

THE BIG JOURNEY

from Creation
to New Creation



eight ► From Sinai to Solomon



A view of the Promised Land – the fertile Jezreel Valley as viewed from Mount Carmel.

Image © [Bible Places.com](http://BiblePlaces.com)

Wandering in the wilderness

Weeks after their rescue from Egypt, God's people camped around Mount Sinai (this can be dated to around **1446BC**, though a more recent date in the region of 1280 BC has also been proposed). There they remained for almost a year (Exodus 19.1 - Numbers 10.11). Last session we looked at the marriage covenant God made with them there, and the Tabernacle where He came to live with them.

That barren wasteland afforded no provision for such a massive company of people (perhaps as many as 2-3 million in all, plus livestock). So God gave them bread and meat from heaven (Exodus 16.4-5,12-36, and see John 6.31-35,48-51) and water from rocks (Exodus 17.5-6, Numbers 20.2-13, compare 1 Corinthians 10.3-4).

But alongside this miraculous provision – and even before they got to Sinai – we read *“the people grumbled”*

(Exodus 15.24). Then five verses later we're told: *“And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, ‘Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.’”* Soon after, another confrontation with the people had Moses fearing for his life (Exodus 17.4).

In fact their complaints began even before the Exodus (Exodus 14.11-12). God's people experienced God's miraculous deliverance from grinding servitude in Egypt. They only had to look up at the pillar of smoke by day and fire by night (Exodus 13.21-22) - a visible token of His presence with them. They ought to have known He would provide for them.

But these grumbings are only the opening fusillade. God's people tested His patience for 40 long years with their complaints and rebellion (Psalm 95.7-11, quoted in Hebrews 3.7-11; Acts 13.18). Only Divine patience born of Divine love could endure it.



Image from [Wikipedia](#)

'Victory O Lord!' painted by John Everett Millais (1829–1896) (The Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester, UK). A wonderful depiction of the scene described in Exodus 17.10-13. The central figure is Moses; his arms are being held up by Aaron (on the right) and Hur (on the left) to ensure victory over the Amalekites at Rephidim. The artist depicts the "going down of the sun"; the three men watch the final moments of the battle below them.

The golden calf – another Fall

God had given His commandments to Israel (Exodus 20.1-17; 21.1-23.33), bound Himself to them in a solemn blood covenant, and eaten a fellowship meal with their leaders. Now Moses and Joshua were on Mount Sinai receiving God's blueprint for His Tabernacle home and his priests' garments and consecration. The eternal holy God, Uncreated Creator of the Universe, was about to move in and live with His people! Yet now we're confronted with (in Peter Enns' words) "the quintessential example of rebellion in the Old Testament"^[1] (Exodus 32.1-35).

Moses had now been away on Mount Sinai for almost 6 weeks (Exodus 24.18). He had assured the people he would return (Exodus 24.14). They simply had to trust God and wait. But trust gave way to anxiety; and anxiety bred panic, until the people rose up in rebellion. Moses, their link to Almighty God, had vanished. Was their human contact with God lost?

The root problem here - as so often elsewhere in the Bible - was *trust*. Only weeks before, God had bound Himself to His people in a solemn blood-bond. Even for ordinary

mortals, frail and fickle though they might be, such covenants were binding. How was it possible even to contemplate that God might break His covenant and abandon them?

All the people had to do was to trust God and be patient. Instead, an angry mob surrounded Aaron and bullied him into doing something. So Aaron made a golden calf, and Israel proclaimed it to represent the "gods" (Exodus 32.4 ESV, NIV) or perhaps "god" (NIV margin) that had rescued them from Egypt. Aaron built an altar to this idol and announced a festival to Yahweh. They offered sacrifices, and ate and drank and partied.

A bull was often used as an idol in the ancient Near East. It's probable that a calf was a symbol of deity widely used among Israel's neighbours. The ancients didn't think the idol was the god itself. Rather, the god – a spirit being – was *embodied* in the idol. From Aaron's use of God's name Yahweh (Exodus 32.5), it seems he was associating Yahweh's presence with this idol, thus breaking the second commandment. The people themselves seemed to be associating pagan gods with this calf - thus breaking the first commandment as well.

The people were rejecting God. In His place they created gods of their own making, gods who would do things the way they wanted, gods who would provide for them and guide them in the way they demanded. This golden calf was, it seems, an idolatrous counterfeit of the golden Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant. God planned to live among them in the Tabernacle, over the golden Mercy Seat above the Ark of the Covenant. But now the people made this golden calf for their gods to live among them. Aaron built an altar in front of it (Exodus 32.5), imitating the altar that would take centre stage in the Tabernacle courtyard. He even made the calf from jewellery that was doubtless destined for the Tabernacle (compare Exodus 35.21-22).

Then the people worshipped this god. They "rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings" and sat down "to eat and drink" (Exodus 32.6). This reminds us of what happened only weeks before, when God made a covenant with His people. There, Moses "rose early in the morning" and men "offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings" to the Lord. Then, after Moses read the Law and sprinkled the blood, Israel's leaders "ate and drank" in God's presence (Exodus 24.4-11). What Israel did now was a perversion of that sacred covenant ceremony that must have been still fresh in their memory.

And they did more than just eat and drink. They were singing and dancing (Exodus 32.18-19) and "running wild" (Exodus 32.25 NIV) – and perhaps worse. The Hebrew word translated "indulge in revelry" (Exodus 32.6, NIV) may carry undertones of sexual licentiousness. They had become "a laughingstock to their enemies" (Exodus 32.25 NIV).

As we saw in Session 6, God's people were a new creation. Through baptism in the waters of the sea, God's new mankind was born, and began the journey to a new Eden, God's Promised Land. It was a new creation. Now they had fallen. As one writer puts it, "It is Genesis 3 all over again."^[2] Just like Adam, Israel distrusted God; like Adam, they rejected Him and took their lives into their own hands.



Image courtesy of The Jewish Museum, New York
 'The Golden Calf' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902).

When Moses and Joshua descended the mountain, wild revelry confronted them. Moses smashed the tablets of the Law in fury. But the Law had already been broken in the hearts of God's people. Moses ground the calf to powder, mixed the dust with water and made the people drink it. This may have links with a similar rite for a woman suspected of adultery (Numbers 5.11-31). Israel had indeed committed spiritual adultery.

Moses cried out, *"Who is on the LORD's side? Come to me"* (Exodus 32.26). The Levites responded to his call and executed judgment, slaying around 3,000 men. And the Lord Himself sent a plague among the people. God's people mourned (Exodus 33.4-6), and Moses - the man to whom God spoke *"face to face"* (Exodus 33.11) - interceded with God. He besought Him to forgive the people and lead them into the Promised Land (Exodus 33.12-17). Then he asked God, *"Please show me your glory."* (Exodus 33.18).

God answered his prayer. He said, *"I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord. . . .'"* (Exodus 33.19). And He said *" . . . while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."* (33.22-23).

So Moses took two new stone tablets and climbed Mount Sinai again. God descended in the cloud and passed by him; as He did so, He proclaimed, *"The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."* (Exodus 34.6-7).

God renewed the covenant (Exodus 34.1-4,10-28). He said to Moses *"Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."* These words that Moses wrote explained how Israel were to keep God's covenant and to worship Him. And God wrote His Ten Commandments on the new stone tablets.

Moses returned to the camp, his face aglow from exposure to God's glory. With the people chastened and repentant, the covenant renewed and the people's relationship with God restored, work on the Tabernacle began. We

described this wonderful tent and all that went on there in the last session.

Spying out the land

Within a year, the Tabernacle was complete and the priesthood and the sacrificial system were functioning. After celebrating their second Passover (Numbers 9.1-14), Israel broke camp (Numbers 10.11-12). Their destination was the Promised Land (see Deuteronomy 1.5-8). There must have been an electric sense of anticipation! God led them to the oasis of Kadesh-barnea in the Paran Wilderness, about 150 miles north-east of Sinai. The journey took several months. But again we read of more rebellion (Numbers 11.1-6,10; 12.1-2).

God's people arrived in the Wilderness of Paran. From there, Moses sent 12 men, one from each tribe, to spy out the land (Numbers 13.1-33, Deuteronomy 1.22-25). The spies returned bearing grapes, pomegranates and figs - evidence of paradise. But powerful people in large fortified cities occupied the land.

