

Biblical Theology: Session IV

Review:

- Since it's been awhile since we met, I figured we'd spend some time doing a review.
- What is Biblical Theology? The definition we've used in this class so far is this: "*Biblical theology is a way of reading the Bible as one story by one divine Author that culminates in one Man, Jesus Christ and what He has done, so that every part of Scripture is understood in relation to Him.*"
- We've used the metaphor of streams and rivers. If you take a boat down the Miami River, you'll eventually end up in the Ohio River, which will eventually take you to the Mississippi River, which will eventually dump you into the Gulf of Mexico where you can find your way to the ocean. The glory of God's grace in the salvation of sinners through Jesus Christ is the ocean. Every verse, chapter, story in the Bible is like a stream that leads to the ocean.
- Biblical theology is our attempt to read the whole Bible as one book, to follow every stream to the ocean as it were. Sometimes the connections are clear, other times it requires some work. This class is about helping you see the connection and giving you tools to follow the streams to the ocean yourself.
- There are some rules and guidelines for doing Biblical Theology. We know that every text is ultimately about the glory of God in Jesus Christ, right? Jesus is on every page. However that doesn't mean that every detail relates to Jesus. In the church's 2021 reading plan we read Exodus 25-30 a couple weeks ago. There's a bunch of details about the tabernacle.
- Is the tabernacle in the wilderness a symbol or type of Christ? Well, it reveals how God wants His people to relate to Him, worship Him. It is the place where God and His people meet. It is his dwelling place on earth. It involves substitutional sacrifice for sin. So, yes, ultimately the tabernacle is type of Christ.
- It safe to say this because Jesus Himself said "**destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again**" (Jn 2:19). John explains that Jesus is referring to his body. So, we can say the temple/tabernacle was a type of Christ. John even hints at this in John 1:14 when he writes that the Word of God "dwelt among us" which is the same Greek word for tabernacle in the Greek OT. Yes, Exodus 25-30 points to Christ.
- How far can we take that? Like the blue and purple and scarlet threads, are they revealing something about divine nature of Jesus, blue referring to the sky and the red referring to the earth? Do the five pillars of the Temple represent the five-fold ministry?
- One thing that must guide us as we do biblical interpretation and seek to understand the meaning of the text is to find out first what it meant to the original audience. Before we draw meaning *from* the text, we need to understanding the meaning *of* the text. What does it say? How does it fit into what came before it and what comes after it. Context *really* matters.



- We must do as much as we can to discern what it meant to the original audience. When the first readers read this, what did it mean to them? How might they have read it. That may seem like a difficult thing, but it's not really.
- Think about the book of Deuteronomy. Who wrote Deuteronomy? [Moses] And to whom did Moses write the book? [Israel] When? Not the year, but when in the story did Moses give them Deuteronomy? [As they were about to enter the Promised Land under Joshua] So, when you read Deuteronomy, picture this scene in your mind. Moses is old and his ministry is coming to an end. He is speaking to the wilderness generation, the ones who grew up after the Exodus, who'd spend the last 40 years in the wilderness, wearing sandals that never wore out, garments that never rotted. They were provided for by manna and quail and followed the cloud of fire and pillar of smoke.
- How might knowing that change the way you read Deuteronomy? I dunno. But just knowing that will help you to understand how they would have understood it. Moses is preparing the people to enter the Promised Land. And clearly he is concerned about how they will live once they settle there. Context. With me? We'll talk about this more in the next couple sessions.
- Up to this point, we've introduced Biblical Theology, we've explored a bit of the Old Testament narrative. What have we seen so far? In Session II, we looked at Genesis 1-11, we looked at Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and Babel. In Session III, we looked at the rest of Genesis and looked a little at the Exodus. Interestingly, Genesis appears in two parts. The first part deals with four events. What are they? [Creation; Fall; Flood; Babel] The second part deals with four people. Who are they? [Abraham; Isaac; Jacob; Joseph] Why does that matter? It doesn't. Just interesting.
- Tonight, we'll continue to trace out the big picture. We'll finish the Exodus narrative and look at God's people settling in the Land, Babylonian exile and return. This will set us up for the New Testament next time. The last class will be putting it all together and doing a bit of Biblical Theology together.
- Questions, comments, before we move on? Ready? Turn to Exodus 19.

