

OLD
TESTAMENT
LAW &
HISTORY

JAMES L. R. CATRON



Developed as a study course by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

Old Testament Law & History
James L. R. Catron

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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

This book is devoted to the survey of the Law and History sections of the Bible. It covers the book of Genesis through the book of Esther. You will gain an overview of the book of beginnings, the wilderness wanderings of Israel, their entrance into the land of Canaan, and the period of the Judges and Kings. The author has given many insights that will enable the student to appreciate these rich portions of God's Word.

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Course Components

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

How To Study

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

Exams

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions.

How Your Exams Are Graded

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.



INTRODUCTION TO LAW AND HISTORY

A Survey of Genesis through Esther

There is no piece of literature in the history of man that compares to the Bible. Yet the Bible is the most neglected, least known, and least understood of all books among most of the people of the world. How can so many people leave this book inspired by God and transmitted through His servants of ancient days on a bookshelf to collect dust? How can it be that such a timely and timeless book, essential to our spiritual and moral health, should be desired so little?

One does not have to look very far for the answer. The basic problem is the sinful nature of man. Man by nature does not want God to reign over him. He does not appreciate or want the high standards of spirituality and morality which God requires of him. Only when a person understands and accepts the gospel message does he, inspired by the Holy Spirit, begin to have a thirst and hunger for God's Word.

As you study through the first part of the Old Testament—Law and History—you must determine to add to your thirst and hunger the quality of hard work. Not only study the material found in this book, which is intended to be a guide to understanding, but also read Genesis through Esther. They are exciting books. No doubt there are some sections that will be more difficult to read than others (like Leviticus), but have patience and do not be intimidated. Schedule to read a certain number of chapters a day, and then stick to it. Do not get bogged down. You can always come back to sections that were difficult for you. It is amazing how much knowledge you will accumulate without being aware of it. That was the experience of this

author when he read through the Old Testament for the first time.

Genesis through Esther consists of two major sections. First there is Law, which takes in the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis-Deuteronomy). These books are followed by History (Joshua-Esther). The Jews called the first five books the Torah (law, teaching). You will observe, however, that there is a lot of history in these books.

LAW					HISTORY											
G E N E S I S	E X O D U S	L E V I T I C U S	N U M B E R S	D E U T E R O N O M Y	J O S H U A	J U D G E S	R U T H	I S A M U E L	II S A M U E L	I K I N G S	II K I N G S	I C H R O N I C L E S	II C H R O N I C L E S	E Z R A	N E H E M I A H	E S T H E R

Genesis is the book of beginnings. The first eleven chapters deal with the story of creation and the development of man upon the earth. Genesis 12–50 records the history of the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The end of the book of Genesis pictures the chosen people in Egypt where they will grow and develop into a large nation.

Exodus opens with the chosen people still in Egypt, but they are there as slaves. The story of Exodus is one of redemption and law. Exodus 1–18 records Israel’s redemption from Egyptian bondage, while Exodus 19–40 gives an account of their acceptance of God’s law at Mt. Sinai—with a commitment to obey it.

Leviticus is the worship manual of Israel. This book instructed God’s ancient people that they could worship only through divinely ordained sacrifices and a divinely ordained priesthood.

Numbers tell the story of how Israel was organized as a camp at Mt. Sinai in preparation for their journey to the promised land of Canaan. The journey was hindered by rebellion and Israel was forced to wander in the wilderness forty years. Finally they came to the plains of Moab, ready to enter the land.

Deuteronomy consists of the last words of Moses in the Plains of Moab just before Israel entered the land under Joshua. Moses expounded the law

to the new generation of Jews who would cross over the Jordan with Joshua.

Joshua records the history of the entrance into, conquest of, and division of the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel. It is a thrilling story of God's power manifested through His people in taking the land.

Judges continue the story of Joshua in the settlement of the land. It contrasts with Joshua in that the tribes failed to completely wipe out the Canaanites and strongly establish themselves in the land.

Ruth is a lovely and touching story of a young Moabite girl who lived during the early part of the book of Judges. Ruth not only came to believe in the true God, but she married Boaz and produced a child in the line of the Messiah.

1 Samuel continues the story of the Judges period and recounts the history of the transition from the rule of the Judges to the rule of Kings in Israel.