The spies returned to the Israelites' camp at Kadesh-barnea in the Paran Wilderness. Kadesh-barnea was close to the Promised Land, and an important oasis in northern Sinai - a little foretaste of the paradise God was leading them into.

Two spies, Caleb and Joshua, were confident that God would give them victory. The other ten weren't, and their report won the day. The people wailed, *"Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?"* (Numbers 14.2-3).

God had promised that He would clear the land of its inhabitants (Exodus 23.28-30; 34.11). God's people had even proclaimed His victory way back, after the Exodus (Exodus 15.13-18) - singing *"all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away"*! The inhabitants themselves were cowering in dread of Yahweh and His people (as we learn from Joshua 2.9-11); *they* knew - even if Israel didn't - that God would give Israel victory.

Israel's unbelief was rank disobedience in the face of God's promises. The people spoke of selecting a leader to take them back to Egypt (Numbers 14.4) - to the old familiar life of servitude they had grown so used to. They had completely forgotten what a bondage it was.

God had cared for His people in so many ways. He gave them a constant visible token of His presence with them. And He was taking them to a new world where untold blessings awaited them. Yet His people slandered Him with this insult: *"The LORD hates us; so he brought us out of Egypt to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us."* (Deuteronomy 1.27 NIV). How could they possibly say this?

"The LORD hates us . . ." - this appalling blasphemy forms the background to *all* sin. Right at the beginning, Satan slandered God to Adam and Eve - implying God didn't love them, that He was withholding something wonderful from them. From that day forward, Satan has tempted people to think that God hates them and seeks to harm them. It's the great lie and, daily, millions fall for it.

God couldn't allow such rank unbelief to spread like

cancer through His people, poised as they were to possess His promised paradise. So He decreed that every man of military age numbered in the recent census (Numbers 1.1-46) would die in the wilderness. After all, they themselves had said, “*... would that we had died in this wilderness!*” They thought it was better to die in the wilderness, so they *would* die in the wilderness. Only the women, the children and young people, and the Levites (not eligible for military service) would enter the land alongside Caleb and Joshua (Numbers 14.26-35).

For the next 38 years (Deuteronomy 2.14), God's people wandered in the desert, perhaps with Kadesh-barnea as their home base. Apart from the last few months or so (recorded in Numbers 20.1-21.12; 33.37-44), the Bible reveals little about that 38-year period. It was, so to speak, wasted time. Year followed year in dreary succession until those unbelieving and rebellious men had all died. That period ended when they crossed the valley of the River Zered (Deuteronomy 2.13, Numbers 21.12) which flows into the Dead Sea's south-eastern corner; they were now in Moabite territory.



The journey through the wilderness - a traditional route. Other routes have been proposed. For example, the crossing of the Sea of Reeds may well have been north of the route indicated, perhaps through the region of the Bitter Lakes (which may in those days have been linked to the present-day Gulf of Suez).

Moses – speaking rashly

After around 38 years, God's people are in Kadesh-barnea again (Numbers 20.1). Astonishingly, this new generation complain, just as the previous one had done! An angry mob confronts Moses and Aaron: “*‘And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink.’*” (Numbers 20.5). If only they had believed God, they could already have been feasting on grain and figs and vines and pomegranates and drinking from sweet flowing streams of water in the Promised Land!

Our patient God responds to His thirsty people's protests in love. All Moses and Aaron have to do is speak to a rock; and out of it water will flow (Numbers 20.8). But Moses - this aged and faithful servant of God - had borne with this rebellious rabble for nearly 40 years. He had had enough. In the heat of rage and exasperation, he shouts at the people in sharp rebuke: “*‘Hear, now, you rebels, must we bring forth water from this rock for you?’*” (Numbers 20.10 T.R. Ashley's translation), as if he (and God) were sick and tired of the people. And notice that he says “*must*

we bring forth water” – thus ascribing this miraculous provision to his and Aaron's own power! And rather than just speaking to the rock, he whacks it - not once but twice!

God simply wants to demonstrate His mercy to His thirsty people. Moses' anger, presumption and disobedience - in front of the very people he had himself rebuked for disobedience – was an act of unfaithfulness toward God that dishonoured Him (Numbers 20.12). God bars Moses from entering the Promised Land.

God's rebellious people

Every rank and division of God's people rebelled in the wilderness. High Priest Aaron and doubtless many other leaders were implicated with many of the people in idolising the golden calf. Aaron's two older sons offered incense that God never commanded (Leviticus 10.1-7). Aaron and his sister Miriam, a prophetess (Exodus 15.20), complained about Moses (Numbers 12.1-15). Korah, a Levite, led an insurrection involving 250 leaders (Numbers 16.1-40). Then the whole nation rose up in rebellion because the Lord slew those rebels (Numbers 16.41-50).

The nation believed the bad report of the ten spies and wept and complained against Moses and Aaron (Numbers 13.25-14.4). And then there were the people's repeated complaints about food and water (for example, Numbers 20.2-5).

In the end, even faithful Moses succumbed to disobedience, as we've just seen. But Caleb and Joshua remained faithful to God throughout and entered the Promised Land.

Foot Note The temptation in the wilderness

Adam failed to resist Satan's temptation in the garden. Israel failed their time of testing, too (see Psalm 95.7-11, quoted in Hebrews 3.7-11; and compare Deuteronomy 8.2-5).

But Jesus – the second Adam and the true Israelite - passed victorious through His time of testing. His 40-day temptation in the wilderness doubtless recapitulates Israel's 40 years of trial in the wilderness - a day for each year. Appropriately, Jesus responds to Satan's temptations by quoting words that God spoke to Israel in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 6.13,16, 8.3).

God's son Adam (He is called this in Luke 3.38) and God's son Israel (see Exodus 4.22), both refused to trust God and obey Him. But this Son of God trusts and obeys. He emerges triumphant over temptation.



The oasis of Kadesh-barnea in the midst of a barren desert.

Image © Gregory Mumford

On the march again

Could this inveterately rebellious and faithless mob ever conquer the land and be God's instrument of blessing to the world? By now, any intelligent observer would have concluded it was quite impossible! There was simply no way it was ever going to happen. Except that God had *promised* it would happen . . . and God never breaks His promises!

So now - despite everything that had transpired - God's people resume their journey to the Promised Land. The Edomites refuse Israel passage through their land, forcing a long detour (Numbers 20.14-21). Then the Canaanite King of Arad attacks them and takes some of God's people prisoner (Numbers 21.1).

At this moment, the tide turns. Israel prays! And God's people defeat this Canaanite tribe at Hormah (Numbers 21.2-3) - a foretaste of conquest of the whole Promised Land. But despite this success, it doesn't take much for yet another complaint (Numbers 21.4-9).

Israel journeys around the land of Moab and crosses the River Arnon. They are now in Amorite country (Numbers 21.13). Famous victories against Sihon, king of the Amorites (Numbers 21.21-32), and Og, king of Bashan (Numbers 21.33-35) give them possession of the lands east of Jordan - land that two and a half tribes would settle in (Numbers 32.33). The final camp is in the plains of Moab on the east bank of Jordan, overlooking Jericho (Numbers 22.1).

Poised for possession

Destiny and depravity

Israel is camped in the plains of Moab, poised for conquest. This strikes fear into the hearts of Balak, king of the Moabites, and his people (Numbers 22.2-3). So he and the Midianites, a neighbouring people, hire a Mesopotamian prophet called Balaam to curse God's people. But instead, Balaam blesses them in some of the most wonderful oracles in Scripture (Numbers 23.7-10, 18-24, 24.3-9, 15-24).

Balaam sees a vast nation (Numbers 23.10), without misfortune or trouble (23.21), invincible (23.24), living in a verdant well-watered paradise (24.6-7). Here is the fulfilment of all God has promised - an innumerable people (see Genesis 15.5, 22.15-17) living in a new Garden of Eden. Those that bless Israel are blessed; those who curse them are cursed (Numbers 24.9, see Genesis 12.3).

Balaam's final oracles predict the fate of the nations around the Promised Land. In his opening salvo, he beholds a ruler of Israel crushing the foreheads of the Moabites and dispossessing Edom (Numbers 24.17-19). This astonishing prophecy not only has King David (see 2 Samuel 8.2, 13-14) in view, but also a promised Messiah - the Seed of the Woman who would crush the head of the supreme enemy of God's people, the serpent (Genesis 3.15).