Israel In the Wilderness

- We read this passage last time we were together. That was a long time ago. Let's read it again. It's important to understanding the book of Exodus. Verse 4, [SLIDE] **“You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”**
- So here we see the reason God chose Israel and delivered them out of Egypt. It was to bring them into the Land He had promised to Abraham and to make them into a kingdom of priests, a holy nation before God. They were to be God's representatives to show and tell the nations of the world about Yahweh.



- And this is why the very next chapter, Exodus 20, is what? The Ten Commandments. Moses goes up the mountain and receives the Law of God. He comes down from Sinai to declare God's will to God's people. This is how they should live. By keeping the Law of God, Israel will show the goodness of God to the nations of the world.
- The Ten Commandments are—in many ways—a summary of the whole law. They open, verse 2, with God's announcement of His own identity. **"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt..."** The first four commandments have to do directly with God. No other gods. No carved images. No misusing God's name. No working on the day He hallowed. This is sometimes called the first table of the Law.
- The next six commandments deal with Israel's relation to one another. The second table of the law is also related to God, just indirectly. They reflect the order of His creation. They reflect the way God has made the world to work. Children are to honor their parents because God is a Father and Israel His children. Don't murder, because God alone gives life and takes life. Don't commit adultery because God made two to become one-flesh. Don't steal, because God makes poor and rich. Do not bear false witness because God is a God of truth. Do not covet, because God is our provider and our satisfaction.
- Many commandments follow, having to do with slavery and justice. There's ways God wants His people to celebrate festivals. By the way, isn't it great that God commands parties? That's what a festival is, right? Three times a year, Israel is commanded to keep a feast. God is commanding His people to eat a bunch of food and have fun. The feast of Ingathering (Or Sukkot), happens in the Fall. It's basically camping. God commands His people to go camping.
- In chapter 23, God promises He will bring them into the Land of Canaan. The covenant with Israel is cut with animal sacrifices, Moses sprinkles the blood of the sacrifices on the people. God's law is given, a sacrifice is offered, the sacrificial victim is slain, their penalty is paid, the people are covered by the blood of the substitute. Moses and the elders go up the mountain see God's glory and share a meal (24:11).
- Chapters 25-30 (as mentioned earlier), relate to the building of the tabernacle. The purpose of the tabernacle is that God may dwell among His people (25:8). With God living in their midst, the people needed to know how to relate to Him. It is the kindness of God to reveal how He wants to be worshipped.
- Moses comes down from the mountain to see God's people engaged in idolatry. Moses'd taken too long, they thought he was dead or skipped town, so they asked Aaron to make gods to go before them. He takes their gold, and—to use his own words—throws it in the fire and out came this calf! Moses sees the idolatry and smashes the tablets of the Law.
- The people are judged, Moses agrees to make atonement for them. He returns up the mountain of God to confess the peoples sin, offering himself to be blotted out of Yahweh's book if the people cannot be forgiven. The Lord response with judgement and mercy. The Lord pardons His people agrees to go with them.