2 Samuel and *1 Chronicles* carry on the history from 1 Samuel. These books tell the story of David's kingship from different perspectives. *2 Samuel* was written from the prophet's point of view as it tells the story of the King. It not only relates David's triumphs in establishing the kingdom, but also his sins. *1 Chronicles* was written from a priestly point of view and emphasizes the positive aspects of David's reign as they relate to the worship of God's people.

1 Kings, *2 Kings*, and *2 Chronicles* continue the history of the kingdom from David's successor, Solomon, to its destruction during the reign of Zedekiah. *2 Chronicles* is a retelling of the story of 1 & 2 Kings from the priestly perspective and has the tendency to downplay the negative aspects of the story while emphasizing the positive. 1 & 2 Kings was written from the prophet's point of view and emphasizes the good and the bad equally. The nation of Israel was finally destroyed and taken captive to Babylon for seventy years.

Ezra records the history of the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity and the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 1–6). Its later chapters record another return under the leadership of Ezra and a revival which followed (Ezra 7–10).

Nehemiah records the story of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, which was followed by another great revival among the leaders and people. This book brings us to the end of Old Testament inspired history. There

was, however, another 400 years before the Christ appeared on earth and the New Testament era began. During that 400 years many other Jewish books were written, but they were not part of the inspired Bible.

Esther took place between the events of Ezra chapters six and seven. It tells the story of how God preserved His ancient people from death and destruction by intervention of the Jewish queen, and wife of Ahasuerus (Xerxes), Esther. Esther is the story of how God’s providence was a match for human crisis.

The following chapters in this book will fill in the details summarized in this introduction to Genesis through Esther. Background material will be combined with the content of the books. When finished, the diligent student should have a good survey knowledge of Genesis through Esther.

Genesis—Part One (Chapters 1-11)

The word Genesis means beginning, and the book of Genesis is the record of beginnings. Highlighted are such things as creation, mankind, marriage, temptation, sin (and sin’s antidote), the first society, the great flood, the nations, and the beginning and development of the Hebrew race. The first section (chapters 1-11) deals with the history of creation and mankind in general, while the second part (chapters 12-50) records the stories of the Hebrew patriarchs.

I. The History of Mankind in General 1-11	II. The History of the Hebrew patriarchs in Particular 12-50			
A. Creation 1 B. Mankind 2-11 1. Adam and Eve 2-3 2. Cain and Abel 4:1-15 3. Cain and Seth’s Posterity 4:16-5:32 4. Noah and Sons 6-9 5. The Nations 10-11	12-25:18 The Story of Abraham	25:19-27:46 The Story of Isaac	28-36 The Story of Jacob	37-50 The Story of Joseph
???	2090 BC		1804BC	

Who Wrote Genesis?

Genesis has been traditionally ascribed to Moses. Moses lived many years after the events of Genesis took place, and he is not named in the

book of Genesis. However, tradition has attributed it to Moses throughout the centuries. God inspired Moses to write Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy as well. These first five books of the Old testament are called the Pentateuch.

How Much Time Is Covered By Genesis?

Genesis covers from creation to the death of Joseph. We are uncertain of the amount of time covered by Genesis 1–11. However, Genesis 12–50 certainly covers from 2090 B.C. (when Abraham entered Canaan at the age of 75) to 1804 B.C. (the death of Joseph). This is determined by comparing many time references in the Old Testament.

I. The History of Mankind in General, Genesis 1–11

Just like a prelude to a symphony, so is Genesis 1–11 to the book of Genesis and to the whole Old Testament. These chapters form a very necessary introduction.

In summary, this section opens with a magnificent account of the creation of the heavens and the earth (chapter 1). It narrows to emphasize God's crown of His creation, Adam and Eve (chapters 2-3). Placed in a marvelous environment, the Garden of Eden, they had fellowship with God and with one another. God's only limitation upon them was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. However, Satan tempted Eve to eat its fruit. She did and then gave some to her husband. Thus sin entered the world and death by sin (Romans 5:12).

After being expelled from the garden, they began their family with the births of Cain and Able (chapter 4). Cain murdered Abel in rage and jealousy. Seth took the place of Abel and from both Cain and Seth developed the first society. It became so wicked that God destroyed it with the great flood (chapters 6-8). Only Noah and his family were saved by means of the great ark. From Noah, civilization began again. Three family lines proceeded from his sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (chapters 9-11). The most important of these was Shem, for from this line God would take one man, Abram (later called Abraham), to be the father of the Hebrew people—whom the rest of the Old Testament is about (Genesis 12–Malachi). Let us note, then, as we survey this major section, some basic items which will help in understanding the general emphasis.

