ISRAELU

LOVE WHAT GOD LOVES:

SEEING ISRAEL THROUGH THE FATHER'S EYES

COURSE STUDY GUIDE

COURSE ONE | LESSON THREE




NOW THESE THINGS HAPPENED TO THEM AS AN EXAMPLE, AND THEY WERE WRITTEN FOR OUR INSTRUCTION.
1 CORINTHIANS 10:11
ISRAELU

Welcome to Lesson Three, *One Story in Two Testaments: The Old Testament Still Matters.*

This week's study emphasizes the Bible as a unified story of God's love and redemption, revealing Jesus as the central figure and clarifying His ongoing work with Israel and the nations.

ESTABLISHED IN COVENANT: GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

IN ESSENCE

The entire Bible is one story, revealing God's plan to redeem us from sin's penalty and power and restore us to a right relationship with Him. His salvation purposes declared in the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New.

Embracing the entire Word of God allows us to see His redemption story and capture the true picture of what God is doing presently with Israel and the nations. He has declared the end from the beginning, that we might know Him and live victoriously.

If we neglect the Old Testament, we're left with an incomplete picture of God, His purposes, Israel and our shared future.

GETTING STARTED

Group leader, read the In Essence *summary as you begin your time together. This will help set up the direction for this lesson.*

As you open the group time, give everyone an opportunity to answer this question.

If they were to make a documentary of your life, what would be your favorite scene?

We all have moments in our lives that are fun to retell, and others we prefer to forget, but our stories are incomplete without every scene. The same is true with the story God is writing. Let's join the video lesson as we consider how the Bible, with its 66 books, is telling one story.

LESSON THREE VIDEO

Group leader, stream the video teaching.

As you watch the video teaching, use the following prompts and space provided to record anything that stands out to you.

1. Jesus spoke of Himself as the main character in the Hebrew Scriptures.

2. Where do we see Jesus revealed in the Old Testament?

- **Theophanies**
- **Types and foreshadows**
- **Prophecies**

The same prophets who prophesied Israel's chastisement for sin, prophesied their restoration.

3. God's eternal plan is revealed first in the Old Testament.

4. God's purposes declared in the Old Testament come about in the New Testament.

5. If we neglect the Old Testament, we can develop a skewed picture of Israel.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Group Leader, read aloud the questions and prompts below and lead the discussion.

1. **Which of these is closest to describing your current level of interaction with the Old Testament?**
    a. Never read it
    b. Read it sometimes, but am unsure how it relates to me
    c. Read parts of it, like the Psalms and Proverbs
    d. Reading it frequently and would like to understand it better
    e. Love it and read it regularly

2. **Have you viewed the Bible as one continuous story, or two independent testaments?** What or who has influenced your view?

3. **Read 1 Corinthians 10:11.** Michael said the events and people in the Old Testament were literal, and simultaneously used as illustrations or foreshadows of spiritual truths for our benefit. What do you think about that statement? Does it reflect your personal view?

    If there is, or was, a level of disinterest or some disconnect to the Old Testament for you, what cause(s) attributed to that?

4. **Read Acts 10:43; Hebrews 10:7; Luke 24:25-27, 44.** The entire Bible is about Jesus. Briefly share within your group some Old Testament revelations and/or prophecies of Jesus that come to mind.

    According to Luke 24:45, if you want to see Jesus and the gospel message more thoroughly in the Old Testament, what could you ask of the Lord?

5. **Describe a time when God sovereignly opened your eyes to a spiritual truth.** What impact has that had?

6. **Read Isaiah 56:3, 6-8.** Israel is the nation to whom Isaiah wrote and the primary people to whom the Lord spoke, so who are the “foreigners”?

Read these verses as well. What message is the Lord giving?

- **Isaiah 49:6:** Is the message of Messiah for the tribes of Jacob (Israel) only?
- **John 10:16:** Jesus was speaking to a Jewish audience, so who are the "other sheep"?

What does this tell you about God's eternal plan? What does it mean to you knowing God's eternal plan has had you in mind?

7. **Read the following sentences and discuss the idea within your group.** Agree? Disagree? Not sure?

   The Israel of the Old Testament is the same Israel in the New Testament, and the Jewish people worldwide and the nation of Israel today are a continuation of Biblical Israel. It's one story.

CONCLUSION

The Bible was penned by about 40 authors, over approximately 1400 years, using two primary languages - yet it tells one harmonious story, because it is truly authored by God, inspiring men to write on His behalf. We want to be people who embrace and prioritize the entire Bible as one message from the Father to us.

