

For those without a thorough familiarity of the Bible, this study provides an overview of the Old Testament (OT), the four hundred-year intertestamental period, and the New Testament (NT). I recommend completing it before reading the Methodology section and beginning Chapter 1 of the study on Genesis 1–3. Please note that there may be minor differences between this PDF and the study posted at <https://redemptivehistorytheology.com/blog/the-cser-structure-an-overview-of-the-bible/>.

Introduction to the CSER Structure

Redemptive history is the gradual unfolding of God’s plan to redeem his people and restore them to be who they were meant to be: those who act on the Lord’s behalf to advance his kingdom throughout all creation. The over-arching themes of the Bible fall under the pattern of Creation/Covenant, Sin, Exile, and Resurrection/Restoration, with Israel’s history embedded into the timeline of all humanity.¹ See the next page for a helpful diagram.

Knowing how a specific passage fits within God’s eternal plan aids our interpretation. For example, Jesus came not only as the new Adam (Rom 5:15), the perfect representative of all of humanity, but also as the new Israel. He succeeded where that nation failed.² By examining the Old Testament in relation to the new covenant, we can better understand our role in God’s plan of salvation as his kingdom expands to fill the earth.

Creation in the CSER Structure

1) Gen 1:26–30: In the Ancient Near East, people believed that an image of a god carried out the deity’s will and work. Therefore, Moses’s original readers (ca. 1250 BC) would have understood that God created Adam and Eve to serve as his ambassadors, ruling with the Lord’s authority on his behalf. God expected them to fulfill his purposes through their faithful stewardship of tending and guarding the earth while extending his glorious kingdom throughout the world (Gen 2:15).³

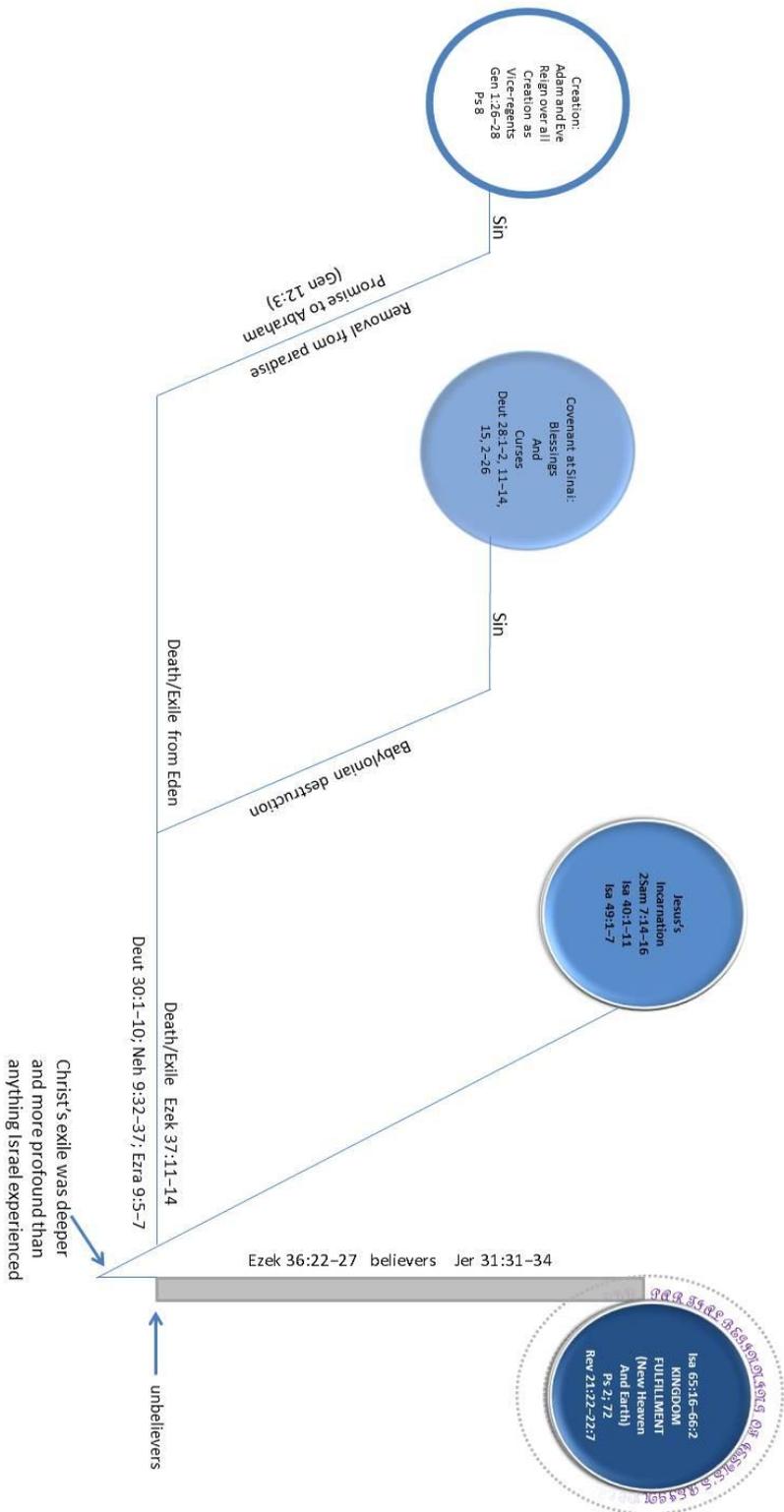
a) Read Gen 1:26–30. What mandate did the Lord give to Adam and Eve?

