

# OLD TESTAMENT CONTEXT

(Mat 22:29 NIV) Jesus replied,  
"You are in error because you  
do not know the Scriptures  
or the power of God"

What "Scriptures" was Jesus talking about? \_\_\_\_\_

## SURVEYING THE OLD TESTAMENT :

- |  |                |           |              |
|--|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. It is organised into three sections-  | A. History     | B. Poetry | C. Prophetic |
| 2. It covers three periods-              | A. Patriarchal | B. Judges | C. Kings     |
| 3. It contains three significant events- | A. Creation    | B. Exodus | C. Exile     |

## THE THEME OF THE OLD TESTAMENT :

*(Luke 24:27 NIV) And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*

*(Rom 1:1) Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God-- 2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3 regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David,*

## THE PURPOSE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT :

*(Rom 15:4 NIV) For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

- The Old Testament was written to \_\_\_\_\_ us and give us hope!



# OLD TESTAMENT WORDS

## 1. God

Referred to in the original Hebrew language of the Old Testament as:

- |                     |              |                   |             |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| (a) <i>Elohim</i>   | (Gen. 1:1)   | (d) <i>Yah</i>    | (Ps. 68:4)  |
| (b) <i>El-elyon</i> | (Gen. 14:18) | (e) <i>Yahweh</i> | (Gen. 15:2) |
| (c) <i>El</i>       | (Gen. 35:3)  | (f) <i>Adonai</i> | (Ps. 110)   |

Scholars have observed that the name God used to reveal Himself to mankind varied according to the circumstances. God, as we call Him in English, is variously revealed as *Elohim* (1:1), *El-Elyon* (14:18), *Yahweh* (15:2), *El-Shaddai* (17:1). Each of these names revealed a significant aspect to God's character. Derek Kidner observes that Genesis reveals the earliest titles of God. "Most High" (14:18-22), "Almighty" (17:1), "Everlasting" (21:33), "God of Israel" (33:20), and, "Fear of Isaac" (31:42, 53).<sup>1</sup>

- He is never referred to in Hebrew as "Jehovah". This is a made up word to translate the Hebrew word YHWH. The best way to translate this into English is either Yahweh, or "LORD".
- He is the Supreme Being, presented as the Creator.
- The Old Testament presents a Monotheistic being, not a Monolithic Being.
- He gradually reveals Himself throughout the pages of the Old Testament

<b>HISTORIC</b>	Pentateuch	Creator, Law Giver, Deliverer from Egypt
	Judges	Angel of the LORD
<b>POETIC</b>	Job	Redeemer
	Psalms	Lord (785 times)
<b>PROPHETIC</b>	Isaiah	Holy One of Israel
		The Servant of the Lord
	Malachi	The Sun of Righteousness (4:2)

## 2. Covenant

An agreement that bound two parties together.

They became united and were able to claim their partners resources as their own.

They incorporated each other's names into their own.

Their agreement was witnessed and sealed in blood.

<sup>1</sup> Kidner: 33

### 3. Law

Four types of Law included in the Old Testament:

- (a) Food laws
- (b) Ceremonial laws
- (c) Civil laws
- (d) Moral laws

A law was a command of God that was applicable to many people over a given period of time.

### 4. Holy

Pure; separate; rare ( in the sense of being special)

We note that God is described as ultimate holiness (Isa. 6:1ff)

The overall presentation of God in the Old Testament is “HOLY” we are instructed to be holy: Lev. 11:44

## THE PENTATEUCH

The Pentateuch is the name given to the first five books of the Bible. The Jews call this section of the Bible, the “Torah”.

## WHO WROTE THE OLD TESTAMENT?

Before coming to Christ you may have thought, like some, that the Bible was written by one man. In fact, it was actually written by many men. Most of these men never met each other. In some cases it is uncertain who wrote particular Books despite even the traditional title for that Book bearing a person's name (eg. First and Second Samuel, the account of Samuel's death is recorded before the end of the First Samuel). Scholars generally view authorship in this way-