We need the full revelation of Jesus and to understand God's complete plan, which enables us to stand strong both today and in the critical days ahead. In this course, as we seek to see Israel through the Father's eyes, let's understand His dealings with them from Genesis to Revelation.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you close your time together, see if anyone within your group has a need for prayer, and take a few minutes to cover those.

You might also pray for an increase of hunger and understanding for the Scriptures. In the scroll of the book it is written of Him. Let's find Jesus and the gospel message in every part.

> *Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law.* **Psalm 119:18**

> *Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures...***Luke 24:45**



THERE ISN'T AN
OLD TESTAMENT PLAN
AND A DIFFERENT
NEW TESTAMENT PLAN.

THERE IS AN ETERNAL PLAN
OF GOD TO REACH THE WORLD
WITH THE GOSPEL.

PERSONAL STUDY FOR BETWEEN SESSIONS

This section is designed for your personal study to help you dig deeper into some of the themes from the teaching and discussion.

DAY ONE

THE NEW COVENANT

God uses covenant as the foundation of His relationships. We looked at the Abrahamic Covenant in the previous lesson, which is foundational to God forming the people through whom the Messiah would come and their land inheritance.

The Abrahamic Covenant also opened the door for other covenants between God and Israel.

- **The Mosaic Covenant, also known as the Law, instructed Israel on how to live as a nation in the Promised Land.** It revealed God's holiness, exposed Israel's sin and need for a Savior. It was a conditional covenant, meaning Israel could break it and lose occupancy of the land, which is what happened. They maintain the inheritance of the land because it was established in the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant, but they lost occupancy for many years. (Leviticus 26:40-44; Ezekiel 37:21-28)

- **The Davidic Covenant identified the specific family within Israel through whom the Messiah would be born.** God promised David his son would reign as king forever from Jerusalem. Jesus, the (generations later) Son of David, was born King of the Jews, died King of the Jews, and He will return as the Lion of Judah, and King of kings! (1 Chronicles 17:11-15; Matthew 1:1)

- **The New Covenant is the covenant of our salvation,** establishing a people from every nation who receive the forgiveness of sins, enter a relationship with God as sons and daughters by faith, receiving a new identity and eternal life.

Let's look at the New Covenant more closely as we consider the theme this week of seeing the message in the Bible as one story. How do we see the New Covenant in both testaments?

1. **Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. With whom was the New Covenant made (vv. 31, 33)?**

   Does that surprise you? Many assume the New Covenant is a plan established with the Church in the New Testament, but at its foundation, God made it with Israel.

2. **Read** the verses below and write out what you learn about the New Covenant. This will be a cursory look at a much larger topic.

Note: *In the Jeremiah and Hebrews passages below, the New Covenant is contrasted with the Mosaic Covenant, or the Law.*

	NEW COVENANT
Jeremiah 31:33-34 **Isaiah 59:20-21**	Provisions:
Ezekiel 36:25-207	Provisions:
Hebrews 7:22; 8:6	Who is the mediator and how is the covenant described?
Hebrews 9:11-12 **1 Peter 1:18-20**	Covenants required the shedding of blood. Whose blood was shed? What did it obtain? How is the blood described?
Ephesians 2:8-9 **Romans 10:9**	How does anyone enter the New Covenant and receive all these benefits?

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." **John 14:6**

3. **According to Hebrews 9:26,** why did Jesus appear?

4. **Now read Hebrews 9:14.** What is cleansed or purified by the blood of Jesus?

He has appeared to put away our sin, but His work on the cross also cleanses our conscience. In other words, not only are we washed clean of our sin – *but we know it.*

We need to know it. We can know it, friend. Do you know it? You've been washed clean!

Let your mind agree with the spiritual reality. The same sin condition that was rendered washed away in Heaven's courtroom must likewise be recognized in the courtroom of your mind.

The power of God's forgiveness is why Paul could write:

- **2 Corinthians 5:17:** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
- **Romans 8:1:** Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

REFLECTION

Use the space below to write out your thoughts regarding the New Covenant blessings as yours, if you belong to Jesus. If you struggle to embrace the truth that you've been washed clean, write that out as well and be specific. Where is the hangup? Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you. Take time to listen to His response.

FURTHER STUDY

If you'd like more on how the New Covenant is connected to Passover and to you, scan this QR code, or click on this link for an article written by Doug Hershey, titled "The Last Supper and First Communion at Passover."

DAY TWO

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

A common feature of Biblical covenants was the exchange of personal items. Let's look at a cameo of the covenant between Jonathan and David and connect some dots to corresponding New Testament truths.

