

Adult Class
Wednesday, June 1, 2011

The Story of the Bible
Connecting the Dots

The Time Periods...

- Before the Flood
- The Flood
- The Scattering of the People
- The Patriarchs
- The Exodus
- Wandering in the Wilderness
- Invasion and Conquest of the Land
- The Judges
- The United Kingdom
- The Divided Kingdom
- Judah Alone
- The Captivity
- Return from Captivity
- Years of Silence

The Time Periods...

Before the Flood
Genesis 1 – Creation
Genesis 5 – Generations

The Flood
Genesis 6 – Warning of the Flood
Genesis 8 – Ending of the Flood

Scattering of the People
Genesis 9 – Command to fill the earth
Genesis 11 – Tower of Babel, forced scattering – Generations of Shem to Abraham

The Patriarchs
Genesis 12 – Abraham introduced, promise given to him
Genesis 50 – Joseph dies in Egypt

The Exodus
Exodus 1 – People in bondage in Egypt
Numbers 13 – People lose their faith (spy incident)

Wandering in the Wilderness
Numbers 14 – God curses the people to wander for 40 years.
Joshua 5 – Commander of the Lord's army appears to Joshua

Invasion and Conquest of the Land
Joshua 6 – Jericho
Joshua 24 – Death of Joshua

The Judges
Judges 1 – Summary of the time period
1 Samuel 9 – Demand for a king

The United Kingdom
1 Samuel 10 – Saul anointed first king of Israel
1 Kings 12 – Kingdom splits after Rehoboam's unwillingness to listen to the people

The Divided Kingdom
1 Kings 13/2 Chronicles 10 – Israel begins its rebellion under king Jeroboam
2 Kings 17/2 Chronicles 31 – Assyria destroys and captures Israel (Northern tribes)

Judah Alone
2 Kings 18/2 Chronicles 31 – Israel taken by Assyria
2 Kings 25/2 Chronicles 36 – Judah taken by Babylon

The Captivity

Return from Captivity
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

Years of Silence

Years of Silence...

- ◉ Having studied the outline of the entire Old Testament, including a brief summary of the prophets, one might conclude that it is time to begin looking at the periods of the New Testament.
- ◉ Without knowing and understanding the events that occur between Malachi 4:6 and Matthew 1:1, many of the details of the events recorded in the New Testament can become confusing.

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Years of Silence...

- ◉ In this lesson, we will aim to bridge the gap of unwritten history between the last writings in Malachi and the earliest time periods described in the New Testament.
- ◉ We will examine two major aspects of history to accomplish this goal:
 - People and events in World History
 - The influence that these had on Judaism
- ◉ This will help us to understand why many things are so different in the New Testament.

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This will help us to understand why many things are so different in the New Testament.

Years of Silence...

- ◉ Examples of Differences in the New Testament
 - Roman domination over the Jews
 - Various geographical references (Judea, Galilee, etc.)
 - Greek culture (and language)
 - Synagogues
 - Scribes
 - Pharisees
 - Sadducees
 - Herodians
 - The Sanhedrin Council

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Examples of Differences in the New Testament

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Years of Silence...

- ◎ The Condition of the Jews in 400 BC
 - Just 200 years earlier, the nation of Judah had been taken captive and their cities demolished by Babylon.
 - After a 70-year period of punishment, the Jews are allowed to return to Jerusalem by the decree of Cyrus of the Persian empire (which had just destroyed Babylon).
 - Over the course of the next 140 years, tens of thousands of Jews return to Jerusalem to reconstruct the temple and the wall around the city.
 - By 400 BC, though a small, Jewish state had been established in Jerusalem (and the Law and rituals reinstated), it remained under Persian rule.

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Years of Silence...

- The Inter-Testament Periods
 - The Persian Period: 397 BC – 333 BC
 - The Greek Period: 333 BC – 323 BC
 - The Egyptian Period: 323 BC – 204 BC
 - The Syrian Period: 204 BC – 165 BC
 - The Maccabean Period – 165 BC – 63 BC
 - The Roman Period – 63 BC and Onward

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The Inter-Testament Periods

The Persian Period: 397 BC – 333 BC

The Greek Period: 333 BC – 323 BC

The Egyptian Period: 323 BC – 204 BC

The Syrian Period: 204 BC – 165 BC

The Maccabean Period – 165 BC – 63 BC

The Roman Period – 63 BC and Onward

Years of Silence...