¹Ciampa, “The History of Redemption,” 257. I remain indebted to Dr. Roy Ciampa for his permission to incorporate his CSER Structure into this study.

² Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 164.

³ Walton, *Genesis*, 130.

Appendix A: Creation/Sin → Covenant → Sin → Exile → Resurrection/Restoration



Thank you to Dr. Roy E. Clampa for permission to adapt this figure from his lecture "A Narrative Substructure for a Biblical Theology of the New Testament: The Kingdom of God and Its Relation to the Covenant-Sin-Exile-Restoration Pattern in Scripture."

b) Gen 1:31: According to the Egyptian text the Theology of Memphis, Ptah, the son of the greatest god, created all the lesser deities. The text reported this:

“Thus, all the gods were formed and his [nine major deities were] completed. Indeed, all the divine order really came into being through what the heart thought and the tongue commanded... And so *Ptah was satisfied*, after he had made everything, as well as all the divine order. He had formed the gods, he had made cities...he had put the gods in their shrines satisfied.”⁴

In contrast, when God created people, the Lord pronounced that work, “the very best it could be.”

Read Gen 1:31. Keeping Gen 1:26 in mind, why was God as pleased about creating humans as Ptah was in making gods?

2) Psalm 8: David wrote this song of worship about 300 years after Moses’s era. The Olympic sprinter, Eric Liddell, said, "God made me fast, and when I run I feel his pleasure."

How does this psalm depict the Lord’s commission of humanity? What specific activity do you engage in which brings pleasure to God?

Sin in the CSER Structure

3) Gen 3:22–24: Acting as the representative for all of humanity, Adam underwent a time of probation in the garden (Gen 2:15–17). Would he accept his subordinate position as a lesser king when the Lord his emperor presented him with what seemed to be an arbitrary command? Meanwhile, the serpent sought to thwart the installation of the kingdom of God by disqualifying Adam and Eve from serving in Eden. This passage occurs in the aftermath of Adam and Eve’s sin (Gen 3:1–13, 16–19), when they lost access to God’s presence in the garden temple.

b) Gen 3:15: While not all snakes are venomous, poisonous serpents tend to be the most aggressive. Thus, people in the Ancient Near East considered an attack by a snake a potentially mortal blow.⁵ Indeed, the messiah would be grievously wounded (Isa 53:4–5),⁶

⁴ “The Theology of Memphis,” *ANET*, lines 57–9, 5, https://archive.org/stream/Pritchard1950ANET_20160815/Pritchard_1950_ANET#page/n29/mode/2up. An alternate translation is “and Ptah rested.”

⁵ Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Gen 3:15.

⁶ Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 94.

even to death. Both adversaries would attack the most vulnerable parts of the other.⁷ Among the translation options for this verb are “bruise,”⁸ “crush,” “snap at,” “snatch at,”⁹ and “strike at.” Since the parallelism employed dictates translating these words the same way,¹⁰ the most suitable option is, “He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.” The nature of these wounds implies that they would occur at the same time.