Keep in mind our theme in this lesson of seeing the continuous story throughout the Bible. It's been said the truths concealed in the Old Testament are revealed in the New. Paul wrote what was in shadow form in the Old, finds its substance in Jesus (Colossians 2:17).

What do we learn about our covenant relationship with Jesus when we look at Jonathan and David's commitment to one another?

1. **Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4.** We don't have all the details of the cutting of covenant, but we have exactly what the Holy Spirit wants us to have. What personal items did Jonathan give David as their covenant was formed?

When a covenant of friendship was made the relationship superseded all other human relationships. The covenant partners were done with independent living and committed themselves to one another. This wasn't like "we were friends one summer." Rather, "You are not alone! Your burden is mine. Your fight is mine. Your joy is mine. Your family is family to me. Your protection and wellbeing are my concern. I live and make decisions with you in mind."

2. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:15.** As people who are in relationship with Jesus through the New Covenant, how are we to live?

Are you done with independent living? Do you live with Him in mind? Make decisions with Jesus in mind? Is His burden yours? His family? How does this truth settle with you?



Is there an area of your life where you've maintained independent control, an area that needs surrendered? If so, which one(s)? Will you do it today?

Let's look at the personal items Jonathan gave to David in I Samuel 18:4 and the corresponding truths those items speak of in our covenant relationship with Jesus. Again, what is in shadow form in the Old Testament, finds its substance in Jesus. It's one story, pointing us to Him and His work of salvation on our behalf.

3. The Robe

- **Old Testament shadow:** The robe spoke of identity. To put on the robe of a covenant partner was expressing oneness with that person. What's his, is mine. We are one.

  Likening the garments to wedding clothes, underscoring the idea of oneness, Isaiah writes that the Lord has clothed (us) with garments of salvation, with a robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10).

- **New Testament substance:**
  He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. **2 Corinthians 5:21**

  Jesus took upon Himself our robe of sin, our guilt and shame, and in exchange robed us with His righteousness. What an exchange!

In Luke 15:22, when the repentant prodigal son returned home, his father called for the best robe to be placed upon him. The son's identity, the relationship, was restored.

- **Romans 13:12-14:** What are we to lay aside, and what are we to put on?

- **Luke 24:49:** What are we to be clothed in?

- **Colossians 3:9-14:** What attributes are part of our "new self"?

4. The Armor, including his sword and bow

- **Old Testament shadow:** The exchange of armor was a way to express that your enemies are mine. You are not alone in battle, but I will arise in your defense and seek your victory. I have your back.
- **New Testament substance:** We have the full power of the Godhead on our side when we are in covenant with Jesus. Imagine it! If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31)
  - **Ephesians 6:10-13, 16-17:** What spiritual armor have we been given and what is the repeated exhortation to the one in battle?

  - **1 Peter 5:8-10:** What will the Lord do for us as we stand against Satan?

5. The Belt

- **Old Testament shadow:** In David's day, the belt held the sword and arrows. It speaks of strength and resource. Jonathan was saying to David, "When you need me, I will be there with all my strength and ability. My resources are at your disposal." The belt holds the essentials and keeps them at hand.
- **New Testament substance:** It's never comfortable to feel weak, even at the end of ourselves, but the Lord met Paul there and assured him (and us) that His power is perfected in our weaknesses (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Do you lack strength, ability, or resources today? Jesus stands with you with His full supply.
  - **Isaiah 11:5:** These verses speak of the Messiah, Jesus. How is His belt described?

  - **Ephesians 6:14:** How is the belt of God's armor described?

  - **Philippians 4:13:** What is the outcome when we are united with Jesus's strength?

REFLECTION

If you are in the New Covenant with Jesus, you have received His robe, His armor, and His belt. His grace is truly sufficient for us.

What do you most need from Jesus, your Covenant Partner, today? The robe? The armor? The belt? How so? It's all there for you.

And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:19

Great job today. There was a lot to read and consider, but the truths can be life transforming, as we fully embrace the extraordinary sacrifice and provision of Jesus through the New Covenant. We encourage you to take what you've learned and share it with others.

FURTHER STUDY

If you'd like more on this topic, we invite you to scan this QR code, or click on this link for an article written by FIRM staff, titled "Battle Strategies: Finding Victory in Uncommon Places."


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STATE CHAMPS

DAY THREE

ISRAEL TODAY

In Lesson Three, we've seen that God has authored one harmonious story from Genesis to Revelation. We want to embrace the entire Bible. If we neglect either testament, we end up with a skewed understanding of His story.

Jesus is the supreme figure in both testaments. God's plan of salvation is the same in both testaments.