- The Persian Period (400 BC – 333 BC)
 - Commenced under the decree of Cyrus for the Jews to return to Jerusalem to reconstruct the temple and lasted until Alexander the Great conquered Persia.
 - At the end of Malachi, the Jews were still under the dominion of the Persian empire and would continue to be for another sixty years.
 - Through the years, the high priest of the Jews was given considerably more civil power in addition to his religious powers, though he continued to be subject to Persia.
 - In general, Persia was tolerant of the Jews and their religious beliefs, offering them relative freedom.

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- The Greek Period (333 BC – 323 BC)
 - At the age of twenty, Alexander the Great began to transform the world by marching eastward, conquering virtually everything in his path.
 - He not only spared Jerusalem when he marched through the land, but he also offered sacrifices to God and listened to Daniel's prophecies of him.
 - The Jews were offered full citizenship rights under the Greek empire of Alexander the Great.
 - As a result of his demonstration of respect for the Jews and God, the Jews developed pro-Greek sentiments, which influenced them significantly as time progressed.

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- ◉ The Egyptian Period (323 BC – 204 BC)
 - Alexander the Great died at age 33, leaving his four generals, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander, and Selenus to divide and rule his empire separately.
 - Ptolemy and his successors became ruler over both the land of the Jews and Egypt.
 - At first, the Ptolemaic empire dealt harshly with the Jews, but afterward became more tolerant of them.
 - Greek culture and language became more pervasive throughout the land, but notably among the Jews.
 - It was at this time that the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament was made from Hebrew to Greek.

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- The Syrian Period (204 BC – 165 BC)
 - Following Ptolemy Philopater's death, his successor, Ptolemy Ephiphanes, was only five years old.
 - Antiochus the Great (ruler of the Seleucids) then invaded the Ptolemaic empire, annexing it and expanding Syria.
 - At this time, Palestine was divided into five sections (which we see referenced in the New Testament)
 - Judea
 - Samaria
 - Galilee
 - Perea
 - Trachonitis

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 - Antiochus the Great was extremely harsh toward the Jews, but still allowed them to live under their own laws.
 - However, with the ascension of Antiochus Epiphanes (175 BC – 164 BC), this changed for the worse.
 - In 170 BC, Jerusalem was ransacked.
 - The temple was stripped and rededicated to Jupiter
 - The wall was torn down
 - The Jewish religion was banned
 - Pigs were offered on the altar
 - The Jews were subjected to monstrous cruelties

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- The Maccabean Period (165 BC – 63 BC)
 - The cruelties inflicted upon them by Antiochus Euphianes eventually incited resistance and revolution.
 - Judas Maccabeus (called by the Hebrew word for “hammer”) led a revolt against Antiochus and eventually recaptured Jerusalem and refurnished the temple.
 - The feast which celebrates the rededication of the temple to God was observed as the Feast of the Dedication, and first took place on December 25th.
 - Other fighting took place during this time, however, for the most part, the Jewish nation remained independent throughout this period of time.

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- The Roman Period (63 BC and Onward)
 - In 63 BC, the Jewish state became a Roman province through a siege of Jerusalem that lasted three months.
 - Eventually, the siege by the Roman general, Pompey, ended with Pompey defiling the Most Holy Place of the temple, placing hatred toward the Romans in the hearts of many of the Jews.
 - At this point, the Herodian family appears on the scene, as Antipater (the father of the Herod who reigned at the time of Jesus' birth) was placed as governor of Galilee.
 - Herod was appointed to be king of the Jews by Rome, and attempted to get along with them.