Read Gen 3:15. What happens to someone whom a viper strikes on the heel? How did that foreshadow what would happen to the messiah?

c) Gen 3:22–24: This passage occurs when Adam and Eve lost access to God’s presence in the garden temple. Consider the John’s vision of the future, when people will long to die but death will elude them (Rev 9:6). Perhaps you have known someone who suffered with an illness to such an extent that they welcomed death.

Why did God evict Adam and Eve from Eden? What would have happened if they had eaten from the Tree of Life in their sinful state? How did the Lord act mercifully by preventing that?

Covenant in the CSER Structure

4) Gen 12:1–3: This passage is the key to understanding Genesis and the rest of the five books written by Moses. Whenever God addressed the biblical patriarchs, he referenced this pact. While the verb at the end of verse 3 can technically be translated as either “bless themselves” or the passive “be blessed,”¹¹ “be blessed” is a better option since God performed the action.¹²

The term “nation” refers to the largest group of people in which the gospel can spread without encountering a significant language or cultural barrier, such as a different caste.¹³ In 2010, the estimated number of people groups unreached for Christ ranged from 4400–7200, accounting for 30–60% of the world’s population.¹⁴

⁷ Walton, *Genesis*, 226.

⁸ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, “שׁוּפַח” (*shuph*), *BDB*, 1003, <https://archive.org/stream/hebrewenglishlex00browuoft#page/1002/mode/2up>.

⁹ Holladay, “שׁוּפַח” (*shuph*), *CHALOT*, 364.

¹⁰ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 197.

¹¹ Wherever text appears in quotation marks, this reflects the author’s translation from either the Hebrew *BHS* or the Greek *NA*²⁸.

¹² Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1–17*, 375.

¹³ Jason Mandryk, *Operation World, 7th Ed.* (Colorado Springs: Biblica, 2010), 961.

¹⁴ Center for the Study of Global Christianity, “Christianity in Its Global Context: 1970–2020, Society, Religion, and Mission” (South Hamilton, MA: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2013), 80, <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/resources/documents/1ChristianityinitsGlobalContext.pdf>.

a) **Read Gen 12:1–3.** What covenant did the Lord make with Abraham? How far does the promise to Abraham extend?

b) **Gen 12:4–5:** In the Ancient Near East, your father’s household represented your identity, daily survival, and future security.¹⁵

How did Abram respond?

c) **Gen 15:1–6.** In Gen 14, Abram rescued his nephew in a fierce battle and then refused a portion of the plunder which a wicked king offered to him. Chapter 15 begins with the Lord saying, “Do not fear, Abram, I [am] a shield to you, your very great reward.” Abram’s trust that the Lord would do as he had promised was “credited to him [as] righteousness.”

Read Gen 15:1–6. Why was God’s promise to Abram appropriate, considering what he had just experienced? How can God be our reward? What else did the Lord promise to Abram?

d) **Gen 15:6–18:** The Lord ratified the pact by invoking the curses for Abram’s failure upon himself.¹⁶ By walking between the pieces of sacrificed animals, those confirming an Ancient Near Eastern treaty were swearing, “May I become like these animals if I break this pact” (Jer 34:18–20). Therefore, God’s covenant with Abraham would accomplish all it was intended to do despite human sin.¹⁷ Significantly, the Lord did not institute circumcision—the sign of this treaty—until years later. Faith, not external ritual, saves us (Gen 17:11–14).

Read Gen 15:6–18. Why do you think God put Abram into a supernatural stupor before ratifying the treaty with him? How do we know that Israel’s years of slavery were not an accident of history? Why didn’t Abraham’s descendants take control of the promised land right away?

¹⁵ Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBOT*, Gen 12:1.

¹⁶Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 2nd Ed., 125–6.

¹⁷Jeffrey J. Niehaus, “God’s Covenant with Abraham,” *JETS* 56, no. 2 (2013): 249–71, 265, http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/56/56-2/JETS_56-2_249-271_Niehaus.pdf.