But with this sublime prophecy from the lips of a pagan prophet still ringing in our ears, we are shocked by Israel's descent into sexual immorality and idolatry - worshipping "*Baal of Peor*" (Numbers 25.1-9). Baal was the Canaanite god that became an idol to Israel so many times - this incident was just a foretaste of what was to come. God commands Moses to take vengeance against the Midianites, who seduced Israel to such sin (Numbers 25.16-18).

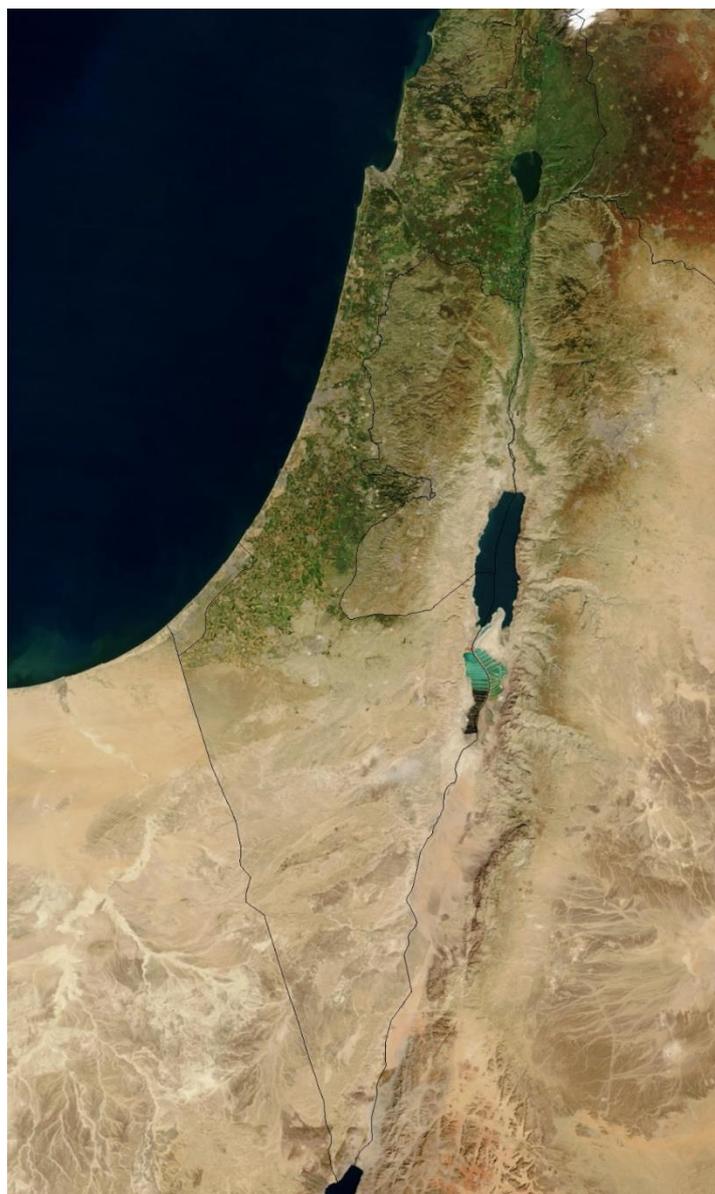
The covenant renewed

Shortly before crossing the Jordan, God tells Moses and Eleazar, the new High Priest, to take a census of God's people (Numbers 26.1-65). There were around 600,000 men (other than Levites) fit for battle - almost exactly the same number as in the first census nearly 40 years before (see Numbers 1.45-46). All the faithless men had died, except Caleb and Joshua. A new generation had risen to take the place of the old; it is a new, reborn Israel that will

cross the Jordan.

Moses' address

Moses preaches to this new Israel there in the plains of Moab. The book of Deuteronomy contains the transcript.



Israel, as seen from space in early 2003. The white area at the top is the Mount Hermon region, still capped with snow. The boundary of present-day Israel is marked faintly on the map.

Image from [Wikimedia Commons](#)

He reminds them of their history since the Exodus (for example, Deuteronomy 1.6-3.29) and exhorts them to obedience. When they have become wealthy and content, they're not to forget that it was God who rescued them and led them through the wilderness (Deuteronomy 8.17-18).

Moses restates God's commandments (see for example, Deuteronomy 5.1-21), and tells them about the land, teaching them more about how they're to live there. There's to be a special place where God will live, where they must worship Him and sacrifice to Him (Deuteronomy 12.2-28). God will live in the centre of the Promised Land, just as He did in the centre of their camp.

And Moses tells the people that, when they enter the Promised Land, they're to write the law and confirm their covenant commitment to God on Mounts Ebal and Gerizim - two mountains at the heart of the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 11.29-30, 27.1-26, Joshua 8.30-35).

"Life and good, death and evil"

Moses pronounces the blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience (Deuteronomy 28.1-68). He summarises and renews the covenant between God and His people (Deuteronomy 29.1-30.20), setting before them *"life and good, death and evil"* (Deuteronomy 30.15). Moses writes the Law and gives it to the priests and elders, commanding it to be read to the nation every seven years (Deuteronomy 31.9-13, 24-29).

"Be strong and courageous"

Then Moses commands Joshua, already appointed as successor (Numbers 27.15-23), and the whole nation to be *"strong and courageous"* as they take the Promised Land, *"for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."* (Deuteronomy 31.6-8). He

formally commissions Joshua (Deuteronomy 31.14-15, 23).

The song of Moses

God gives Moses a song to sing to the nation (Deuteronomy 31.16-22, 30-32.44). The song foretells the nation's history. It celebrates how God chose and blessed His rebellious people. And it prophesies how, though blessed in the Promised Land, they rebel and suffer God's judgment. But the song ends in triumph. God will punish Israel's enemies and restore His people. This prophecy may well have the return from Exile in the foreground. But doubtless there's an even greater salvation in view – the renewal of God's people through Jesus's death and resurrection and the pouring out of His Spirit.

The blessing of the tribes

And, as Jacob had done before him, Moses blesses the 12 tribes (Deuteronomy 33.1-29, and compare Genesis 49.1-28).

Joshua takes over

Finally, after ascending Mount Nebo and viewing the land, this faithful servant of God passes into His immediate presence.

Joshua takes over and God commissions him to take the people into the Land (Joshua 1.1-9). Obedience to God is the key to blessing; he's to meditate in God's Law day and night (compare Deuteronomy 6.6-9; 11.18-21). Like Moses, Joshua sends spies - who encourage Israel with these words: *"Truly the LORD has given all the land into our hands. And also, all the inhabitants of the land melt away because of us."* (Joshua 2.24). On Jordan's bank, God's people await His call to advance.

Into God's Promised Land

Another exodus

So the people cross Jordan (perhaps around **1406BC**). The river is in flood, but God holds back the waters and the people pass over on dry land - just as they had crossed the Sea of Reeds (Joshua 3.14-17). It's another Exodus.



Image from Life in the Holy Land.com

The river Jordan in flood near Jericho – a photo taken around 1935.

The Exodus and the crossing of the Jordan are really two stages of the same event. Remember this is a new Israel – the old Israel (represented by its warriors) died in the wilderness. New Israel goes through a new Exodus. The nation passes through the waters of baptism into a new life in a new world. It's a new creation, all over again.

Notice that they enter the land from the east. That's significant. God sent Adam and Eve *eastwards* out of the garden; God's people enter the Promised Land *from the east*. They are entering a new Garden of Eden.

Immediately after crossing the Jordan, they are circumcised. Circumcision was a sign of the covenant God made with Abraham. It symbolised that he and his household were in covenant relationship with God (Genesis 17.9-14, and see Romans 4.11-12) – and so they were to remain faithful to God and trust Him to fulfil all His covenant promises.

That circumcision beside Jordan was a landmark. God said to Joshua: *"Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you."* (Joshua 5.9). Richard Hess explains: *"The reproach of Egypt was the disobedience of the previous generation (the generation of Egypt) which brought about the period of wandering and death in the desert. That generation could not inherit the land."*^[3] And that, in turn, gave the heathen nations occasion to reproach

God by claiming He couldn't bring His people into the Promised Land (see Numbers 14.13–16, Deuteronomy 9.28).

