13 - Old Testament Salvation History

I Salvation History

1. God’s plan to save human beings from sin and bring them to eternal life.
2. called salvation history

II Primeval History

A “primeval”, meaning they are stories of things that happened before recorded history.

B The Creation accounts reveal that God’s creation was good

Adam and Eve’s disobedience teaches us that the sin of our first parents injured their relationship with God and with each other.

1. This Original Sin is passed on to all humans
2. The stories of Cain and Abel, Noah and the Flood, and the Tower of Babel teach us that sin leads to death and destruction.
3. God has mercy on his creatures and begins a process of intervention to save us.

III Patriarchs (and Matriarchs)

A Most of humanity does not recognize the one true God.

B Abraham and his wife, Sarah - God promises that their descendants will be numerous and that they will inherit a Promised Land.

C The stories of Abraham and Sarah’s children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren repeat a pattern of crisis and God’s faithfulness.

1 Jacob’s older sons sell their youngest brother, Joseph, into slavery.

2 But God leads Joseph to become Pharaoh’s right-hand man

3 Joseph welcomes back his father and brothers, providing them with food and a place to live during another famine.

D Jacob’s sons become the patriarchs—the founding fathers—of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

1 a patriarch is the male leader of a tribal group and is responsible for their survival.

2 The patriarch is a benevolent father figure, exercising unquestioned and absolute decision

making in the tribe.

3 The matriarch is his (primary) wife, who leads and has decision-making authority over the women in the tribe.

4 In the religious or ecclesial sense, the patriarchs are the original ancestors of the Jewish faith—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob’s twelve sons—who were chosen by God to lead his Chosen People.

IV Egypt and the Exodus

A Jacob’s descendants—now called Israelites are led from slavery in Egypt

B In a contest of wills between “gods,” Yahweh proves his might over Pharaoh by sending terrible plagues upon the Egyptians.

C The Israelites’ escape from Egypt and journey to the Holy Land is called the Exodus.

D On the way to the Promised Land, the Israelites stop at Mount Sinai.

E God extends the Covenant he made with Abraham to all the Israelites.

1 He gives Moses the Law, summarized in the Ten Commandments, which the people must obey as a sign of their commitment to the Covenant.

2 During the Exodus the people frequently complain and lose their faith in God.

F Settling the Promised Land

V the Israelites’ conquest of the Promised Land.

A Moses’ right-hand man, Joshua (“Jesus” is another form of his name), to lead the people into the land, much of which is inhabited by other people.

B When they trust God, they are successful in their battles; when they do not trust God, they fail

C Eventually they gain control of the land, and Joshua divides the land between the twelve tribes.

D new invaders try to capture the land

E the Israelites have no king, because God is their ruler

1 the violence gets worse, and the judges are less holy

2 ends with a horrible rape that leads to a civil war in which the whole tribe of Benjamin is slaughtered except for six hundred men.

VI Kingdoms of Judah and Israel

A Eventually the Israelites want their own king.

B God has Samuel—the last of the judges—anoint Saul as the first king of Israel.

C David follows Saul as the second king. David is a mighty warrior and unites all the tribes into one kingdom

D After David’s death, one of his sons, Solomon, builds a temple at Jerusalem, the capital city

E After Solomon’s death there is disagreement among the tribes, and the kingdom splits in two.

1 Israel is the name of the northern kingdom

2 Judah is the name of the southern kingdom.

F God calls prophets to tell the people to obey their Covenant with God.

1 The sayings of the “writing prophets” are collected and become part of the Jewish Scriptures.

2 Several kings in Judah—particularly Hezekiah and Josiah—attempt religious reform

3 It is likely that a significant portion of the Jewish Scriptures are initially collected, written, and edited during this time

VII Exile and Return

A God lets their kingdoms be conquered and their rulers overthrown

B Many of the people are taken into captivity, so this period of salvation history is called the Exile.

C Prophets like Ezekiel comfort the Israelites with the promise that God is still with them.

D hint at the future coming of a just, gentle, and suffering servant-king who will lead the people back to God.

E during and after the Exile, the Israelites rewrite much of their sacred Scriptures.

F Their identity is primarily a religious identity centered on following the Mosaic Law

G after 50 years in exile a new Persian king allows the people now called Judeans, or Jews—to return to rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple

H Alexander the Great comes to rule over Israel.

1 One of the Greek governors tries to establish Greek culture and religion in Israel

2 they put statues of Greek gods in the Temple

3 In response around 150 BC a Jewish family, the Hasmoneans (also called the Maccabees), lead a successful revolt against the Greeks to restore Jewish independence

4 the common people hope for a messiah, or savior, to make them great again

5 New Jewish groups called the Essenes, the Pharisees, the Sadducees

VIII Covenants formed between God and His Chosen People

A Noahide Covenant: God established a covenant with Noah and his descendants to never again flood the earth destroying all life (Gen. 9:9). This covenant is established with all of humanity. Humanity is tasked with fulfilling seven commandments (do not worship idols, do not curse God, establish courts of justice, do not commit murder, do not commit sexual immorality, do not steal, do not eat flesh torn from a living animal).

B Covenant with Abraham: God established a covenant with Abraham that he would make a great nation of his descendants through which the whole world will be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3). On his part Abraham had to leave the land of his youth and enter into the land promised to him. Abraham and his descendants also were required to circumcise all male descendants.

C Mosaic Covenant: God established a covenant with Moses (Ex. 19-24) in which the Jewish people are freed from slavery and become God’s special possession. Not only will they be blessed, but God will claim them as his very own. The Mosaic covenant has 613 commandments which the Jewish people must fulfill to receive the benefit of the covenant.

D Davidic Covenant: God established a covenant with David that the Messiah will come from David’s descendants (2 Sam. 7). This covenant did not task the Jewish people or Gentiles with any new commandments to fulfill.

E The New Covenant: God promised to establish a new covenant through the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31-34) which was then fulfilled in Jesus (Luk. 22:20). This covenant does away with the legal requirements of commandments and replaces them with a desire of the heart to do the will of God. This covenant is with all humanity.