5) Neh 9:9–12: Most of this chapter summarizes Israel’s history prior to the exile in 722 BC for the Northern Kingdom and in 586 BC for Judah. In keeping with the plagues of judgment against the gods of Egypt described in Exod 8–12, an Egyptian papyrus dating to the Ramses’ dynasties (1293–1069 BC) laments as follows:¹⁸

“Plague is throughout the land. Blood is everywhere...The river is blood. Men shrink from tasting—human beings, and thirst after water...That is our water! That is our happiness! What shall we do in respect thereof? All is ruin...[Alas], gates, columns, and walls are consumed by fire...Lower Egypt weeps...The entire palace is without its revenues. To it belong [by right] wheat and barley, geese and fish...[Alas], grain has perished on every side...

“[Alas], that has perished which was yesterday seen. The land is left over to its weariness like the cutting of flax...All animals, their hearts weep. Cattle moan...Behold, cattle are left to stray, and there is none to gather them together. The land is without light...[Alas], the children of princes are dashed against the walls...[Alas], the children of princes are cast out in the streets...The prison is ruined. He who places his brother in the ground is everywhere...It is groaning throughout the land, mingled with lamentations...Behold, the fire has mounted up on high. Its burning goes forth against the enemies of the land...Gold and lapis lazuli, silver and malachite, carnelian and bronze...are fastened on the neck of female slaves.”¹⁹

a) Read Neh 9:9–12. How does this papyrus remind you of the Egyptian plagues? Why did the Lord act on Israel’s behalf?

b) Exodus 12:5–7, 13: Passover commemorates this event.

Based upon these verses, what protected the firstborn of Israel from death in the final plague?

6) Neh 9:13–22: This portion of the prayer summarizes Exod 19 through Deuteronomy.

a) How did the Lord demonstrate that he is “a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, great in covenant faithfulness, and he did not forsake them (Exod 34:6)?”

¹⁸Stephen Quirke, review of *A World Upturned: Commentary on and Analysis of the Dialogue of Ipuwer and the Lord of All, Or* (NS), 26, no. 1 (1 January 2010): 401–7, 403.

¹⁹Alan H. Gardiner, trans., *The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage from a Hieratic Papyrus in Leiden* (Pap. Leiden 344 Recto) (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche, 1909), 9–11, <https://archive.org/stream/admonitionsofegy00gard#page/8/mode/2up>.

b) Deut 28:1–2, 11–15, 20–26: Note that Exodus/Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua 24 each follow the format of Hittite treaties written during 1400–1200 BC between an emperor and a king serving under him.²⁰ This suggests both Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Bible and an exodus during the reign of Ramses II.²¹

In Deuteronomy, these Hittite treaty elements include a preamble (1:1–6), a historical prologue recounting the past relationship between the emperor and the lesser (1:7–4:49), a list of general stipulations (5–11), specific stipulations (12–26), blessings and curses (27–28),²² and witnesses (32).²³

Ancient Near Eastern Treaty Formats

<i>Mari and Leilan</i>	<i>Hebrew Patriarchal</i>	Intermediate Hittite	Middle Hittite	Pentateuch*	Sefire and Mesopotamia
<i>Divine Witnesses</i>	<i>Divine witnesses</i>	Title	Title	Title	Title
<i>Oath</i>	<i>Oath</i>	Divine Witnesses	Historical Prologue	Historical Prologue	Divine Witnesses
<i>Stipulations</i>	<i>Stipulations</i>	Stipulations	Stipulations	Stipulations	Curses
			Divine Witnesses		
<i>Ceremony</i>	<i>Ceremony</i>	Oath	Curses	Curses	Stipulations
<i>Curses</i>	<i>Curses</i>	Curses	Blessings	Blessings	
<i>Early 2nd Mill BC 1800-1700</i>	<i>Early 2nd Mill BC</i>	Mid 2nd Mill BC 1600-1400	Late 2nd Mill BC 1400-1200	Late 2nd Mill BC	1st Mill BC 900-650

* This includes Exodus/Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua 24. Since there is no God but Yahweh, divine witnesses are omitted.

Column 1 Column 2 Column 3 Column 4 Column 5 Column 6

²⁰René Lopez, “Israelite Covenants in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Covenants (Part 2 of 2),” *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal* 10 (1 April 2004): 72–106, 72–3, http://chafer.nextmeta.com/files/v10n1_5lopez_covenants2israelite_covenants.pdf.

²¹ Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 288.

