

# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## The Torah

### I. General Overview

- a. The OT is essential reading for the NT believer

### II. Genesis and Creation

- a. The Bible begins specifically with creation, the creation of the universe and all mankind.
  - i. Creation is not just a bit of staging or background, but it is an integral part of the entire story of who we are, where we come from and where we are going.
- b. Dorothy Sayers, “God was an artist, he created.”
- c. Original Creation—
- d. The original creation gives us our world view of who we are and where we came from and what kind of God the true creator God really is.
- e. New Creation and imago Dei - Isaiah, 2 Cor 5:17—In Christ we become new creatures and are being restored into the original imago Dei.
- f. Newbigin—“God created out of love, all creation is simply a gift of the loving God, to reflect his glory and has arranged it to be the home of his children.”

### III. The Fall

- a. God has given mankind everything except the knowledge of good and evil.
- b. Leslie Newbigin—“Then we hear the anguished cry of God, ‘Adam, where are you?’”
- c. God has given mankind everything except the knowledge of good and evil.

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- d. Genesis 10—70 nations that came out from Noah. The heathen nations grow.
- e. So God makes another start, but this time he chooses to do it through a single, faithful man named Abraham.

## IV. **Genesis 12**

- a. Abraham—Rich man of pagan civilization. God calls him to leave it all behind and establishes a covenant with him.
- b. The stress of Bible is the story of the covenant between God and his people. It's about relationship, not theory.
- c. The Story of God's People
  - i. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Twelve Tribes and descendants
- d. Settlement and Growth in Egypt

## V. **Exodus**—God acting within space and time to save His people from slavery and death.

- a. It begins with the story of Moses who was brought up in the court of Pharaoh.
- b. At Mt. Sinai God makes a new covenant with them and calls them to be a priesthood, to be a blessing to all nations.
- c. Exodus 19: First words of commandments are a promise, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."
  - i. Each commandment has an opposite of what we should do!
- d. Israelites reach the promise land, but doubt which leads to 40 years in the desert.

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## VI. Covenant

- a. Definition – Formal legal contract between two parties.
  
- b. Two main types of covenant
  - i. Parity—an individual makes contract with other individual in business.
  - ii. Suzerainty—exists between a lord (suzerain) and a vassal. Common in ANE. God chose to use a human model to express His love for His people.
  
- c. How It Works
  - i. God makes certain promises—He promises to be a protector, liberator, king.
  - ii. His people make certain promises—they are to follow God's law/commandments to fulfill covenant.
  - iii. Genesis 15—God's covenant with Abraham
  
- d. So God made a covenant with the Israelites giving them His law and expecting them to reciprocate in obedience.

## VII. God's *hesed*

- a. *Hesed* in the OT conveys a concept of “faithfulness, steadfast love, or more generally kindness” and contains a strong relational aspect in any of its uses.
  
- b. The LXX most often renders it ἔλεος which is then translated to the English as simply “mercy”, but this tends to be an inadequate rendering on a human level because “mercy” usually connotes one individual showing kindness to another that is in debt of some sort.
  - i. *Hesed*, however, is a quality that should be exercised mutually among equals in a community shown through kindness, steadfastness and love not based upon merit or debt.
  
- c. *Hesed* is the unmerited grace from Yahweh lavished on all people and especially Israel.
  - i. This grace, in turn, inspires the people of Israel to respond with grateful and true worship to God and, in the realization that all people are of God's family, they should bind all of their relationships with the same love and mercy that God showed to them.
  
- d. This is the expression of the priesthood of Israel to all the nations.