- Moses makes new tables to replace the ones he broke, the covenant is renewed. The rest of Exodus is taken up with the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness. God will live among His people. He will guide them through the wilderness and into the Land of Promise.
- Leviticus is largely a book about the sacrificial system. God is holy and has revealed His law to His people. Of course, the people break God's law and deserve His judgment. But God unveils a sacrificial system to protect His people and enable them to live with Him in their midst. When they sin, a substitute will die in their place. It's blood for their blood. The Levitical system is a faith-based system. Worshippers are saved by God's grace through faith as the judgment for their sin falls on a substitute instead of them. How does this point to Christ?
 - [CREDIT vs. DEBIT]
- The Book of Numbers opens one month after the book of Exodus ends. They set out from Sinai on the way to Canaan. In chapter 11, the people complain. They are tired of manna, they want meat. They remember the fish and the vegetables they ate in Egypt. The Lord responds, *"You want meat?! I'll give you meat. I'll give you so much meat it comes out of your nose."*
- They get to Canaan and send spies into the Land. They report back. The Land is fertile. So fertile, it produced giants. Ain't no way we're going in there. Only Joshua and Caleb came back saying, *"Eh, God's with us, we got this."* In Numbers 14, there is an argument. The people want a new leader. Joshua stands up and says, *"if the Lord is with us, He will bring us into this land and give it to us. Do not rebel against the Lord."* They pick up rocks and try and kill him.
- The Lord plans to kill everyone. Moses intercedes...again. Numbers 14:17-19, [SLIDE] **"And now, please let the power of the Lord be great as you have promised, saying, 'The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation.' Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now."** Moses appeals to God's merciful nature. The Lord grant's Moses' request.
- He will show mercy. But it is a mercy through judgment. No one 20 years old or older who saw the glory of the Lord in the Exodus will see the glory of the Lord in Canaan. They will wander the wilderness for 40 years. Their children will inherit the Land. The rest of Numbers chronicles their time in the wilderness.
- Nothing much happens in the book of Deuteronomy. The word means second law. It is a retelling of the Law. The wilderness generation is on the brink of entering the Land. Moses has been told by the Lord that he will not lead them into Canaan. Joshua will take his place. Deuteronomy is the old man's last words to God's people he led for the last 40 years. He is preparing them for battle and for living in the Land of Promise.
- When you read Deuteronomy, you'll find a lot of covenant stipulations. Blessings and curses. If you keep My commandments, you and the Land will be blessed. If you do not keep the Law, you and the Land will be cursed.



ISRAEL IN THE LAND

- Moses dies. Jude says angels fight over the body, I have no idea what that's about. Joshua takes over, and leads God's people into Canaan. There's the famous Jericho story, with the walls tumbling down. God brings His people into the Land. They settle. Then the book of Judges. Turn to Judges chapter 2.
- Judges is a tough read. It's basically a 3-400 year cycle of what is recorded here in chapter 2. Let's read from verse 11 down to 20... [SLIDE] **"And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals. And they abandoned the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the Lord to anger. They abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroath. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the Lord was against them for harm, as the Lord had warned, and as the Lord had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress. Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and they did not do so. Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them. But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel..."**
- What is the main point of the book of Judges? [Homework from last time.]
- So where are we? God delivers His people from slavery in Egypt. He reveals Himself to them in miraculous power, He provides for them miraculously with manna and water from rocks. He gives them His law. They rebel against Him and refuse to trust Him. That generation falls in the wilderness.
- He brings the next generation into the Land. He drives out the Canaanites. They settle in the Land. They're not there long before they abandon the Lord and begin to follow other gods. The Lord judges them, they cry out to Him for deliverance. He raises up judges who save them. So long as the judge is alive, they follow God. As soon as the judge dies, they turn back to sin and become worse than before. This cycle goes on for 3 to 4 hundred years. That's longer than America has been a country. And still, God remains merciful to His people.
- The last judge of Israel is who? [Turns to look at the sign behind him.] Samuel. During the days of Samuel, the people beg for a different kind of ruler, they want a king like all the other nations. *Yeah, that's our problem, too. We don't have enough government. Israel thinks, "let's get some more government."*



- Samuel warns them. God is your king. And you want a human king? Do you know what kings do? They take. They take your money, your sons, your daughters. Kings don't come with an army. They take your kids and make them serve in their army. Israel wants one anyway. God gives them Saul. He's a dud. So God gives them another king. A man after God's own heart. Named? David. David is anointed king over Israel. God comes to David and makes a covenant with him. Turn to 2Samuel chapter 7.
- 2Samuel 7 is one of the most important chapters in the Bible. 2Samuel 7:8-16. [SLIDE] **“Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.’”**
- So the Lord makes a covenant with David. He reaffirms the promise of Land which He made with Abraham and Moses, verse 10. He promises that David's son will build the Temple, verse 13. And then the covenant expands. Verse 13, **“I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever...[16] your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before Me.”**
- As with most OT prophecies, there is a near future fulfillment and a distant future fulfillment. The near future fulfillment was that Solomon would build the Temple of the Lord. The distant future fulfillment was in reference to the Messiah. Did you catch in verse 12, the son of David is called the **“offspring”**. That's not a reference the grunge band from the 90's. It's the same “offspring” referred to back in the Fall, Genesis. The offspring of the woman who would destroy the offspring of the serpent.
- In the generations that follow, the search goes on for this Offspring. Kings come and kings go. No offspring. Not long after Solomon dies, the 12-tribe kingdom of Israel breaks apart. Ten tribes in the North, called Israel, have their capital in Samaria. And two tribes in the South, called Judah, keep their capital in Jerusalem.
- [SLIDE] The book of Kings is the account of all the kings of Israel and Judah. The Northern kingdom cycled through 19 different kings. The southern kingdom cycled through 20. Of the 19 kings in the Northern Kingdom, anyone know how many were bad? [All of them.] Of the 20 in Judah, 11 were bad. [Who was best? JOSIAH?]