²² These usually come after the witnesses, but per Kitchen (*On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 288), there are often slight variations.

²³Peter C. Craigie, “Covenant,” BEB 530–6, 535.

After the two parties ratified a treaty, each of them received a copy to place in the temple of their god (Cf. Exod 25:16, 21–22; Deut 31:24–26).²⁴ This raises an interesting issue with how we typically think of the two tablets of the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:1–17). Based upon Ancient Near Eastern practices, each tablet contained the full covenant (Deut 10:1–5).

Read Deut 28:1–2, 11–15, 20–26, which provides a brief overview of God’s blessings and curses. Why and how would God bless Israel? What would cause him to curse the nation? What is the significance of Moses receiving both copies of God’s covenant with Israel to place in the ark of the covenant?

Read Deut 28:1–2, 11–15, 20–26, which provides a brief overview of God’s blessings and curses. Why and how would God bless Israel? What would cause him to curse the nation?

c) **Deut 30:1–5**: What was Moses presupposing in this passage?

d) **Deut 30:6–10, 14**: In Deut 10:6, the Lord promised his people that he would “circumcise the foreskin of your hearts.” In other words, he would remove whatever prevented them from hearing and obeying God’s teaching.²⁵

How did Moses describe the result of this heart surgery performed by the Lord?

6) **Neh 9:23–31**: This passage recounts Israel’s experiences from the time of Joshua’s rule through that of the divided monarchy.

a) How did God express his compassion during these eras?

²⁴René Lopez, “Israelite Covenants in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Covenants (Part 2 of 2),” 80, [Http://chafer.nextmeta.com/files/v10n1_5lopez_covenants2israelite_covenants.pdf](http://chafer.nextmeta.com/files/v10n1_5lopez_covenants2israelite_covenants.pdf).

²⁵Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1–21:9* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 2001), 204.

b) 2 Samuel 7:12–16: The prophet Nathan delivered this promise to David after the king expressed his desire to build a house for the Lord’s presence over the ark of the covenant. What did the Lord promise to do for the king?

c) Ps 2: New Testament authors frequently quoted this psalm.²⁶ “Kiss the Son” is another way to say, “be ruled by the Son.”²⁷ The empire of David and Solomon never approached the size of the one envisioned here.²⁸

What does this song of worship predict that the Son will do?

d) Ps 72: This song also anticipates the coming of the kingdom of God in all its fullness.

What will the coming king do?

e) Isa 40:1–11: This passage promises God’s restoration of Israel after the coming exile,²⁹ a second exodus.³⁰

How will the Lord bring comfort to his people?

f) Isa 49:1–7: How did the servant of the Lord describe himself? What was his commission?

Exile in the CSER Structure

7) Daniel 2:31–45: Assyria took the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity in 722 BC (2 Ki 17:6–18). Approximately 150 years later, Babylon overthrew the southern kingdom of Judah in 586 BC (2 Ki 25:1–12).³¹ However, Dan 1:1–3 indicates that the prophet was captured in the first wave of Judean exiles deported to Babylon in 605 BC (2 Ki 24:1–4).³²

²⁶Peter C. Craigie and Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 1–50, 2nd Ed.* (WBC; Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 68.

²⁷Ethelbert W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (New York: E. & J. B. Young, 1898), 118.
<https://archive.org/stream/figuresofspeechu00bull#page/118/mode/2up>.

²⁸John E. Goldingay, *Psalms 1–41* (BCOTWP; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 95–6.

²⁹Oswalt, *Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, 47.

³⁰Ciampa, “The History of Redemption,” 272.

³¹Peter Machinist, “Palestine, Administration of,” *ABD* 5:69–81, 69.

³²Tremper Longman III, *Daniel* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 43.

Babylon (the head of gold) fell to Cyrus in 539 BC, inaugurating the Medo-Persian Empire (the breast and arms of silver) (Dan 5:30–31).³³ Alexander the Great extended the rule of Greece (the belly and thighs of bronze) from Egypt to Persia in a three-year campaign (334–331 BC).³⁴ That kingdom remained in power until the second century BC, when Rome assumed control of the entire region.³⁵ By the end of the 5th century AD, the Roman Empire came to an end.³⁶

a) **Read Dan 2:31–45.** What did Daniel write about the kingdom of God?

b) **Jer 31:31–34:** This is the only place in the Old Testament where we have the term “new covenant,”³⁷ although allusions to this concept do appear elsewhere (e.g. Hos 2:18–23; Isa 55:1–11; Isa 61).