A. Time Coverage

As mentioned previously, we do not know for sure the exact amount of time covered. It is a safe estimate, however, that Genesis 1–11 covers more time than the rest of the Old Testament (Genesis 12–Malachi). What makes it difficult to determine the time coverage? First and foremost, it is due to our lack of knowledge as to when creation took place.

B. Language

The language of Genesis 1–11 is prose with just a few exceptions (e.g. 2:23; 4:23). It is important to understand that the creation account is not poetic, but prose. Why? Because some do not believe that Genesis 1–2 is an actual account of how God brought the creation into being. Making the account poetic gives them great latitude in its interpretation.

C. Literary Principle

The literary principle governing the content of Genesis 1–11, and the whole Bible, is historical selection. The content is selected, not for secular reasons or purely historical data, but for God’s purpose in revealing His plan of redemption for mankind. Moses, guided by the Holy Spirit, put into the record exactly what God wanted. He did not give a thorough, detailed history of the period. Note the following select emphases:

1. The Place of God in Genesis 1–11

The existence of God, of course, is assumed, not proved or explained. This is understandable since Genesis was written for God’s people, who already believed in His existence.

God is viewed as the originator of all things (Genesis 1:1). Having primacy over creation, He is both transcendent (meaning above, apart from) and immanent (meaning present with creation). This truth rejects the pantheism of eastern religions and the New Age Movement, which teach that God is all and all is God.

Other aspects of God’s person are seen in these chapters. Among them are His love in providing Adam and Eve with such a wonderful place to live (Genesis 2) and fellowshiping with them in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). Then there is His grace as seen in His long-suffering toward those who do evil—the wicked

of Noah's day (Genesis 6 and 1 Peter 3:20). As well, there was a gracious plan for redeeming mankind—the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). God's wrath is also prominent in the great destruction of mankind by the worldwide flood of Noah's time (Genesis 6–8). He is a holy God, and sin must be punished.

2. What Place Does Man Have in Genesis 1–11?

Man is distinct from all God's creation and creatures. He is rightfully called the crown of God's creation.

a. His nature (1:26)

Man was made in the “image and likeness” of God which was not true of the animal world. As created in God's image he has (1) morality, (2) personality, (3) and spirituality. As a moral being Adam had freedom and responsibility. As a personal being, he had intellect, emotion, and will. As a spiritual being he was capable of having communion with God.

b. His distinction (1:27)

God made man “male and female.” The distinction between the sexes was His design. The contention that man is very, very old, and that he evolved from prior brute forms to his present form is strongly contradicted by Genesis. The Genesis account is dogmatic that the first human beings were Adam and Eve and that they were not the result of some evolutionary process from sub-human ancestors.

c. His propagation of the race (1:28; 2:18-25)

God said that it was not good for Adam to be alone, so He made Eve his wife and companion (2:18-23). From this pair the race had its beginning, and it would move from one couple to one family, to one society, and finally to nations which developed from Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Moses commented on this scene, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (2:24). Leaving refers to the exclusiveness of the relationship; he is not to be tied to his parents materially or psychologically. Cleaving refers to the permanence of the relationship; they are not to divorce (Matthew 19:4-6). Becoming one flesh refers to the unity of the relationship; it is not to be corrupted by other relationships.

The whole Christian world needs the message of this verse. It has been said that Genesis 2:24 is an indirect warning against polygamy, for it says that a man is to cleave to his wife, not his wives. Polygamy was a problem in the ancient world and it still is in certain parts of our world.

d. His Position in the earth (1:26, 28; Psalm 8)

God gave man dominion over the earth. David celebrated this dominion in beautiful Psalm 8. But God's king of the earth failed through sin (Genesis 3) and so lost that dominion. Thus Hebrews 2:8 says, "But now we do not yet see all things put under him." What King Adam lost will be more than regained by King Jesus. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In the meantime, Satan is called six times in John's gospel the "prince of this world." He has concocted a system built on the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Some day that will all be swept away by the coming of Jesus Christ.