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◎ Synagogues

- In the New Testament, there are numerous mentions of these gathering places which had not been used before.
- Recall that the reason that the people went into captivity was because of their obsessive idolatry.
- Following their release, the Jews became extremely dedicated to God and obeying His laws.
- One issue that arose from captivity was that many Jews were versed in Aramaic, not Hebrew.
- The synagogues functioned as places of instruction and teaching, though not necessarily worship.
- As time went on, translations of law became expositions.

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Recall that the reason that the people went into captivity was because of their obsessive idolatry.

Following their release, the Jews became extremely dedicated to God and obeying His laws. **Wanted to ensure that they were doing exactly as the Law commanded.**

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Gradual process that occurred over time – a tradition of Oral Law began to grow to “explain” written law

However, from that time, also, there began to form that elaborate system of interpretations, amplifications and additional regulations of which the Judaism of our Lord's time was the result.

Years of Silence...

◉ Scribes

- Scribes in the New Testament are generally connected with evil or hard-hearted people (especially Pharisees).
- Scribes existed during the Old Testament time, however their role was apparently much more subdued.
- “Definite rule” needed to be extracted from the law that covered virtually every aspect of daily life.
- In order to create this detailed and complex code, experts (scribes) made the study of the law their careers.
- These men are sometimes called “lawyers” in the NT.
- Ezra seems to be the first scribe that is elevated, as we see him reading the law in Nehemiah 8.

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Pharisees

- Though they are frequently mentioned with the scribes, the Pharisees were a completely separate group of Jews.
- The Pharisees had a sense of “separatism” that may have begun when the foreign wives were put away during the times of Ezra and Nehemiah.
- What may have prompted the Pharisees to come together was the formation of an opposition group, the Sadducees, who had a much more physical view.
- The mark of a Pharisee was that he always sought to add to the law more detail than was already there.
- Though they were few, they had a great deal of influence.

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The mark of a Pharisee was that he always sought to add to the law more detail than was already there. **Ritualist – clearly seen throughout the Gospels. Religion and salvation were made to be a highly complicated matter.**

Though they were few, they had a great deal of influence. **6000 existed during the time of Herod, yet their influence was so great.**

Years of Silence...

◎ Sadducees

- They were diametrically opposed to the Pharisees.
- This group probably began as a social clique, and could be labeled as an “aristocratic” class of people.
- Unlike the Pharisees who clung to it, the Sadducees completely rejected the Oral Law, and even held much of the Written Law with great skepticism (they denied the existence of angels, spirits, and the resurrection.)
- The mark of a Sadducee is that he always wants to take away from the Law.
- The Sadducees were very involved with politics, and held that the Law had no business mixing with the state.

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Sadducees - **Matthew 22:23**

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It is obvious why they would hate Jesus and His teachings...they hated Him so much that they were willing to work with the Pharisees to kill Him.

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◉ Herodians

- This was another Jewish clique which there is little recorded about, except for sparse details.
- Clearly, the group's aim was to strengthen the support for the ruling family of the area (the Herods).
- By supporting the Herods, the Jews hoped to enjoy the favor of Rome and its protection.
- The Herodians attempted to blend Roman and Jewish cultures in order to accomplish this.
- Herodians were more secular than either of the other two groups: they were far more interest in the ends than the means by which they were attained.

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Herodians -- **In Matthew 22:16, Mark 3:6 and 12:13**

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- ◎ The Sanhedrin Council
 - Often translated “the council,” the Sanhedrin council was the supreme civil and judicial tribunal of the Jews.
 - It was created in approximately 200BC as a way of allowing the Jews some measure of self-sovereignty.
 - It consisted of 71 members:
 - The High Priest
 - 24 Chief Priests
 - 24 Elders
 - 22 Scribes
 - Jesus may have had this council in mind when he selected 70 people to teach in the area.

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It was created in approximately 200BC as a way of allowing the Jews some measure of self-sovereignty. **By the time of Herod, their political power had largely been taken away, and the council remained mostly to execute Herod’s will, as well as to serve as a religious council.**

It consisted of 71 members:

The High Priest

24 Chief Priests – **1 Chronicles 24:4,6**

24 Elders – **represented the “common people” Matthew 21:23**

22 Scribes

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