How has this been fulfilled? What is still to come?

c) **Ezek 36:22–28:** The priest Ezekiel served as a prophet in Babylon during the exile (Ezek 1:3).

When would the nations know that God is the Lord?

d) **Ezek 37:1–14:** In Hebrew, the same word can be translated as, “wind,” “breath,” and “Spirit.”³⁸ Consequently, this passage alludes to how the Lord animated Adam in Gen 2:7. What did God promise to his people?

e) **Dan 7:9–14:** This passage occurs immediately after Dan 7:1–8 described the four kingdoms as various devouring beasts arising from the sea. For people living in the Ancient Near East, the sea represented chaos.³⁹

In contrast to the creatures comes one “like a Son of Man” to rule over those monstrous animals. While “son of God” in the Old Testament often referred to all of Israel (Deut 14:1),

³³ Jean-Claude Margueron, “Babylon (Place),” *ABD* 1:563–5, 563.

³⁴ John McRay, “Greece (Place),” *ABD* 2:1092–8, 1097.

³⁵ D. F. Watson, “Roman Empire,” *DNTB* 975–8, 975.

³⁶ Wells, Colin M., “Roman Empire,” *ABD* 5:802–6, 802.

³⁷ J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 579.

³⁸ Brown, Driver, and Briggs, “רוּחַ” (*ruakh*), *BDB*, 924,

<https://archive.org/stream/hebrewenglishlex00browuoft#page/924/mode/2up>.

³⁹ Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Dan 7:3.

after the Hebrew Bible was written, the term shifted to depict a holy and pure person of God, the ideal Israelite of the end time (Matt 5:9; Rom 8:12–19).⁴⁰

According to the Psalms of Solomon, which were penned during the middle of the first century BC,⁴¹ “[God] will gather a holy people whom he will lead in righteousness...And he will no longer permit injustice to dwell among them, and no person who sees wickedness will dwell with them. For he will know them because all of them are sons of God”⁴²

Read Daniel 7:9–14. How did the Son of Man represent both Adam’s and David’s descendants? In contrast to the phrase “son of God,” which referred to a perfect Israelite, when Jesus used the term “Son of Man” for himself, what was he claiming?

8) Neh 9:32–37: Levites led Israel in this prayer soon after Ezra read the Mosaic law at a public ceremony in Jerusalem in 445 BC (Neh 8:1–3, 18).⁴³ So, this occurred almost one hundred years after the proclamation on the Cyrus Cylinder allowed those held captive in Babylon to return to their homelands (2 Chr 36:22–23; Ezra 9:5–7).⁴⁴ With the exception of the short-lived Hasmonean Dynasty (153–37 BC), from the time when Assyria overran the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC and Babylon overthrew the southern kingdom of Judah in 586BC, Israel never knew freedom from subservience to foreign powers until 1948.⁴⁵

Read Neh 9:32–37. How does this prayer describe the people of Israel?

9) A great upheaval occurred in Israel during the Intertestamental Period, the time between when the final book of the Hebrew Bible was written (ca. 450 BC) and the birth of Christ (ca. 6–4 BC). After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC, Greek-speaking kings known as the Seleucids took control of Palestine until 64 BC.⁴⁶

The priestly line of Zadok remained in control from David’s reign (ca. 1005–965 BC) until the rule of Antiochus IV.⁴⁷ Antiochus, who called himself “manifest [as a god]” (*Epiphanes*) usurped the Seleucid throne in 175 BC and ruled until 164 BC. Due to his tyrannical

⁴⁰Brendan Byrne, “Sons of God,” *ABD* 6:156–9, 157.

⁴¹Daniel Falk, “Psalms of Solomon,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism, Vol. 1: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism* (ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 35–51, 35–6.

⁴²Brannan et al., *LES*, Psalms of Solomon, 17:26–7,

<http://www.mycrandall.ca/courses/newtestament/hebrews/PrimReadPsSol.htm>.

⁴³Ralph W. Klein, “Ezra–Nehemiah, Books of,” *ABD* 2:731–42, 736.