Now all the faithless men who had come out of Egypt had died, except Caleb and Joshua. A new generation had been born. This generation were now circumcised, demonstrating their obedience to God's covenant. *Now they could possess the Promised Land.*



Image © Bible Places.com

Fruit for sale at the Mahane Yehuda Market in Jerusalem. *"For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, . . . a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, . . ." (Deuteronomy 8:7-9).*

Israel's coming of age

The years in the wilderness were a time of testing and discipline (Deuteronomy 8.2-5, see Hebrews 3.8-9). God's people were born at the Exodus, and these 40 years were their 'childhood', their crucial formative years. God was readying them for their role in world history - just as children undergo training and discipline to prepare them to take their place in society and be a blessing to it. God showed them His love and holiness; He taught them to obey Him; He trained them to rely on His provision and power. This is how Adam and Eve should have lived in the Garden of Eden; this is how God's people were to live in God's new garden across the Jordan.

Crossing Jordan into God's Promised Land was like a rite of passage. At that point they took on the privileges and responsibilities of adulthood. Until then, God miraculously provided for them. Their clothes and shoes didn't wear out (Deuteronomy 8.4; 29.5) – just as we make sure our children are properly clothed. God miraculously provided bread and water (Deuteronomy 8.3,15-16, John 6.31) - just as we provide food for our children. And our children don't need to earn their meals - they just have to come to the table. Likewise, God's children just had to get out of bed and collect the manna. There was no ploughing, no sowing, no weeding, and no harvesting - the manna simply appeared, morning by morning. All they had to do was cook it and serve it. They all got equal portions (Exodus 16.16-18) - just as we ensure every child of a comparable age gets equal shares! And God continued to feed them despite their rebellion - just as we continue to feed our children even when they're disobedient.

But when they crossed Jordan, God stopped treating them like children and launched them into adulthood. God gave

them responsibility for their own lives. He set before them a blessing and a curse (Deuteronomy 11.26-28; 28.15-68). Coming of age is *always* attended by a blessing and a curse; adulthood brings new and greater opportunities for success - and for disaster, too. Their destiny was now in their hands.

The manna ceased once they were eating the produce of the land (Joshua 5.12); now *they* had to till the ground and harvest the crops. If they were obedient, God would so bless their labours that the land would become the breadbasket of the Middle East (see Leviticus 26.3-5, Deuteronomy 28.1-5,11-12). They'd have enough to lend to the nations around (Deuteronomy 15.6, 28.12), something they could never do whilst in the wilderness. Now they could begin to be a blessing to the nations (compare Genesis 12.3), rather than just be receivers of God's blessing - and *"It is more blessed to give than to receive"* (Acts 20.35). But if they were disobedient, they would starve (Leviticus 26.26,29) – something that never happened in the wilderness, despite their repeated rebellion.

A new Garden of Eden

The Promised Land was like the Garden of Eden - a fertile well-watered paradise abounding in natural resources (Deuteronomy 8.7-10; 11.9-12), a land *"flowing with milk and honey"* (Exodus 3.8).

Just as Adam and Eve had the life-defining choice between the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, so God set before Israel the life-defining choice of blessing or curse, life or death (Deuteronomy 30.19). If they obey Him they would enjoy the land; if they reject Him, they would be driven out into exile (Leviticus 26.32-39), just as Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden.

The Tabernacle at the centre of their camp, too, was like a Garden of Eden - a holy and beautiful place where God lived and where His people could commune with him. But only certain people could enter - the priests and those offering sacrifices. No-one actually lived there permanently. The Promised Land became, in effect, an extension of the Tabernacle - a place where *all* God's people could dwell permanently in His presence and under His blessing. And, like Adam and Eve, God's people were tasked with tending His garden and keeping it holy and undefiled.



Image © chany14 : flickr.com (CC BY-ND 2.0)

Olive trees on terraces in Israel.

God's bridgehead to the world

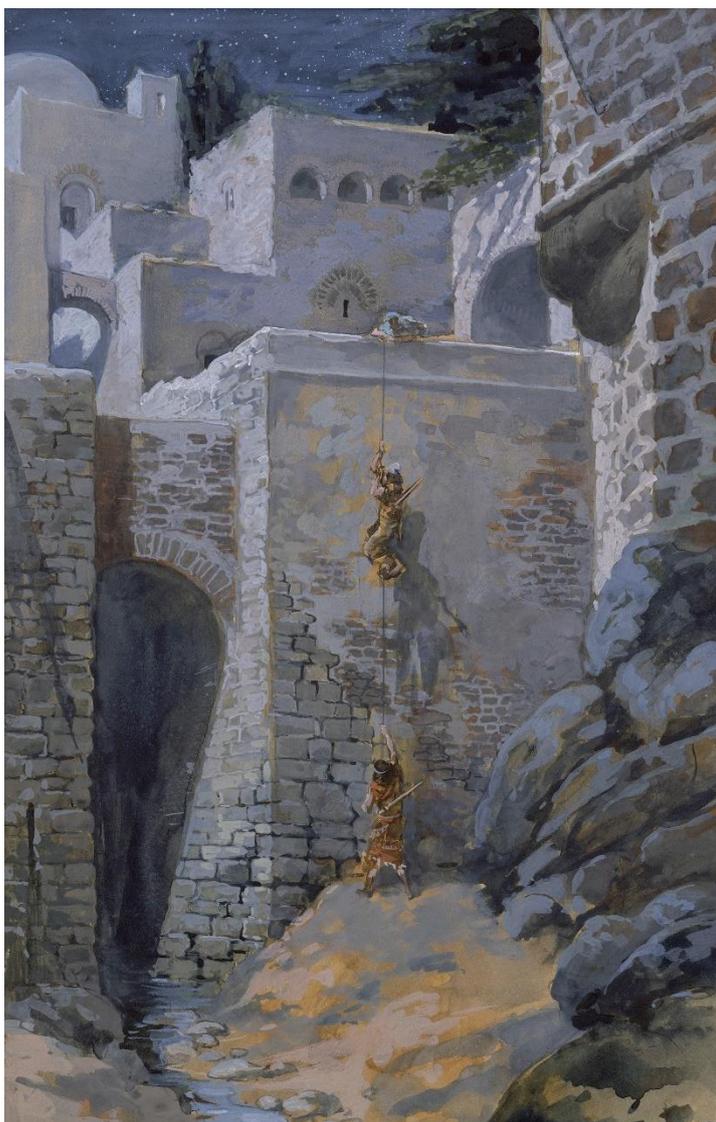
This Promised Land was God's bridgehead into occupied territory. From this new garden, God planned to extend His dominion to the four corners of the Earth.

God's paradise home – the Promised Land - was at the centre of the world. Situated at the crossroads of the world, it was almost at the midpoint of the world's land-masses, and a bridge between three continents. Consequently it was – and still is - at the centre of history, too. Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian, Assyrian, Greek and Roman empires all controlled it at one stage or another, and it remains a crucible of world conflict to this day.

The boundaries are detailed in Genesis 15.18-21, Exodus 23.31, Deuteronomy 1.7 and Joshua 1.4. They extend north as far as the upper Euphrates - a river flowing from the original Garden of Eden. Michael D. Williams comments: "God's choice of Canaan as a land for Abraham was intentional and central to the redemptive mission for which Abraham was chosen. What was important about this particular piece of real estate was its geographic relationship to other lands. It was a doorway to the world, on the way to everywhere else."^[4]

And Israel weren't given the land just to settle down in and make themselves comfortable. They were on a mission – a mission we'll explore more fully in the next session.

Conquest and capitulation



'The Flight of the Spies' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902). The two spies sent by Joshua escape from Jericho – Rahab "let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall" (Joshua 2.15).

The enemy in the land

The Canaanites' depravity is legendary. The most prominent god of these polytheistic pagans was Baal, a fertility god. This god was worshipped with orgiastic worship that included 'sacred' prostitution and even human sacrifice (see Psalm 106.37-38); they communicated with the spirit world by occult practices (Deuteronomy 18.9-12). The Canaanites were like festering sores on the landscape. Surgical removal was the

only solution to stop their vile practices contaminating and destroying God's people (Deuteronomy 7.1-5, 20.16-18). But where there was faith, God showed mercy. Rahab, the prostitute, trusted God. She and all her family were saved, and she is almost certainly the Rahab of Matthew 1.5, an ancestor of Jesus Himself. (If so, she must have been a distant ancestor of Boaz, rather than his mother).

