

Graphics, Audio and Video - Media Notes are highlighted with this background color

- There is a sermon starter video.

Key Questions, Metadata and Outline

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is an overview of the Old Testament and offers a connection for our lives today.

Why is this sermon important?

This sermon is important because it gives context to the books of the Old Testament and is a reminder that the Old Testament continues to have life and significance for us today.

What is the context of this sermon?

This sermon is the second in the series.

Some of the key resources for this sermon and series include: Wrestling with the Bible sermon series at The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection (<http://j.mp/1kl57IS>), Journey Through the Old Testament sermon series at The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection (<http://j.mp/1t2Pp7X>), txt sermon series at LifeChurch.tv (<http://j.mp/1t5aqv7>) and the book Making Sense of the Bible by Adam Hamilton.

What are the next action steps?

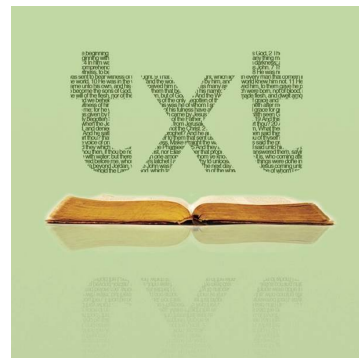
The next action steps are to not leave anyone out, look at others as someone loved by God and to turn back to God when in need of a time to repent.

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that God offers forgiveness and love to every single person; no matter what we have done or how long we have turned away.

Metadata

- Topic(s)
 - Bible
- Sermon Books of the Bible
 - Genesis, Deuteronomy
- Series
 - txt: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture
 - The Bible is much more than a book of stories and rules from the past. It's rich with a relevant message God has for us today. Join us as we discover how to



engage with the Bible like never before and how to apply it to our lives each and every day.

- Speaker
 - Andrew Conard
- Tags
 - books, Bible, forgiveness, children of God, love, loved, repent, welcome, creation, beloved

Outline

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Genesis 1:1-5, CEB

1 When God began to create the heavens and the earth— 2 the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God's wind swept over the waters— 3 God said, "Let there be light." And so light appeared. 4 God saw how good the light was. God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God named the light Day and the darkness Night.

There was evening and there was morning: the first day.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7, CEB

4 Israel, listen! Our God is the Lord! Only the Lord!

5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your being, and all your strength. 6 These words that I am commanding you today must always be on your minds. 7 Recite them to your children. Talk about them when you are sitting around your house and when you are out and about, when you are lying down and when you are getting up.

Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon Starter Video

- Play sermon starter video.
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Introduction

Series Review

Today we continue our series, txt: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture. My hope is that during the weeks of this series, we will have the opportunity to explore the Bible as much more than a book of stories and rules from the past. It's rich with a relevant message God has for us today.

Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes during the message today. Today, I hope that you will hear:

- Something new or find new questions
- Perspective on your life or something in your life that gives additional meaning to the message today.
- Guidance about how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

I invite you to write down some of the things that you hear in the sermon today and take

your bulletin home as a tool to grow in your faith outside of worship. You can reflect on what you heard today, pray for people of our congregation and read scripture to prepare for worship next week.

Opening Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Opening Story

Introduction to the Old Testament

Today we look at the Old Testament. What Christians refer to as the Old Testament is simply "The Bible" for Jews. These are the scriptures that shaped Jesus life, they shaped the early church and they are the foundation of our own faith. For New Testament Christians the Bible was the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible.

Jesus Responds with the Old Testament

Last week we read the story of Jesus being tempted by the devil in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry. Do you remember how Jesus responded? He quoted the scriptures, the Hebrew Bible.

When Jesus was crucified, hanging on the cross, do you remember where Jesus turns for words of prayer? The scriptures. He quotes Psalm 22 as he is praying from the cross.

The early church was shaped by the scriptures. When they looked at the Hebrew Bible, they saw words that gave life and connections with the truth of Jesus.

Transition

Today, I am going to give you a broad overview of the Old Testament. There are 39 books and 1400 years. Over the next fifteen minutes we review the entire Old Testament. I encourage you to open a Bible - on your phone, one from the pew in front of you or one you brought from home. We begin with the Torah - the first five books of the Bible.