Today, we want to answer the question, *Is Israel the same in both testaments, and are the Jewish people today a continuation of biblical Israel?*

ISRAEL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. **Read Genesis 35:9-12.** Who is Israel and how did he get his name? What did God promise him?

Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel. Israel was a man, then a nation as the family grew.

ISRAEL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

There were 400 years between the close of the Old Testament and when Jesus was born. The question is: *Is the Israel of the New Testament a continuation of Israel in the Old Testament? It may seem obvious to answer yes, but let's confirm it.*

2. **According to Matthew 1:1-2,** who were Jesus's ancestral fathers? Was Jesus born into the same Israel as the Israel of the Old Testament?

Below are just a few examples that confirm Jesus, the disciples, and the apostle Paul all saw themselves as part of the same national Israel and divine purpose founded in the Old Testament.

- ✓ Jesus's death on the cross was the blood that ratified the New Covenant God made with Israel.
- ✓ Jesus said the entire Old Testament spoke of Him, and that He came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17).
- ✓ At Pentecost, Peter addressed the crowd as "men of Israel," "brethren," and "house of Israel." (Acts 2)
- ✓ After the birth of the Church, Stephen recited Israel's history in Acts 7 beginning with "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham ..."

3. **Read Philippians 3:5.** How did Paul, the greatest apostle and Church planter, describe himself?

The Israel of the New Testament is the same Israel of the Old. Same familial identity, living on the same land, with the same mission.

ISRAEL TODAY

What about today? Are today's Jewish people worldwide and the nation of Israel a continuation of biblical Israel?

Why ask the question - does it matter? It absolutely does.

- There is an Israel prophesied throughout Scripture who will return to their original homeland and then return to the Lord. There is a physical and spiritual restoration for Israel.
- Jesus said His second coming would be to a Jerusalem, an Israel, whose leadership will be welcoming Him with "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Matthew 23:37-39)
- Paul wrote there will be a day when "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26), a national turning to the Lord. *Who is that Israel?*

In the year 70 AD, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans and by 135 AD all Jewish people were banished from Judea. They scattered into the four corners of the earth, just as the Jewish prophets prophesied, and they remained in the nations, in exile, until 1948. Then, by the hand of God, Israel became a sovereign nation once again, and Jewish people from around the world started making their way home, and their return continues today.

In Genesis 10:5, 20, 31, we learn the components of a nation: family, land, and language.

- Regardless of the attempts to annihilate the Jewish people over the millennia the Jewish people live – the Jewish FAMILY is growing.
- Besides Israel, no other people in history have had a homeland, been exiled for 2,000 years, and returned to that same LAND.
- Besides Israel, no other people in history have had a LANGUAGE, lost the language in exile, and had the same language resurrected as a mother tongue - simultaneous to the families returning to their homeland.

It's a miracle! The Jewish people living outside of the nation of Israel today are still the sons and daughters of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob even while being productive citizens of other nations.

Is it *this Israel* of whom the ancient prophets spoke who will return to the Lord and welcome the Messiah, Jesus, in the latter days?

No one knows the day or hour of the prophetic fulfillments, of course, but is modern Israel, including the Jewish people worldwide, those who will see and take part in the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies concerning Israel? We believe so. *Who else could it be?!*

4. **Read Hosea 3:4-5** and write out what was prophesied about Israel and the general timing of the fulfillment noted in verse 5.

5. **Read Jeremiah 30:3.** What is promised?

6. **Read Jeremiah 31:1-4, 7-11, 14:** What is prophesied for Israel in these verses? Note: Jer. 30:24 identifies the timing as "in the latter days."

Lots to consider here. If you believe modern Israel is a continuation of biblical Israel, it ought to impact how you pray for and interact with the people. No nation is perfect, most certainly, but let's be diligent to see Israel through the Father's eyes. The Scriptures are still speaking – all of them!

REFLECTION

Read the *In Essence* lesson summary provided at the beginning of Lesson Three. As you have considered this topic of how the Old Testament Still Matters, have there been further questions come to your mind, or perhaps poignant moments when some dots were connected for you? If so, write them out.

The Bible is one continuous story. If we neglect any part, we're left with an incomplete picture of God, His eternal purposes for all people, and of Israel and our shared future.

FURTHER STUDY

If you'd like more on how Israel relates to you as a believer, scan this QR code, or click on this link for a short video by FIRM, "Why Israel: How your Christian faith is rooted in Jesus and the Jewish people."

ISRAEL IS GOD'S CHOSEN VESSEL, ENTRUSTED WITH A UNIQUE PURPOSE THAT HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH CONNECTING US TO GOD.

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