



St. Bart's Collective Worship Themes

Autumn 1: The Promised Land

The Bible isn't a book full of stories, it is a book with ONE story – of how God's plan unfolds. The Old Testament is full of events that reveal God's character and point towards his plan to save his people through his promised king - Jesus. Each part is often an illustration of something bigger in God's plan. Some themes are repeated, particularly people rejecting and then turning back to God when they get into trouble. God disciplines his people as a loving father disciplines his children. There is always a reason!

Quick overview of the key Old Testament narrative:

GENESIS
Genesis begins THE STORY by providing the narrative of the beginning of the world in the first eleven chapters. In these chapters, the story progresses through 20+ generations of people. The goal is to get the story to Abram (Abraham). So these chapters cover a very long time period and, as a result, can obviously focus on very few details. The remaining chapters of the book provide the narrative for the early beginnings of the nation of Israel through the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, concluding with the family of Jacob in Egypt. Then THE STORY slows down, focusing on only four generations of people. The purpose is to provide a "skeleton" of information about the background of everything that leads up to Israel being in Egypt, awaiting God's redemption.

EXODUS
Exodus picks up THE STORY from Genesis as evidenced by an overlapping connection with Joseph going down to Egypt, being used by God to preserve Jacob's family. After Joseph dies, Exodus continues the narrative by 1) recounting the nation's hardships in Egypt, 2) demonstrating God's miraculous work of judgment against Egypt and redemption of Israel in the exodus from Egypt to Mt Sinai, 3) providing the establishment of his covenant with Israel and 4) explaining the building of the Tabernacle so that God can dwell in their midst. Whereas Genesis covers over 24 generations, Exodus concerns only the life of Moses (his life actually continues to the end of Deuteronomy.) The family of Jacob grows into a nation with whom God makes a covenant. All of this is preparation for taking the nation to the Promised Land.

NUMBERS
Numbers continues THE STORY for us, narrating the developments taking place as Israel prepares to take the land. All of the contents occur in Moses' generation. After the completion of the Tabernacle, this book conveys the story of the organisation of the nation, their departure from Mt. Sinai and the subsequent disobedience of this first generation when they refuse to take the land. The resulting judgment is 40 years of wilderness wanderings, which is also found in this book (although not in much detail.) We do not have a lot of information about this 40-year time period because the focus of the book is to get us to the border of the Promised Land. The book closes with the preparation of the second generation (after the exodus) in taking the land of Canaan.

JOSHUA
The book of Joshua connects to the previous books by beginning with a reference to Moses' death. (Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land because of his disobedience when he struck the rock.) The leadership of the people for the task of entering the Promised Land is transferred and entrusted to Joshua. The narrative in this book continues THE STORY by providing the events of Israel entering the land by focusing on the conquest, division, and initial settling of the land of Canaan during the life of Joshua.

JUDGES
Judges continues THE STORY by overlapping with the end of the book of Joshua. Since the land has already been settled, this book provides a glimpse of the early years in the land when Israel was led by judges. This period marked by the rule of the judges is summarised by utilising a similar cycle evidenced by each generation. The cycle is simple, yet disturbing. Each generation is characterised by eventual rebellion, followed by God's judgment, their crying out to the Lord, the Lord raising up of a deliverer, the actual deliverance and a subsequent return to obedience for a period of time until the cycle repeats itself. Consequently, many generations are covered to make it clear what this time period was like for Israel. When they are disobedient, there are consequences, but, when they walk in faithfulness, the Lord in his mercy restores them to a place of blessing.



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1-2 SAMUEL

The era of the judges continues into the books of Samuel. Samuel is a judge, but he moves THE STORY from the period of the judges into the period of the kingdom. These two books include the transition from the leadership of the last judge (Samuel) to the beginning of (under King Saul's leadership) and establishment of (under King David's leadership) the kingdom. It is also the necessary foundation to the books that follow.

1-2 KINGS

The books of Kings naturally flow out of the books that introduce the kingdom, especially with the overlap of the end of King David's life. Connecting to the end of the books of Samuel, the books of Kings begin with the latter years of King David's life, culminating in the transfer of leadership to Solomon as the new king. King Solomon is the focus immediately after King David's death, and, after his unfaithfulness and the subsequent division of the kingdom, the remaining pages summarise the lives of the kings of the divided (northern kingdom of Israel and southern kingdom of Judah) and the solitary kingdom (southern kingdom of Judah alone). THE STORY points to the "glory" of the kingdom (under King Solomon's leadership) and the division of the kingdom into the northern kingdom, until this kingdom goes into exile, and southern kingdom, until this kingdom goes into exile, which is the seeming end of the nation as a whole.

{EXILE}

At this point we have the exile. The nation is taken out of the land. There are many events that happen during this time, which are part of the growth and formation of the nation. The land is the focus in the Old Testament, so in many ways, and for our purposes, THE STORY takes a 70-year break. But God is not done - His story continues.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah continue THE STORY by reversing the removal of the people from the land. They now return. After the 70 years of exile are over, these books record the three returns to the land under the leadership of Zerubbabel (to rebuild the Temple), Ezra, and Nehemiah (to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem). The purpose of these returns is ultimately concerned with preparing for the coming Messiah and the restoration of the kingdom. However, each return also includes the many reforms that the people must make along the way. God is continuing his work.