Torah

Archetypal Stories - Genesis 1 to 11

The first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis are written about events that took place before any other recorded history. The stories of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, a great flood, God's promise in the rainbow, Noah and his descendants. All of these stories teach us about the truth of God, people and how they interact. They point to something that is bigger than

themselves—something that is true for us today.

≈1900 BC - Abraham and Sarah

The Old Testament from Genesis 12 and forward tells the story of a particular couple, Abraham and Sarah and their descendants. This family is known as the Israelites and their distinct relationship with God. “It is a story of God’s call for them to be his people, and the story of the covenant he makes with them. But it also recounts how God’s people struggled and often failed, to fulfill the covenant.”

≈1600 BC - Israelites enslaved in Egypt

≈1300s BC - Exodus

Exodus tell the story of God delivering the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt through an unlikely character—Moses. Moses was a goatherder in the Sinai peninsula whom God called to confront Pharaoh. Through the words of Moses and the work of God the people of Israel were released.

Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. It was while they were in the wilderness that God gives the people all of the law they are to follow in the land God will take then, including the Ten Commandments. Their new kingdom is to be a light to the world. They would be God’s people and God would be their God. God leads them to the Promised Land and the Book of Joshua tells of the conquest of the land of Canaan.

That covers Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua.

Historical

Judges

The book of Judges describes the 200 years after the conquest of Canaan as God raises up the warrior judges to protect the people.

Ruth

Ruth is a beautiful short story about King David’s great grandmother. It introduces the idea of the monarchy.

1 and 2 Samuel

1 and 2 Samuel tells the story of the rise to power of King David and his life story.

1 Chronicles

1 Chronicles, also tells the story of David and the story of Solomon.

1 Kings, 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles

1 Kings, 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles tell the stories of all the kings that came after David and Solomon.

722 BC - Destruction of the Northern Kingdom (Israel)

These kings who are supposed to lead the people in their relationship with God, instead lead the people away from God. The cycle of turning away, turning back and being forgiven and delivered repeats itself until 722 BC when the north part of the Kingdom is conquered by the Assyrian army. The ten northern tribes of Israel are forcibly relocated, are scattered and assimilate into the Assyrian Empire.

587 BC - Destruction of the Southern Kingdom (Judah)

130 years later the same thing happens to the people in the southern Kingdom, except this time it is the Babylonians. Their capital, Jerusalem, and the temple are destroyed. The people are taken into exile in Babylon. The people of Judah remembered the failure of the people of the northern kingdom to maintain their identity, so they continued to worship God. They gathered together in what would become known as synagogues.

Alright, so that covers Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

538 BC - Ezra and Nehemiah

After fifty years in exile, the Babylonians are conquered by the Persians and the Persian king allows the people to return to their homeland. 50,000 Jews returned to the city of Jerusalem and found it in ruins. They began the process of rebuilding the temple and the city walls. This is the story of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Esther

The last historical book is Esther. Esther is a beautiful story that tells a story of courage about a woman who is married to the King of Persia. She discovers that there is a plot to have the Jewish people killed by the Persians. She stands up for her people and because of her courage the Jews continue to live to this day.

This concludes the review of Israel's history from the very beginning of time to the return from the exile in Babylon

Transition

This brings us to the poetry and wisdom literature.

Writings / Poetic

From Job to Song of Solomon you have the poetry and wisdom literature of the Old Testament. The words are most often poetry and not prose.

Job

Job begins these writings. It is an epic poem addressing the question of suffering. In some ways, Job is a counterbalance to the historical books we've considered so far. They routinely suggest that suffering comes from unfaithfulness to God. But the book of Job stands against these books in making it clear that Job was a righteous man, and yet he suffered—thus countering the idea that suffering is always a punishment for sin.

Psalms

Next we enter the Psalms—Israel's hymn and prayer book—composed across the course of Israel's history, during the good times and the bad, with the joyful songs of praise and the laments, cries for help in times of trouble.

Proverbs

Next is Proverbs which is a collection of short sayings that tell something about how life works, written first by Solomon and then by others who came after him.

Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes is the story of a wealthy man at the end of his life who determines that all of it is meaningless except the fear of the Lord.

Song of Songs

Finally Song of Songs offers a tribute to romantic love and intimacy. Some interpret this as an allegory of God's love for the church, yet most scholars see it as romantic poetry that reminds us that God invented sexual desire and it is a good gift.