First blood

Israel's very first battle at Jericho was more like a series of worship services than a military campaign (Joshua 6.1-27). The army just did the mopping up. It set the context for the whole conquest. Every subsequent victory - however much fighting was involved - hinged on worshipping and obeying God. So do our own battles in heavenly places. The attack on Ai that followed revealed what happened when people didn't follow God's instructions (Joshua 7.1-26). Disobedience brought defeat; one sin weakened the entire nation. Sin weakens our Christian brothers and sisters in ways we may be quite unaware of.

The conquest of Jericho and Ai gave Israel a base in the centre of the Promised Land. Two major campaigns are then chronicled: (1) a southern campaign (Joshua 10.1-43) that began by defending the Gibeonites, with whom the Israelites had made a covenant (Joshua 9.1-27), against five Amorite kings; and (2) a northern campaign (Joshua 11.1-15) to repulse an attack led by Jabin, king of Hazor. In



'The Seven Trumpets of Jericho' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902) (The Jewish Museum, New York). "And the Lord said to Joshua, "See, I have given Jericho into your hand, . . . You shall march round the city, all the men of war going round the city once. Thus shall you do for six days. Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day you shall march round the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets." (Joshua 6.2-4).



Image © Bible Places.com

View of part of a revetment wall at the ruins of the Old Testament city of Jericho. It's suggested that the city had two walls, an outer wall of mud brick built on this revetment wall, and an inner wall (not seen here). Bryant Wood has suggested that the mud brick wall collapsed when the Israelites, under Joshua's leadership, captured the city. The mudbrick wall formed a kind of ramp over the revetment wall, allowing the Israelites to enter the city.

all, these military operations last for perhaps seven years or so. Then the land enjoys *“rest from war”* (Joshua 11.23). But much land still remained in enemy hands (Joshua 13.1-6).

The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh had already been allocated land east of the Jordan (Joshua 12.1-6, 13.8-13, 15-32, 14.3, Numbers 32.1-42). Now Judah, Ephraim and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh are allotted land. Faithful Caleb demands Hebron (Joshua 14.6-15). This was near where Abraham lived for a large part of his time in Canaan (Genesis 13.18, 35.27) and near the spot where he was buried (Genesis 23.19, 25.9). Caleb's reward for his faithfulness is the territory associated so closely with faithful Abraham. And he - now in his eighties - drives out the Anakim, the very ones that so struck fear into the hearts of the ten faithless spies (Joshua 15.13-14, Judges 1.10, 20, see Numbers 13.28, 33).

Before the last seven tribes are allotted their lands, the Tabernacle is set up at Shiloh (Joshua 18.1), nearly 20 miles north of Jerusalem. The Tabernacle probably remained there more or less permanently until Samuel's time (though by then it may have been altered or even replaced). The Levites are given 48 cities and their adjoining pasture-lands, distributed through the land (Joshua 21.1-42), rather than concentrated round the Tabernacle. Such dispersion kept them in contact with the whole nation and made it easier for them to teach the Law to the people.

The main phase of the conquest is over. *“Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.”* (Joshua 21.45). God is faithful! Before his death, Joshua - like Moses before him - reminds Israel of their history, and exhorts them to be faithful to God. Like Moses, too, he renews the covenant that was first made way back at Sinai (Joshua 23.1-24.28). And the people do continue to serve God - until all the elders who led the nation under Joshua have died (Joshua 24.31, Judges 2.7).

Faltering into failure

But there was still work to do. God's people hadn't captured all the land God had given them; parts of His paradise were still under enemy control. So the tribes begin to mop up the remaining Canaanites.

Then things go awry. The Promised Land was a

bridgehead into Satan's territory, and the ancient enemy wasn't giving up without a fight. After a good start (Judges 1.1-18) the tribes fail to deal with the Canaanites (Judges 1.19, 21, 27-35). They don't obey God (Judges 2.1-3) - they make covenants with the Canaanites and don't destroy them or their pagan altars. That spells disaster (see Joshua 23.12-13, Psalm 106.34-39).

If the wilderness wanderings were Israel's childhood and crossing the Jordan was their rite of passage, the next - and truly appalling - period in Israelite history is their early adult years. That period of life brings its own temptations - and God's people fall for them.

There's a recurring cycle summarised in Judges 2.11-19 (see also 1 Samuel 12.8-11): **(1)** Israel commits idolatry; **(2)** their enemies oppress and afflict them (according to Deuteronomy 28.25); **(3)** the people cry to God to save them; **(4)** God gives them a deliverer who defeats their enemies and gives them a period of peace. Then the Israelites fall back into idolatry, and the whole dreadful business starts over again. This goes on for as many as 300 years or more.

Judges 3.7-16.31 is a portrait gallery of the disparate and often rather unlikely deliverers ('judges') that God raised up. They include **Othniel**; left-handed **Ehud**; **Deborah** (a prophetess) and **Barak**; **Gideon**, conqueror of a vast horde with just 300 chosen men, but whose son Abimelech seized power through violence and whose skull was broken by a woman; **Jephthah**, son of a prostitute; and - most famously - arch-womaniser **Samson** who, blind and helpless, defeats the Philistines in his final spectacular act of heroism. **Samuel** was the last (Acts 13.20).



Image courtesy of The Jewish Museum, New York

'Samson Slays a Thousand Men' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902). The artist depicts Samson having slaughtered a thousand Philistines with *“a fresh jawbone of a donkey”* (Judges 15.14-17).

Descent into darkness

The end of the book of Judges paints a picture of utter religious and moral degradation. Judges 17.1-18.31 tells the story of a Levite who served idols, in one preacher's phrase, for "ten shekels and a shirt". Judges 19.16-30 must be the most sickening story in the entire history of God's people. It involves homosexuality and gang-rape, and echoes Genesis 19.1-11. In Stephen Dempster's

words, "Israel has become Sodom!"

Like Adam and Eve in the garden, God's people were tasked with keeping God's paradise clean and holy. But that paradise has become a place of strife and vile depravity. Judges ends with this lament: "*In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*" (Judges 17.6; 21.25). God's new humanity was doing just what God's first man and woman did – rebelling against God and doing their own thing.

A tale of two kings

Harbingers of hope

But even in these darkest of times, some light shines. God was going to do a new thing. He begins to work.

Ruth – devoted Gentile

The little book of Ruth, set in the time of the judges, begins with a tale of famine in God's paradise (where there should have been abundance of food) and exile into a foreign land. It ends with a Gentile, Ruth, marrying a 'kinsman-redeemer' and becoming great-grandmother to a great king, David. At the end of Judges we read, "*there was no king in Israel*". Here is God's answer – a promised king who will complete the conquest and capture Jerusalem, where God's Temple will one day be built. God, faithful to His blood covenant, sows the seeds of His people's redemption even during their darkest hour.

Samuel – faithful prophet

Then another beacon of light - Samuel - is born (around **1100BC**). Last of the judges (1 Samuel 7.15-17), he was the first of a new order of prophets (compare Acts 3.24) that ends with Malachi, and includes all the prophets who wrote books preserved in the Bible. God, Who spoke only rarely in the dark days of the judges (1 Samuel 3.1) begins once more to address His people. Through Samuel's mother Hannah, God thunders out His lordship over this world and His victory over all His enemies (1 Samuel 2.1-10). Hannah's song concludes with the empowerment of God's anointed king. The outworking of this prophecy begins with King David. It finds its final fulfilment in Jesus, David's Son. Through Jesus the Messiah all God's enemies will be broken and a new world order established.

Samuel the kingmaker

A king was coming; Hannah's son Samuel was the kingmaker. His birth marks a new phase in Israelite history. Samuel, a Levite (1 Chronicles 6.22-28,33-38), enters service under Eli at the sanctuary in Shiloh. The High Priest Eli is weak and his sons corrupt, and God's sanctuary is now a place of immorality (1 Samuel 2.22) and greed (1 Samuel 2.12-17). Yet worse is to come. The Philistines capture the Ark of the Covenant. Nothing like this has ever happened before - and won't happen again till Nebuchadnezzar destroys Solomon's Temple. God plagues the Philistines - as He did the Egyptians - and they send the Ark back. But it never returns to Shiloh (1 Samuel 7.1-2); God abandons that defiled sanctuary (see Psalm 78.60).

