8. What are some adjectives to describe Ezra's emotions?

9. (10:1-8) How did the people respond to Ezra's sorrow?

10. For what does the proclamation call?

11. (10:9-17) What does Ezra instruct the throng to do about their illicit marriages?

12. What is their response?

13. (10:18-44) Were the unlawful marriages ended?

14. What further complicated their repentance?



## Lesson 11: Nehemiah, Part A

### Nehemiah 1-5

1. (1:1-11) What report concerned Nehemiah? How did he react?
2. (2:1-3) What happens in verse 1 that had never happened before?
3. What kind of relationship does Nehemiah seem to have with the king?
4. (2:4-10) What does Nehemiah do before requesting anything from the king? What is his request?
5. (2:11-20) What did Nehemiah do during the night?
6. The approval of two parties seemed to help convince the people to get to work. What were those parties?
7. Who appears to be in early opposition to Nehemiah?
8. According to verse 19, what suspicion does he have?

9. (4:1-9) According to verse 7, what makes Sanballat angry? What did his crew plan to do?
10. What two measures did God's servants take, according to verse 9?
11. (4:10-14) As the adversaries strengthened themselves, Nehemiah called on the people to have courage. What is his charge in verse 14?
12. (4:15-23) Who is given credit for bringing the adversaries' counsel to nothing?
13. What protective measures are the workers forced to take (see verses 16, 18, 20 and 23)?
14. (5:1-13) What problem has arisen?
15. What does Nehemiah propose to do about it, according to verses 10-11?
16. (5:14-19) What promotion is described here?
17. How is the new governor different from previous ones? Why?

## Lesson 12: Nehemiah, Part B

### Nehemiah 6-13

1. (6:1-14) What message did Sanballat's group send to Nehemiah four times? What was their evil intent?
2. What was the accusation contained in the fifth message?
3. Who was Shemaiah?
4. (7:1-73) How does verse four describe the city and its inhabitants?
5. (8:1-8) Who reads the law for the congregation?
6. According to verse 8, what is the goal of the reading? What does Ephesians 3:4 say to us?
7. (8:9-12) What did the people do when they heard and understood the law? Why do you think they reacted this way?

8. (8:13-18) What holiday did the people observe according to the law? How long had it been since God's people had done this?

9. (9:1-38) Basically, what is chapter nine?

10. (13:1-13) According to verses 4-5 and verse 10, what happened while Nehemiah was away?

11. (13:15-31) Nehemiah made other reforms which are detailed in this passage, as well. Name at least one.

## Lesson 13: The Intertestamental Period 431-4 B.C.

### PERSIAN PERIOD (539-331 B.C.)

- **478-473** The events of the book of Esther occur during the reign of Xerxes I.
- **457** Ezra comes to Jerusalem and makes his reforms.
- **444** Artaxerxes I (465-425) sponsors the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem at the request of his cupbearer, Nehemiah.
- **432** Malachi prophesies to the Jewish remnant.
- **425-331** Xerxes II, Darius II, Artaxerxes II, Artaxerxes III, Arses and Darius III reign successively in Persia.
- **331** Alexander the Great takes Persia and Palestine for Greece.

### GREEK PERIOD (331-167 B.C.)

- **323** Alexander dies and four of his generals assume divided power.
- **301** Palestine falls to Syria and then Egypt.
- **198** Syria, under Antiochus the Great, regains Palestine with plans to exterminate the Jews.
- **168** Antiochus Epiphanes devastates Jerusalem, defiles the temple, offers a sow on the altar, erects an altar to Jupiter, prohibits circumcision and worship of Jehovah. He sells thousands of Jews into slavery, destroys copies of the Scriptures and tortures the rest of the Jews.

### MACCABEAN PERIOD (167-63 B.C.)

- **167** A priest named Matthias, infuriated at Epiphanes, gathers a band of Jews and revolts. Matthias dies in 166 and his son, Judas, takes the lead.
- **165** An amazing military genius, Judas reconquers Jerusalem and purifies the rededicated temple. Judas establishes the Asmonean line of priest-rulers, nicknamed Maccabees, that rules for 100 years.

### ROMAN PERIOD (63-1 B.C.)

- **63** Palestine is conquered by Rome's Pompey. Antipater, an Edomite, is appointed to rule Judea. His son, Herod the Great, is installed as the governor of Galilee.
- **37** Herod is made king of Judea and rebuilds the temple to garner Jewish favor.
- **4** Jesus is born, just escaping the wrath of the jealous king.

## Questions

1. What are the names and approximate eras of the four periods of history during the last five centuries before Christ?

1.  
2.

3.  
4.

2. What powerful military leader conquers Persia and its possession, Palestine. When?

3. Who takes Palestine in 198 B.C. and with what intent?

4. Who devastates Jerusalem in 168 B.C.?

5. What historical period begins with a revolt against him?

6. What military genius conquers Jerusalem in 165 B.C.?

7. What line of rulers is established at this time? How long will this line stay in power?

8. Who conquers Palestine in 63 B.C.?

9. What governor of Judea rebuilds the temple? Why?

10. Who is born in approximately 4 B.C. and narrowly escapes the wrath of the jealous king?



## *Other Class Material By This Author*

### **A Passage Through the Old Testament**

OT1 In The Beginning  
OT2 From Egypt to Canaan  
OT3 Taming Canaan  
OT4 The Throne of David

OT5 Israel and Judah  
OT6 The Major Prophets  
OT7 The Minor Prophets  
OT8 Wisdom Lit./Post-Exile

### **A Passage Through the New Testament**

NT01 Harmonized Gospels  
NT02 Acts of the Apostles  
NT03 Early Epistles  
NT04 Liberty Epistles  
NT05 First Corinthians  
NT06 Second Corinthians

NT07 Prison Epistles  
NT08 Preacher Epistles  
NT09 Hebrew Epistle  
NT10 Minor Epistles  
NT11 Revelation to John

### **Topical Studies**

Biblical Typology  
Brotherly Love  
Characters of The Acts  
Characters of The Old Testament  
Great Themes of Isaiah  
New Testament Churches  
Parables of Jesus  
Proverbs: The Beginning of Knowledge

Sermon on the Mount  
Special Studies  
The 10 Commandments Today  
The Church of Christ  
The Life and Times of Jesus  
The Spirit World  
Works of Flesh-Fruits of Spirit



J.S. Smith  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Electronic Mail: [jeffssmith@mac.com](mailto:jeffssmith@mac.com)  
Internet: [www.electronicgospel.org](http://www.electronicgospel.org)  
© 1998 All Rights Reserved

*Reproductions may be freely made and used, provided proper credit is given to the author and no charge is ever made in association with this material without the express written consent of the author.*