Transition

This concludes the Writings, leaving only the Prophets

Prophets

What do Prophets do?

In biblical times, prophets were not fortune-tellers nor were they interested in telling the future. They were social critics that sounded the alarm that if the Jews continued to walk away from God, God would withhold protection and something would come and bring their destruction. The prophets were the spiritual and ethical conscience of the nation.

Isaiah, Hosea, Amos and Micah

Isaiah, Hosea, Amos and Micah prophesied primarily in the 700s. They are warning the nation of Israel, the northern kingdom, that there will be judgment at the hands of the Assyrians if they don't repent and follow the Lord. The people did not repent and Israel was destroyed.

Nahum

Nahum comes next. He is prophesying against the Assyrians for having destroyed the Israelites. He prophesies that the capital city of Nineveh will one day fall and within a few decades it does fall to the Babylonians.

Zephaniah, Jeremiah and Joel

Zephaniah, Jeremiah and Joel foretell the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and of Judah if the people don't repent. They also offer a word of hope that one day people will return to their homeland. The people did not repent. Well, they did and then they didn't; they did and then they didn't. Eventually the Babylonians carried them away as slaves in exile.

Habakkuk

Habakkuk is written as the Babylonians have started to take control of Judah and reflects Habakkuk's questions about God.

Lamentations

Lamentations is a psalm written as a man walks through the streets of Jerusalem after it had been destroyed. He is grieved at what he sees and cries out to God for help in the midst of his pain.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel was one of the first prophets to be carried into exile. He writes from exile about why Judah was destroyed and promising that there would be a day of restoration.

Daniel

Daniel tells the story of courageous exiles - Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The king has asked them to bow down to their gods and give up following the Lord and they refused. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown in the fiery furnace; Daniel was cast into the lion's den for their refusal, in exile to give up their faith. Those stories were intended to encourage the people of God living in exile

Obadiah

Obadiah prophesies that one day Judah would be restored and that Judah's southern neighbor Edom, who laughed as they were taken into exile, would be destroyed.

Jonah

Jonah, it is hard to pinpoint when it happens, is the story of a man, a prophet who is called to offer grace to Israel's enemies. He did not want to go offer that grace. So you remember, he was thrown overboard and swallowed by a fish. The whole story is about God's love for our enemies and not just for ourselves.

Haggai and Zechariah

Haggai and Zechariah are writing after the exiles have returned back to Judah and they have been building their own houses but have not rebuilt the temple of the Lord. They encourage the people to rebuild the temple. Then Zechariah foretells the coming of a new king—We see that as Jesus.

Malachi

Malachi comes 90 years later. He sees that the people are half-hearted in their worship of God and not taking their faith seriously. He warns them once more, repent or what happened before will happen again.

That is all 39 books in the Old Testament.

Conclusion

Our Story (Connection with Opening Story)

There is so much more to these 39 books than a history lesson or this brief overview. These books contain a word from God for us today. We hear again our family story. It goes like this:

The story of Israel, God's chosen people, is that they turned away time and time again. Every time they turned back to God, they are forgiven.

When we read the Hebrew Bible we find that it isn't just the story of the ancient Israelites, it is our story.

The Human Condition

The story of how we sometimes struggle.

The story, in our own lives, that when things are going well, we tend to forget God.

We focus on money, possessions, those things that ultimately have very little meaning and we ignore the needs of others. We find ourselves disconnected from God and don't know where else to turn, so we cry out to God.

God's Forgiveness

God offers us forgiveness and the chance to start over—to live a life in which we confess that there is only one God, the Lord—not all the other things that we chase after.

The chance to start over and live a life in which we love the Lord our God with all our

heart, all our being, and all our strength.

Good News

The good news is that God offers forgiveness and love to every single person; no matter what we have done or how many times we have turned away.

Call to Action

God created all things out of love—you, me, our neighbors; the people with whom we don't really get along; those that don't look like us or act like us.

This means that God's love and forgiveness is really for all people.

So here is my invitation for you today, look for ways that you can share God's love and forgiveness with others.

Look at other people as someone whom God has created and loves deeply.

Invitation

And if you find yourself, like the people of Israel, in need of a time to repent and turn back to God, remember...

No matter how many times you may turn away, God offers forgiveness and loves you more than you can imagine.

Will you pray with me?