At this point in national history, Samuel leads the people in a national revival. They repent, put away their idols, and bind themselves again to God in covenant at Mizpah. And as Samuel offers a whole burnt offering, God thunders and routs the Philistines (1 Samuel 7.3-14). When God is worshipped and obeyed, He gives victory - just as He did at Jericho.

A king "like all the nations"

Samuel's sons - like Eli's - were wicked. What would happen when Samuel died? Israel's elders demand a king "*to judge us like all the nations*" (1 Samuel 8.1-5). But God tells them that, in asking for a king, they have rejected Him (8.7).

God Himself had spoken about a coming king through Jacob (Genesis 49.10) and Balaam (Numbers 24.17). The little book of Ruth ends with King David's birth; Hannah sings of God's anointed king. One day God *will* provide a

Division of Canaan, 1200 to 1030 B.C.



king for His people. So why is God displeased with Israel's request for a king? Because they want a king to judge them and fight their battles "like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8.5,19-20). The whole point about Israel was that they were *not* to be like all the other nations. They were to be separate from every other nation (Exodus 33.16). They were to be *in* the world but not *of* the world. God Himself ruled His people. God would go out and fight their battles. The king of God's choosing would lead the nation into obedience to God and reliance on *His* power. But that wasn't the sort of king the people wanted.

The people reject God from being their King (1 Samuel 8.7) and insist on a king like the other nations' kings. And that is precisely what God gives them. He condemns them to their own desires. But before He does so, He warns them what will happen. In Peter Leithart's words, "Like the kings of the nations, Israel's king will take everything productive from the Israelites: sons for his army and to work on his lands, daughters to serve in his household, fields . . . , servants and work animals. . . . Israel might as well go back to Egypt, for their king will treat them no differently than Pharaoh."^[5] God's people will end up as slaves again (1 Samuel 8.17), just like they were in Egypt!

So God gives them king Saul, who begins to reign around **1050BC**. He's tall and impressive (1 Samuel 10.23-24) and



Image from *The Bible Picture Book* by Muriel J. Chalmers

'Saul Gains His Kingdom' painted by Frank Adams. The artist depicts Saul as a warrior king – perhaps defeating the Ammonites as recorded in 1 Samuel 11.1-11.

begins well (1 Samuel 11.1-15). But soon we read that God has to reject him. Saul falls into sin. His basic problem is this - he doesn't ask God to guide him. He acts on his own initiative; he does what *he* thinks best (see 1 Samuel 13.5-

14, 1 Samuel 15.1-23, 1 Chronicles 10.13-14). In short, Saul is a rebel. And rebellion, as Samuel pointed out, is as evil as divination (1 Samuel 15.23).

A king "after God's heart"

So God tells Samuel to anoint another man to replace Saul (1 Samuel 16.1-13) - a man of God's choice, this time, not mankind's. David is a man after God's heart (1 Samuel 13.14, Acts 13.22). He loves God passionately, trusts Him implicitly (see, for example, Psalm 18.1-3), and obeys God gladly (see Psalm 18.20-24, Psalm 40.6-8). Unlike Saul, when David goes out to battle, he asks the Lord about it (1 Samuel 23.2-4,9-12; 30.8; 2 Samuel 2.1; 5.19,23-24), something Saul never did.

God is teaching us a lesson through Saul and David. He's taking us all the way back to the Garden of Eden. God made mankind to rule over His creation (Genesis 1.26,28). What kind of person can rule in God's world? What kind of person will God entrust His paradise home to? God wants a David, not a Saul. Adam and Eve were like Saul - they did what *they* thought was best; they acted on their own initiative. They chose a life of independence from God. Saul is a picture of fallen mankind. But David loved, trusted and obeyed God. He is a picture of the mankind God wants to live with Him in His paradise.

Conquest completed

David doesn't become king until Saul's death (around **1010BC**), ten or more years after Samuel had anointed David as king. Saul's hostility to David drives him into the life of a fugitive. But David doesn't seize the kingdom by force; he waits patiently for God to give it to him (see 1 Samuel 26.9-10). Finally, Saul ends up dead on the battlefield of Mount Gilboa, defeated by the Philistines (1 Samuel 31.1-13). David is proclaimed king by Judah at Hebron (2 Samuel 2.1-4), and then eventually by all Israel (2 Samuel 5.1-5).

David was God's warrior king. After his anointing, but long before he became king, David fought a duel with the colossal Philistine Goliath. In the first session we quoted



Image courtesy of The Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog

A shepherd boy slinging – an old photograph (taken or published between 1950 and 1977). This image reminds us of David who, as a very young man, killed Goliath with a stone from a sling (1 Samuel 17.48-51).

Vaughan Roberts: “The rest of the Bible can be seen as a ‘search for the serpent-crusher’”^[6]. That serpent-crusher is Jesus. But Jesus’s ancestor David foreshadows Him. David was a serpent-crusher. Goliath was clad in “*scale armour*” (1 Samuel 17.5, NIV), reminding us of a serpent (see Job 41.15-17). The stone from David’s sling sinks into Goliath’s forehead; after slaying him, David beheads him. David is the seed of the woman - in direct line of descent from Eve to the Seed Himself, Jesus Christ, Who one day will deal the final death blow to the ancient Serpent. When David takes off the head of this scale-clad Philistine, he is foreshadowing that final victory over Satan.

This was just the first of many victories. David emerges the victor in a civil war with the house of Saul (2 Samuel 2.8-3.1,6-4.12). David captures Jerusalem (around **1002BC**) from the Jebusites (2 Samuel 5.6-9) and makes it his capital. He defeats the Philistines, the Moabites, Aramaean forces, the Edomites, the Ammonites and the Amalekites (2 Samuel 5.17-25, 8.1-14, 10.1-11.1, 12.26-31, 1 Chronicles 14.8-17, 18.1-13, 19.1-20.8). We read “*the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went*” (2 Samuel 8.14). David’s sphere of influence expanded as far as the Egyptian border in the south to the upper Euphrates – thus fulfilling God’s promise to Abraham (Genesis 15.18, see 1 Kings 4.21,24, and also Deuteronomy 1.7-8, Exodus 23.31).

The capture of Jerusalem is a strategic milestone. David brings the Ark of the Covenant - symbolising God’s presence – into his new capital (2 Samuel 6.12-19, 1 Chronicles 15.1-16.3). He pitches a tent for it there. He organises the priests and Levites, and appoints some Levites to be musicians who worship God with prophecy and song, and with musical instruments (1 Chronicles 25.1-31). Doubtless here in this Davidic tent is where many of the Psalms would have been sung. The conquest of the Promised Land began with worship around Jericho’s walls. Now, in the closing stages of the conquest, worship resounds in God’s sanctuary in Jerusalem.

David was the great conqueror king, who together with his mighty men (2 Samuel 23.8-39 and compare 21.15-22), wrested the Promised Land, God’s paradise, from enemy occupation. In Stephen Dempster’s words, “*They finished*



Image from Life in the Holy Land.com

David, “*the sweet psalmist of Israel*” (2 Samuel 23.1) wrote “*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.*” (Psalm 23.1-2). This early coloured photographic image (created between 1900 and 1920) is from a set of slides of shepherd life illustrating Psalm 23.

the job that Joshua had started”^[7]. Conquest was complete. 2 Samuel 22.1-51 (which is very similar to Psalm 18.2-50) is David’s victory song.

God’s covenant with David

David wanted to replace his tent with a permanent Temple. So God sends Nathan to speak to David (2 Samuel 7.4-17, 1 Chronicles 17.3-15). This is a key prophecy in the Bible. God says He will make David’s name great and then makes these tremendous promises:

A secure land

God will give His people a secure place of their own to live and the wicked won’t oppress them any more.

A royal dynasty

God will build David a “*house*” (2 Samuel 7.11) - meaning a royal dynasty – that will never be extinguished; it will endure for ever (2 Samuel 7.16, see also Psalm 89.3-4,28-29,35-37, Jeremiah 33.17,20-21, and Ezekiel 37.24).