3. Prophetical (3:15)

The third chapter of Genesis is one of the most sorrowful in the Bible. God had commanded the first couple not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, threatening them with death (Genesis 2:17). When Satan appeared on the scene to deceive Eve (Genesis 3:1-6; 2 Corinthians 11:3), she should have responded in obedience to God's clear command to not eat of the forbidden tree. However, she yielded to the tempter and gave the fruit also to her husband. The judgment was pronounced on all the participants (Adam, Eve, the serpent, and Satan) in Genesis 3:14-19. But in the midst of this judgment there was mercy, as prophesied in Genesis 3:15—the first prophecy concerning the Messiah. It predicted that the seed of the woman (Jesus Christ) would crush the serpent's (Satan's) head. This means that the Messiah would break Satan's power. He did that when He died on the cross. Many more prophecies will be made in the Old Testament to broaden that theme. Among them are Isaiah 52:13–53:12 and Psalm 22.

4. Moral

Throughout Genesis 1–11, man is viewed in relation to God and His laws. The clear pattern is responsibility, failure, judgment, and grace. We have just seen how this worked out for Adam

and Eve: Responsibility—don't eat of the tree; failure—they disobeyed; judgment—clearly pronounced and justifiably given; grace—the clothing of Adam and Eve by God (Genesis 3:21) with garments of skin, and God's prophecy of a coming redeemer (Genesis 3:15). This pattern repeats for Cain and Abel (4:1-15), Cain's line and Seth's line (4:16-5:32), Noah and his three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (chapters 6-9), and the nations—descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth (chapters 10-11). Let us observe this pattern:

a. Cain and Abel (4:1-15)

Their responsibility was to serve and worship God in God's appointed way. How do we know this is the standard? Because revelation had been given to them (Genesis 4:7; Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12) either by God directly or passed on by Adam. God's appointed way was animal sacrifice.

The failure was on the part of Cain, not Abel. He did not obey and bring the animal sacrifice (4:3). In anger he murdered Abel (4:8) and had an unrepentant attitude (4:13). Cain was not concerned about his sin, only his punishment (4:14).

God's judgment upon Cain (4:11-12) was banishment from food-producing soils. He would be a fugitive and a vagabond. His fear was that someone would find him and kill him (4:14b).

But God is rich in grace—even to wicked Cain (4:15). This is seen in several ways: (1) God spoke to Cain about his anger before he killed Abel (4:6-7); (2) God did not kill Cain, though he deserved it; (3) He placed a mark on Cain (we don't know what it was) in order to restrain others from killing him (4:15). Letting Cain live gave him more opportunity to repent; (4) Another seed was provided to take Abel's place, Seth (4:25). The New Testament speaks negatively of Cain saying that he was of the devil (1 John 3:12).

b. Cain's line (4:16-24) and Seth's line (4:25-5:32)

The responsibility is the same for the descendants of these two men as for themselves—serve and worship God as God had appointed: through animal sacrifice (as illustrated in Abel and Noah). The failure in Cain's line is illustrated in polygamy (4:19), pride of manslaughter (4:23-24), and much worldly attainment

(4:20-22). There is no mention of God in this line. The line of Seth failed, but not at the beginning. When Seth's son, Enosh, was born, "men began to call on the name of the LORD" (4:26). Such outstanding men as Enoch (5:24) and Noah (6:9) who walked with God were in Seth's line.

But over time the line of Seth ("the sons of God," 6:2) was corrupted by the line of Cain ("the daughters of men," 6:2). This unequal yoke brought great wickedness in the earth. The judgment for this incredible corruption was the great flood of Noah's day (7:23). Yet there was grace! God's grace was seen in Noah's preaching of judgment for 120 years (compare Genesis 6:3 with 1 Peter 3:20). On a smaller scale, but very significant, Noah's family was spared the judgment and became the basis for the beginning of a new race and the preservation of the Messianic promise.

c. Noah and his sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (6:1–9:29)

The responsibility was generally to worship God in His own appointed way, and to walk with God as Noah had. Specifically, they were to build the ark (6:14-22) and enter it (7:1, 13) for their preservation. Then they were to reestablish sacrificial worship after the flood (8:20).

The failure came some time after the flood, after Noah had planted a vineyard (9:20). Noah lost his self-control and became drunk. He also uncovered himself in his tent (9:21). The next failure was worse, for Ham (and evidently his son Canaan) looked with pleasure and satisfaction at Noah (9:22-24).