Genesis	Moses
Exodus	Moses
Leviticus	Moses
Numbers	Moses
Deuteronomy	Moses/Joshua
Joshua	(Eleazer and Phineas)
Judges	Samuel
Ruth	Unknown
First Samuel	Samuel? + Nathan? + Gad?
Second Samuel	Samuel? + Nathan? + Gad?
First Kings	Jeremiah
Second Kings	Jeremiah
First Chronicles	Ezra
Second Chronicles	Ezra
Ezra	Ezra
Nehemiah	Nehemiah
Esther	Unknown
Job	Moses?
Psalms	Compiled by Ezra
Proverbs	Solomon
Ecclesiastes	Solomon
Song Of Songs/Solomon	Solomon
Isaiah	Isaiah
Jeremiah	Jeremiah
Lamentations	Jeremiah
Ezekiel	Ezekiel
Daniel	Daniel
Hosea	Hosea
Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos
Obadiah	Obadiah
Jonah	Jonah
Micah	Micah
Nahum	Nahum
Habakkuk	Habakkuk
Zephaniah	Zephaniah
Haggai	Haggai
Zechariah	Zechariah
Malachi	Malachi

(Table 1)

## THE OUTLINE OF THE PENTATEUCH

- Genesis-** Creation; Fall of mankind; Judgment on mankind by the Flood; Call of Abraham to start a nation (Israel).
- Exodus-** Israel in bondage in Egypt; God uses Moses to deliver His people; God establishes His covenant with Israel based on the Law.
- Lev.-Deut.-** God gives the civil/ceremonial/food laws; Instructions for the priests and Levites; Blessings and Curses

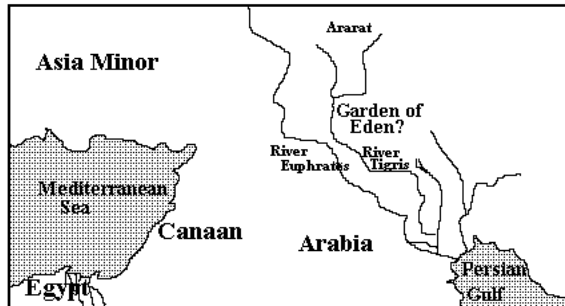
### THE PENTATEUCH

The first five Books of the Bible are referred to as the *Pentateuch*. Written by Moses, they came to be known as the "Law of Moses". The first Book, Genesis, lays the background for the unveiling of God's call and deliverance of His people. The next four Books, while dealing with some historical aspects, format the covenant Israel enjoyed with God. Within the Pentateuch the rest of the Bible lies in embryonic form. Much of Christ's teaching came directly from the Pentateuch.

(An eg. of where Christ simply reinforced the truth of the Pentateuch in His teaching Lev. 19:18)

## **GEOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

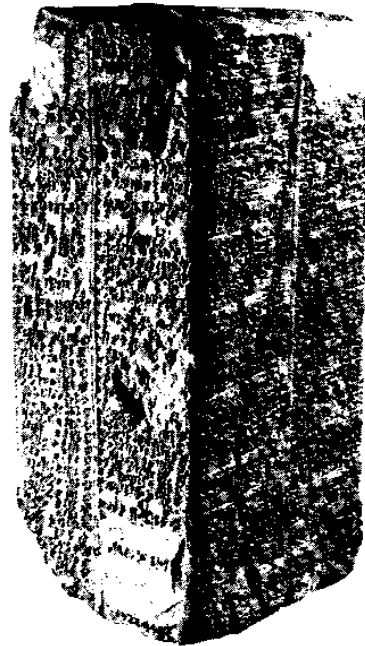
The Bible commences its narrative in Northern Iraq, in a place known as Eden<sup>2</sup>. While not seeking to be an atlas, it does speak of population centres in geographic terms. Archaeology has confirmed nearly every geographic claim of the Bible.



For many years Genesis was seen as nothing more than a book of myths. One of the main reasons for believing this was the belief that Moses could not have had access to any records because writing was only a relatively late invention. However, archaeological discoveries have now shown that writing could very well be *original*. Excavations have shown that not only was writing a flourishing art form during the time of Abraham, but there were also libraries, and universities storing large quantities of literature. One city in ancient Babylon was "Sippar"

which means *City of Books*. Its ruins were excavated during the 1880-90's and 60,000 tablets of literature were discovered including a library of 30,000 tablets.

The Weld Dynastic Prism discovered in 1922 just north of Ur, contains the then known history of the world including the accounts of the ten generations of kings prior to the Flood. It was written about 2170 B.C., 100 years prior to Abraham.



<sup>2</sup> The Garden of Eden is indicated on the map with a question mark, and the statement that it was located in Northern Iraq is not a conclusive one because all geographical markers prior to Noah's flood are sketchy now due to the flood's devastation of the earth's landscape.