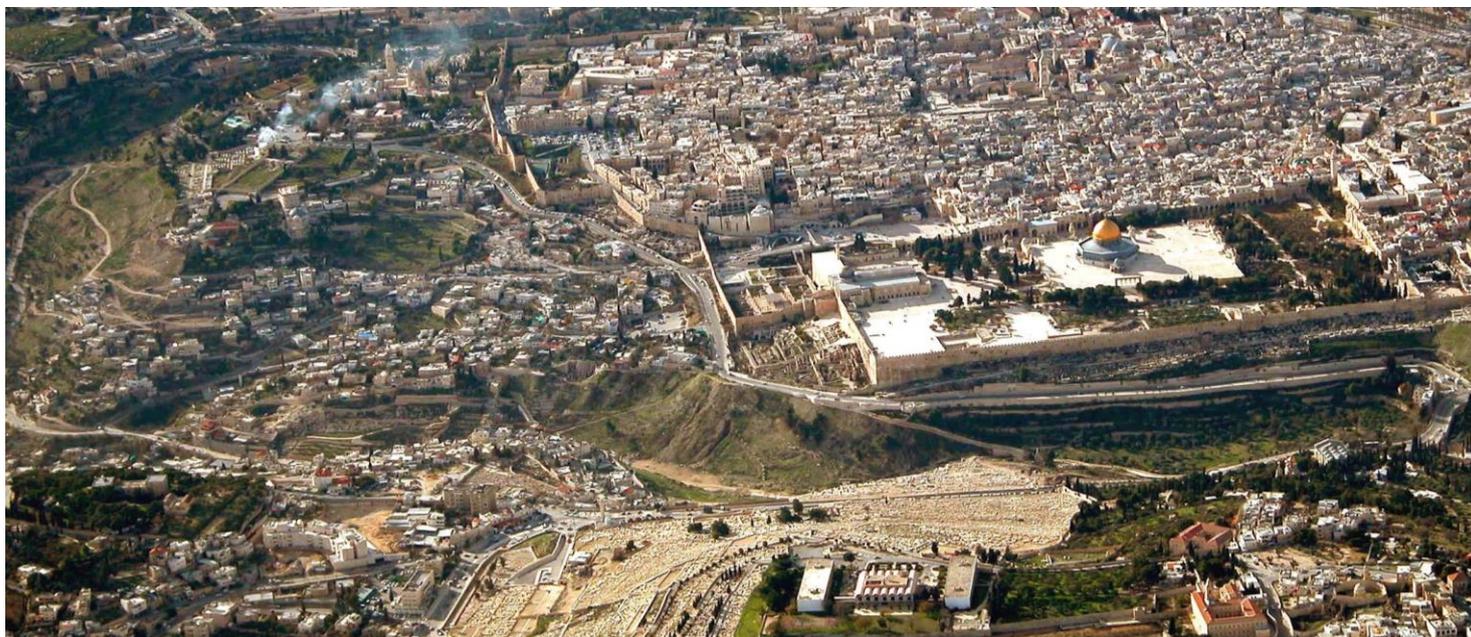
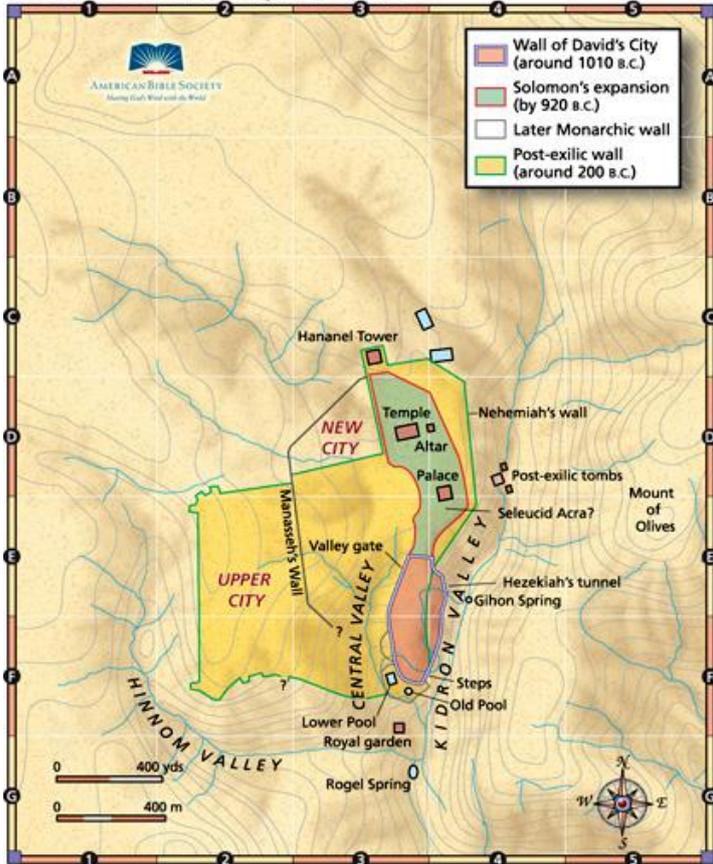


Image © Bible Places.com

An aerial image of Jerusalem. South is to the left side of the image. The original city of David is outside the southern wall of the Old City, stretching along the hill southwards. Compare this aerial view with the map on the next page, which shows the walls of David’s city.

Jerusalem in Old Testament Times, The Growth of David's City, 960 to 44 B.C.



This resource is provided by www.BibleResourceCenter.org – an online ministry of the American Bible Society.

A home for God to dwell in

David's offspring would build God a house. The Lord forbids David himself from building the Temple. David is a conquering warrior (1 Chronicles 22:8; 28:3). Only after the Promised Land has been fully conquered and occupied, its borders secure and the kingdom at rest, will it be appropriate for God's house to be built. Though David makes preparations (1 Chronicles 22:2-5), it's his son Solomon who will build God's Temple.



Bible prophecy is sometimes fulfilled at more than one level, and that's the case here. On the one level it's fulfilled through David's son Solomon and the line of kings that ruled Judah over the succeeding years (who we'll look at in the next session). But on another level it's fulfilled through Jesus Christ, the great king of David's line, who isn't merely David's Son but God's Son, too (2 Samuel 7:14, Mark 1:1, John 20:31, Acts 9:20, Romans 1:3-4, Hebrews 1:1-5). Here's how Nathan's prophecy works out in history:

A secure land

David conquered all his enemies (2 Samuel 7:1) and bequeathed to Solomon a kingdom safe from enemy oppression (see 1 Kings 5:4). But one day God's kingdom will come in its final glory - Jesus will rule over God's people for ever, and Satan and sin will never touch them again.

A royal dynasty

David's dynasty did continue for centuries, though Solomon was indeed punished for his sin, as God warned (2 Samuel 7:14, 1 Kings 11:1-40) – as indeed were the other Old Testament kings of David's dynasty. But Jesus Christ's

dominion will never end (Isaiah 9:6-7, Luke 1:31-33).

A home for God to dwell in

David's son Solomon built God a house - a magnificent Temple which was the wonder of the world. But Jesus is greater than Solomon (compare Luke 11:31). He will build His church - a temple made up of all God's people and indwelt by God Himself by His Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22), a people among whom God will live for ever (see Revelation 21:2-3).



These promises that God made to David are a covenant - the Davidic Covenant. (It's referred to as a covenant in 2 Samuel 23:5 and Psalm 89:3-4.)

The Davidic covenant is another step forward in God's plan. God promised Abraham a paradise and a people who would bring blessing to the entire world. Now God is telling us more about how those promises are going to come about - *a King is coming, and through Him all God's promises to Abraham will be fulfilled.*

This King is the seed of Abraham - in direct line of descent from Abraham, and inheritor of the promises God made to Abraham and his offspring (see Galatians 3:16). All nations would find blessing through Abraham (Genesis 12:2-3); all nations will find blessing through this King (compare Psalm 72:17 – this psalm is about the king of David's line).



Image © BibleMapper.com

The extent of Saul's, David's, and Solomon's kingdoms.