The judgment was pronounced, not upon Ham, but upon one of his four sons, Canaan. The judgment came in the form of a curse: "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren" (9:25). The sexual sensuality of Ham and Canaan became characteristic of Ham's descendants through Canaan. From Canaan came the most wicked, sexually perverted people that ever lived—the Canaanites of Palestine. These people controlled Palestine when Joshua and Israel invaded that land. God's command was that they should be destroyed, in total, from the land. But Israel did not obey God's voice and allowed them to live and become Israel's slaves (see Joshua 9 for one example). Thus the curse, "a servant of servants he shall be to

his brethren” became fulfilled.

The grace of God is seen in the following ways. First, the three sons of Noah would have the privilege of repopulating the earth (9:1, 19). They were challenged to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (9:7). Secondly, God promised to Noah that he would never destroy the earth again by water (9:11). Thirdly, Canaan is to be the servant to Shem. Fourthly, Japheth would “dwell in the tents of Shem,” which means that he would enjoy the spiritual blessings of the Shemites.

d. The Nations: Descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth (10:1–11:32)

The responsibility of the nations is the same as before. They are to worship and serve God as revealed to their ancestors. Secondly, they are responsible for various provisions of the covenant with Noah. The chief provision is to expand, spread out, and fill the earth (9:7).

The failure is clearly seen by their disobedience to spread out and fill the earth. This failure is dramatized by the tower of Babel incident (11:1-9). The peoples of the earth confederated in the land of Shinar. They built the tower as a symbol of their confederation—a confederation against God. They said, “Let us make us a name.” This is the sin of pride and self-sufficiency. God is repudiated! They feared being “scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.” They lusted for the power which comes from unity. But it was a unity without God ruling over them! Babel is a picture of the arrogance and rebellion of man against God.

The judgment was swift and complete once it became clear what man was unwilling to do. God’s method was to “confuse their language,” thus making it impossible to “understand one another’s speech.” The effect was dynamic. They spread abroad over the earth! God will see that His will is done one way or another. Is it not better to obey than rebel?

The grace of God took an interesting turn. He ceased working with the race in general, but He was not finished with them. He took one man, Abram, from the line of Shem, and through him He blessed the world (compare 11:27-32 with 12:1-3).

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EXAM BOOKLET

AK '07 (2 UNITS)

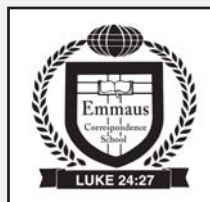
STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

Each exam are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Each exam has multiple-choice questions to be answered. You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue
- B. green
- C. yellow
- D. orange

 B

WHAT DO YOU SAY? QUESTIONS

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

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CHAPTER 1 EXAM

INTRODUCTION TO LAW AND HISTORY

EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

1. Genesis through Esther consists of how many major sections?
 - A. two
 - B. three
 - C. four
 - D. five

2. Exodus opens with the chosen people located in
 - A. Palestine
 - B. Egypt
 - C. Assyria
 - D. Babylonia

3. Leviticus is the
 - A. story of redemption
 - B. account of the numbering of Israel
 - C. the record of the entrance of Israel into Canaan
 - D. the worship manual of Israel

4. Which books tell the same story from different perspectives?
 - A. Numbers and Deuteronomy
 - B. Joshua and Judges
 - C. 1 Samuel and 1 Chronicles
 - D. 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles

CHAPTER 1 EXAM CONTINUED

5. Genesis, the book of beginnings, records such beginnings as _____
- A. the creation
 - B. the flood
 - C. the nations
 - D. all of the above
6. Genesis is divided into two major sections which are _____
- A. Genesis 1-3 and 4-50
 - B. Genesis 1-11 and 12-50
 - C. Genesis 1-21 and 22-50
 - D. none of these
7. Genesis covers from the creation to the death of _____
- A. Abraham
 - B. Isaac
 - C. Jacob
 - D. Joseph
8. A literary principle governing Genesis 1-11 is _____
- A. historical selection
 - B. historical synthesis
 - C. historical soundness
 - D. historical situation
9. "Image and likeness of God" means that man has _____
- A. morality
 - B. personality
 - C. spirituality
 - D. all of the above
10. Throughout Genesis 1-11, man is viewed in relation to God and His laws. The clear pattern is _____
- A. responsibility, retribution, redemption
 - B. responsibility, failure, judgment, grace
 - C. responsibility, relationship, failure, restoration
 - D. responsibility, labor, failure, rejection

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Do you believe in the biblical account of creation or the theory of evolution? Explain.