- During the reign of the kings, the Lord would send prophets to speak His word of warning and judgment to bad kings, to call them to repent. Northern kingdom prophets included Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, Hosea. Prophets sent to the Southern Kingdom were Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Habakkuk, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah.
- In 722 BC, after 200 years of bad, unrepentant kings, Israel is destroyed by the Assyrians. The people who remain in the northern kingdom, assimilate to Assyrian culture and customs. Samaria remains their capital. So, you see why in Jesus' day there is a distain for the...samaritans.
- The Assyrians are gobbled up by the Babylonians. And in 586 BC, the Babylonians lay siege to Jerusalem and Judah falls. The very best of the Jewish people are carried off into captivity. One of those young men goes by the name of Daniel. You may have heard of him...
- Some time later, the Babylonians are gobbled up by the Persians. The Persian King, Cyrus the Great, permitted some exiled Judeans to return to Jerusalem. Thus we have the books of Nehemiah and Ezra. Back in Persia, we have the account of a beautiful Jewish woman's rendezvous with the Persian king, and the salvation of her people. The woman's name is? Esther.
- Chronologically, the Old Testament ends with the return of Israel from Babylon under Nehemiah and Ezra. For the next 400 years there is canonical silence. God does not speak. That is until an angel appears to an old childless priest named Zechariah, whose wife, Elizabeth, would give birth to a son named John who would prepare the way for the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus: Prophet Priest King

- These are all streams. The undercurrent leads us to the ocean of God's glory in Jesus Christ. Consider.
- The Lord delivered His people out of slavery through the Prophet Moses. As an infant, Moses' life was in danger by Pharaoh, a Gentile king. As an infant Jesus' life was in danger by Herod, a Gentile king. Like Moses, Jesus was sent to deliver His people from slavery. Like Moses, Jesus was rejected. Moses led God's people through testing in the wilderness for 40 years. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days.
- Moses came down from the mountain carrying the Word of God. Jesus came down from Heaven as the Word of God. Moses interceded for the people on the basis of God's mercy. Jesus intercedes for God's people as the basis of God's mercy. Moses revealed the sacrificial system and proper worship of God. Jesus fulfilled the sacrificial system and *enables* right worship of God.
- Moses could not take the people into the promised land because his sin. Jesus had no sin and leads sinners into the Promised Land of the eternal heaven.
- Israel, despite having all the blessings of God before them, could not keep the Law. They were judged and sent into exile. Jesus, who left all the blessings of God in heaven, kept the Law of God perfectly, was Himself exiled and judged for the sins of the whole world. His exile and return to life reunites sinners to their Creator.
- The judges couldn't lead God's people away from false worship. Jesus Christ is the greater Judge whose own righteousness restores and protects right worship of God. King David's sons and grandsons could not destroy



the seed of the serpent. When Jerusalem is destroyed in 586 BC, it seemed God's promised to David had failed. That was, until the Son of David, of the tribe of Judah, would be born to a virgin in Bethlehem, He would be the King of Kings, to sit on the throne of Heaven forever.

- Jesus is the Prophet, greater than Moses, who spoke God's word to His people. He is the Priest, the One who goes between God and His people. Jesus is the King, greater than David, the one who establishes the kingdom of God forever. Every stream leads to Jesus.

Homework

- Chapters 22-25...page 201 to 234.
- Read Matthew 1-28, write down every OT reference you can find. There are more than a 100. Just write down the ones you see. We'll review them next time.

