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Old Testament

Lesson 3 Essay Historical Books

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I read about 80% of the textbook required reading from Hill & Walton A Survey of the Old Testament. I read the chapters first while simultaneously listening to both Hill and Walton lesson videos. Then I went back read and watched the videos including the Bible project videos. I took about 15 pages of short notes. In order for me to retain the history and the content I need to revisit it at least 3 times. Repetition of the content at least 3 times helps me to achieve this goal.

A succinct overview of the historical view was Gods' faithfulness to Israel over the 2500 year span in a chronological time line. God remained committed to his promises that he gave to Abraham and we can see it threaded through out the all of the historical books no matter what the heart of the people was God remained faithful. Even when geographically Gods' people weren't in place that was self-sustaining he still provided by making that place where all trade had to pass through as explained in the description of the land of Canaan. Canaan was noted for its strategic location that allowed all trade to flow through there even though it did not produce resources. When Gods' people resided there they still were taken care of. (P.190-191) The Late Bronze Age (1500-1200BC) Hill and Walton.

Although there was a recurrent them in the historical books they all had a unique image of God. Whether the Israelites were being treated unfairly or living out a rebellious life God was faithful to his covenant. There were times that consequences came behind choices that the Israelites made but those choices never allowed God to give up on his ultimate will or not remember his promise that he gave Abraham in Gen 15:1-21 The Abrahamic Covenant. Each book depicted God's faithfulness and His unflinching love for his own.

**Joshua** – Exhibits the importance of obedience. Because of obedience Israel was able to possess the land. It wasn't Joshua strength or might, but it was God working through Joshua that allowed them to possess the land. The message is that God keeps his promises, no matter how impossible they may seem. P.226

**Judges** – This book exhibits Gods' justice and His grace. God remained faithful even after not only the Israelites failed to do so but the leaders of the Israelites as well. The spirit of the Lord is exhibited here; not in the sense of the Trinity but in the symbol of his might, power and authority. God empowered the leaders to do his work as an extension of himself. The spirit of the Lord is equivalent to the hand of God.

**I & II Samuel** – In these two books Gods' intent of love, grace and justice is exhibited in the life of David. God knew that David was the one to be king because he knew David's heart. He knew that David would work out of his authority and not his own. David wasn't perfect as there were consequences that he had to endure because of his disobedience while king and not just King David but his offspring as well. Here we see that God uses who he may.

**I & II Kings** – In the kingship there is good verses bad, Yahwism verses Baalism a split in the kingdom and extension of time under kingships Northern / Southern that worship in their own way which displeases God causing Israel the need to rededicate to the covenant.

**Ruth** – The narrative story displays the rewards of faithfulness and loyalty. The theme full circle shows the reward of God allowing what appeared to be a lost inheritance recaptured. Ruth's' faithfulness to Naomi a widow and daughter in-law was witnessed by Boaz who in return allowed the marriage inheritance to recaptured. Again, when we are faithful God is faithful in return. God rewards faithfulness.

**Esther** – displays the serendipity of God at work. God's name not mentioned one time, but his divine presence is at work. Some see or call it a coincidence but it God working on the behalf of the oppressed.

**I & II Chronical** – Theme was to remind Israel what was required to restore the covenant, prayer, repentance and leave idol worship alone. Change of hearts is what God wanted then and its still what he desires from us today. 2 Chronicles 7:14-16 English Standard Version (ESV) 14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 15 Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. 16 For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time.

**Ezra & Nehemiah** – Major theme was focused in the restoration of the city of Jerusalem. Goal was to not just rebuild the physical building but to rebuild the internal spiritual building as well. For God's presence to remain there was a requirement for holiness. This was and still is a requirement for God's covenant with his people.

In conclusion one out the many facts that I am taking away is that the bible uses many characters that display God's divinity, authority, power and just all of his attributes. That was a different spin for me and one I will apply going forward as I read the bible.