Through this King - Jesus Christ - God's people will finally live with God for ever in His paradise, safe and secure, never to be troubled by sin or suffering again - as we see in Revelation 21.1-4. As Vaughan Roberts says, "From 2 Samuel 7 onwards in the Bible, we are waiting for the arrival of God's king, the son of David."^[8]

David's fall

But time and again, when things begin to look really hopeful for God's people in the Old Testament, sin enters. The echo of Nathan's remarkable prophecy hardly dies away before David commits adultery with Bathsheba, and arranges that her husband - one of his faithful mighty men (2 Samuel 23.39) - might be slain in battle, so he can take her as his wife. 2 Samuel 11 tells the whole sordid story.

David repents, and God forgives him - David is still a man after God's own heart. But David pays a heavy price. Robert Bergen writes, ". . . the Torah blessings resulting from obedience vanished. In their place David began to experience the stern curses of the Torah, including loss of family ([compare] Deuteronomy 28.18) and even exile ([compare] Deuteronomy 28.64-67)."^[9] The consequences of David's sin casts a deep shadow over the rest of his life. From now on, David suffers trouble and strife (see 2 Samuel 12.7-15). Four of his sons die prematurely - the son

conceived through adultery with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12.15-23), Amnon (2 Samuel 13.23-33), Absalom (2 Samuel 18.1-18) and Adonijah (1 Kings 2.13-25). His own son Absalom revolts against him (2 Samuel 15.1-18.31). The unity of David's kingdom is threatened by Sheba's revolt that follows (2 Samuel 19.41-20.22). And at the end of David's reign, Solomon has to outmanoeuvre his rival brother Adonijah for David's throne (1 Kings 1.5-53).

Solomon

But God's promises to David stand secure. Solomon is proclaimed king (around 970BC) and Israel enters a period of peace and prosperity unequalled before or since. Israel's empire is at its largest geographical extent. And a magnificent house is built for God in Jerusalem - Solomon's Temple.

► Next Session From Solomon to the Coming Saviour

We look at Solomon's magnificent kingdom and the splendour of the Temple he built. But his many foreign wives lead him into idolatry and set a downward course that ends in exile. We'll trace the history of God's people onwards to the threshold of Jesus's coming to Earth.



Image from Life in the Holy Land.com

An early photograph of Bethlehem (taken between 1898 and 1946). This was David's home town (see 1 Samuel 16.1-13). In that town, Jesus, "the son of David" (Matthew 1.1) would be born (see Luke 2.4-5).

TEXT CREDIT ► Text 2025 © Robert Gordon Betts.

BIBLE QUOTATION CREDITS ► Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture is taken from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Anglicized English Standard Version copyright © 2002 by Crossway. Used by permission. All rights reserved. The ESV text may not be quoted in any publication made available to the public by a Creative Commons license. The ESV may not be translated in whole or in part into any other language. ► Scripture quotations marked 'NIV' are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version (Anglicised edition). Copyright © 1979, 1984, 2011 by Biblica (formerly International Bible Society). Used by permission of Hodder & Stoughton Publishers, an Hachette UK company. All rights reserved. 'NIV' is a registered trademark of Biblica (formerly International Bible Society). UK trademark number 1448790.

BOOK QUOTATION CREDITS [1] Quoted from *Exodus: The NIV Application Commentary* by Peter Enns, page 568. Published by ZondervanPublishingHouse, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, in 2000. [2] Quoted from *Exodus (Interpretation: a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching)* by Terence E. Fretheim, part eight. The Fall and Restoration of Israel: Exodus 32:1-34:35. Paperback edition published by Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, USA, in 2010. [3] Quoted from *Joshua: an Introduction and Commentary (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries)* by Richard S. Hess, page 122. Published by Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, United Kingdom and InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, USA, in 1996. [4] Quoted from *Far as the Curse is Found: the Covenant Story of Redemption* by Michael D. Williams, page 115. Published by P&R Publishing, Phillipsburg, New Jersey, USA, in 2005. [5] Quoted from *A House for My Name: a Survey of the Old Testament*, by Peter J. Leithart, page 134. Published by Canon Press, Moscow, Idaho, USA, in 2000. [6] Quoted from *God's Big Picture: Tracing the Story-Line of the Bible* by Vaughan Roberts, page 78. Published by Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, United Kingdom, in 2003. [7] Quoted from *Dominion and Dynasty: a Theology of the Hebrew Bible* by Stephen G. Dempster, page 141. Published by Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, United Kingdom and InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, USA, in 2003. [8] Quoted from *God's Big Picture: Tracing the Story-Line of the Bible* by Vaughan Roberts, page 82. Published by Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, United Kingdom, in 2003. [9] Quoted from *1,2 Samuel (The New American Commentary volume 7)* by Robert D. Bergen, page 361. Published by Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee, USA, in 1996.

IMAGE QUOTATION CREDITS ► Small logo image of winding road at top of page 1 supplied by Serif (Europe) Ltd. Image cropped. ► Image on page 1 © Bible Places.com at <http://www.BiblePlaces.com>. ► Image on page 2 is 'Victory O Lord!' painted by John Everett Millais (1829-1896) and held by the Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester, UK. Image published at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:VictoryOLord.JPG> and considered by the Wikipedia Foundation to be in the public domain. ► Image on page 3 is 'The Golden Calf' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902) and courtesy of the Jewish Museum, New York. Image published at <https://collections.thejewishmuseum.org/collection/26377-the-golden-calf-le-veau-d-or>. ► Map of Exodus route on page 4 copyright © MANNA Bible Maps at <https://biblemaps.com/>. All rights reserved. Used by kind permission of the MANNA Bible Maps. ► Image of Kadesh-Barnea on page 4 copyright © Gregory Mumford, used by permission of the photographer. ► Image on page 5 is Israel, as seen from space in early 2003. Image from Wikimedia Commons and published at https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/archive/c/9/20150131121937%21Satellite_image_of_Israel_in_January_2003.jpg. The main Wikimedia Commons page for this image is at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Satellite_image_of_Israel_in_January_2003.jpg. ► Image on page 6 © Life in the Holy Land.com at <https://www.lifeintheholyland.com/>. ► Image of fruit on page 7 © Bible Places.com at <http://www.BiblePlaces.com>. ► Image of olive grove on page 7 copyright © chany14 / flickr.com (whose profile is at <http://www.flickr.com/people/chany14/>) and entitled 'Olive trees'. Image published at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/chany14/134089019/>, and made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic license (viewable at http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/deed.en_GB). ► Image of spies escaping from Jericho on page 8 is 'The Flight of the Spies' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902) and courtesy of the Jewish Museum, New York. Image published at <https://collections.thejewishmuseum.org/collection/26408-the-flight-of-the-spies-le-luit-des-espions>. ► Image of priests and people marching around Jericho on page 8 is 'The Seven Trumpets of Jericho' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902) and courtesy of the Jewish Museum, New York. Image published at <https://collections.thejewishmuseum.org/collection/26411-the-seven-trumpets-of-jericho-les-trompettes-de-jericho>. ► Image on ancient wall on page 9 © Bible Places.com at <http://www.BiblePlaces.com>. ► Image of Samson on page 9 is 'Samson Slays a Thousand Men' painted by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902) and courtesy of the Jewish Museum, New York. Image published at <https://collections.thejewishmuseum.org/collection/26451-samson-slays-a-thousand-men-samson-et-la-machoire-d-ange>. ► Map on page 10 is copyright © American Bible Society. This resource is provided by <https://www.americانبible.org/engage/bible-resources/> - an online ministry of the American Bible Society. ► Image of Saul on page 11 is 'Saul Gains His Kingdom', an illustration in *The Bible Picture Book* by Muriel J. Chalmers, opposite page 28, published by Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., London, Edinburgh, New York, Toronto, and Paris. ► Image of boy slinger on page 11 from the Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Online Catalog and published at <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/matpc/item/2019705754/>. ► Image of shepherd with sheep by a pool on page 12 © Life in the Holy Land.com at <https://www.lifeintheholyland.com/>. ► Image of Jerusalem from above on page 12 © BiblePlaces.com at <http://www.BiblePlaces.com>. ► Map of Jerusalem in Old Testament times, the growth of David's city, 960-44 B.C., on page 13 is copyright © American Bible Society. This resource is provided by <https://www.americانبible.org/engage/bible-resources/> - an online ministry of the American Bible Society. ► Map of the extent of Saul's, David's, and Solomon's kingdoms on page 13 © BibleMapper.com at <https://biblemapper.com/>. ► Image on page 14 © Life in the Holy Land.com at <https://www.lifeintheholyland.com/>.