So note very clearly that THE STORY of the Old Testament ends with the book of Nehemiah. Yes, Nehemiah. It is not that God is done with his people. It is just that God will resume his story with the coming of the Messiah, which occurs in the gospels in the New Testament. The end of the Old Testament is one of anticipation, the anticipation of the good news of the gospel in the coming Messiah.

The prophets add to this anticipation as these books begin to fill in certain details about what God is up to, what he is going to do, and when it is going to happen.

The Old Testament is actually the "first testament" or the prelude to the New Testament. Both testaments contain God's story...



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Week	Memory verse	Monday Whole School Worship	Tuesday Songs of Worship	Wednesday Lower School in Class Upper School together	Thursday Lower School together Upper School in Class	Friday Class Reflection
	If the Lord is pleased with us, he will take us there and give us that rich and fertile land. Do not rebel against the Lord and don't be afraid of the people who live there. <i>Numbers 14:7-9</i>	Promises – God's and Ours		Spies Moses sends 12 spies into Canaan. They report back. Joshua and Caleb are positive. The others aren't and rebel. The land is good but God makes them wait. <i>Numbers 13-14</i>	Spying again Joshua now leads the people. He sends two spies into the city and Rahab looks after them. They promise to look after her. <i>Joshua 2</i>	Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.
	Because of this everyone on earth will know how great the Lord's power is, and you will honour the Lord your God forever. <i>Joshua 4:24</i>	Crossing Jordan Joshua leads the people into Canaan <i>Joshua 3-4</i>		Settling down The tribes of Israel are each allocated part of the promised land. A city of refuge is appointed. <i>Joshua 13-19</i> <i>Refuge - Joshua 20</i>	What about us? The Levites were given no land but they had a special job to do. Who would look after them? <i>Joshua 21</i>	Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.
	The Lord would have mercy on them because they groaned under their suffering and oppression. <i>Judges 2:18b</i>	Raiders With Joshua dead, the people turn away from God. <i>Judges 2</i>		Deborah the Judge With a message for Barak a victory was won and a song was written. <i>Judges 4-5</i>	Gideon Judges too What do you mean we have too many soldiers? Yet God knew what he was doing. <i>Judges 7</i>	Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.
	No one is holy like the Lord; there is none like him, no protector like our God. <i>1 Samuel 2:2</i>	Samuel's Dedication Samuel is born for service. <i>1 Samuel 1- 2:11</i>		Samuel hears God's voice It isn't often that someone hears God's actual voice so this took Samuel by surprise. How would he respond? <i>1 Samuel 3</i>	Samuel Rules When God is with His people they are safe but what happens when others interfere? <i>1 Samuel 4:1-11;</i> <i>1 Samuel 5;</i> <i>1 Samuel 6:1-16</i> <i>1 Samuel 7:2-4</i>	Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.



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	<p>The people paid no attention to Samuel, but said, "No! We want a king, so that we will be like other nations, with our own king to rule us and to lead us out to war and to fight our battles." <i>1 Samuel 8:19-20</i></p>	<p>We want a King! The people demand kingship against better advice <i>1 Samuel 8</i></p>		<p>Tall King Saul Samuel meets Saul and anoints him king in secret. How will the people react? Will Samuel be able to persuade them? <i>1 Samuel 9-10</i></p>	<p>Brave Jonathan How would King Saul's son prove his worth? <i>1 Samuel 14</i></p>	<p>Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.</p>
	<p>The Lord said to Samuel, "I am sorry that I made Saul king; he has turned away from me and disobeyed my commands." <i>1 Samuel 15:10-11a</i></p>	<p>Saul's demise Sadly, Saul didn't turn out to be the king he should have been. <i>1 Samuel 15</i></p>		<p>Young David A new king was needed but Saul was still on the throne. Samuel anoints David and Saul becomes jealous <i>1 Samuel 16, 18</i></p>	<p>David on the run Saul persecutes David but Jonathan comes to David's aid. <i>1 Samuel 19-21</i></p>	<p>Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.</p>
	<p>The Lord is my protector; he is my strong fortress. My God is my protection, and with him I am safe. He protects me like a shield; he defends me and keeps me safe. <i>1 Samuel 22:2-3a</i></p>	<p><i>A HARVEST OF THANKSGIVING</i> David's Song David hasn't been a perfect king but he was a man after God's own heart. <i>2 Samuel 22</i></p>		<p><i>HARVESTING THE GREATER GIFT</i> The Wisdom of Solomon Solomon was now king. What would be the thing he wanted most? <i>1 Kings 3</i></p>	<p><i>A HARVEST FOR A PURPOSE</i> Great Riches Solomon was successful and rich. Why was he so wealthy and what should he do with such riches? <i>1 Kings 4:20-34</i> <i>1 Kings 5</i> <i>(1 Kings 8:54-61)</i></p>	<p>Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.</p>
	<p>Israel, trust in the Lord, because his love is constant and he is always willing to save. <i>Psalms 130:7</i></p>	<p>A Kingdom Divided Rehoboam succeeded the disobedient Solomon. <i>1 Kings 11:26-43;</i> <i>1 Kings 12</i></p>		<p>The Poor Kings of Judah and Israel Just listing the kings we see the same phrase repeated, "Like his father before him, he sinned against the Lord and..." Those in charge has such responsibility but there were exceptions. <i>1 Kings 15-16</i></p>	<p>Ahab's Example King Ahab's rule isn't one you'd want to be under. "He sinned against the Lord more than any of his predecessors." But what did his wife do for Naboth's vineyard? <i>1 Kings 21</i></p>	<p>Time to review the passages of the week and share prayer needs.</p>