⁴⁴Matthews, Chavalas, and Walton, *IVPBBCOT*, Ezra 1:1.

⁴⁵H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1998), 318.

⁴⁶John Whitehorne, “Seleucus (Person),” *ABD* 5:1076–7, 1076.

⁴⁷George W. Ramsey, “Zadok (Person),” *ABD* 6:1034–6, 1036.

unpredictability, his detractors called him “*Epimanes*,” which means “utterly mad.”⁴⁸ A year after taking the throne, Antiochus IV sold the office of high priest to the highest bidder with a pro-Greek orientation,⁴⁹ first to the high priest’s brother and then to men with no relation to the office.⁵⁰ These included the Hasmonean Menelaus, whom a Jewish historical book called “a cruel tyrant” (2 Maccabees 4:7–25).

After insurrectionists deposed Menelaus, Antiochus besieged Jerusalem and looted the temple (2 Macc 5:11–22). The king then forbade the observance of the Mosaic law, including circumcision and keeping the Sabbath. As a final insult, he desecrated the temple (2 Macc 6). Refusing to participate in a pagan sacrifice, a warrior named Matthias and his five sons led the Maccabean Rebellion. This lasted seven years (167–160 BC), culminating in a declaration of peace from the king which Roman ambassadors confirmed (2 Macc 11:27–35). The Festival of Dedication (Hanukkah) commemorates the re-consecration of the temple and its altar during this period (1 Macc 4:28–60; b. Shabbat 21b).⁵¹ However, Antiochus IV eventually crushed the revolt, and Menelaus returned as high priest.⁵²

In the aftermath of the Maccabean Rebellion, the high priesthood accrued unprecedented power, becoming a highly-politicized office with both religious and civil powers. During this period, major parties and sects developed within Judaism.⁵³ Herod the Great (37–4BC) finally deposed the Hasmoneans, ushering in the era of rule by the Sadducees.⁵⁴ This aristocratic clan declined in power after the Roman army destroyed the temple in 70 AD.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, the Essene community condemned the Sadducees’ corruption and claimed that only their sect in Qumran upheld biblical tradition (1QH4 of the Dead Sea Scrolls).⁵⁶

During this era the family of Annas attained prominence. He received his appointment as high priest in 6AD, then his son-in-law Caiaphas (18–36 AD) began ruling three years after a Roman official deposed him. Overall, five of Annas’ sons held the office of high priest.⁵⁷

In contrast to the Sadducees, the Pharisees created a lay movement which believed they could identify members of God’s covenant people by their adherence to the Mishnah. This commentary on the first five books of the Old Testament formed a hedge around the Mosaic law (*m. Avot* 1:1),⁵⁸ in violation of Deut 4:1–2 and Deut 2:32. The Mishnah contains twenty-four chapters dedicated to Sabbath regulations alone (*m. Shabbat*). Although the Pharisees did not descend from priestly lineage, the members of this sect strictly maintained this tradition

⁴⁸Polybius, *Histories* (trans. Evelyn S. Shuckburgh; London. New York: MacMillan, 1889), 26.1, 352, <https://archive.org/stream/historiespolybi00hultgoog#page/n369/mode/2up>.

⁴⁹ John Whitehorne, “Antiochus (Person),” *ABD* 1:269–72, 270.

⁵⁰ Uriel Rappaport, “Maccabean Revolt,” *ABD* 4:433–9, 434.

⁵¹ James C. VanderKam, “Dedication, Feast of,” *ABD* 2:123–5, 123.

⁵² Rappaport, “Maccabean Revolt,” 436.

⁵³ Joshua Schwartz, “Lessons from Inter-Communal Conflict During the Second Temple Period,” *Jewish Political Studies Review* 12, no. 3–4 (9 January 2000): 39–52, 40–1, <http://jcpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2000/10/lessons-from-inter-communal-conflict1.pdf>.

⁵⁴ H. W. Basser, “Priests and Priesthood, Jewish,” *DNTB* 824–7, 825–6.

⁵⁵ Gary G. Porton, “Sadducees,” *ABD* 5:894–5, 894.

⁵⁶ Lawrence H. Schiffman, “Zadokite Fragments (Damascus Document),” *ABD* 6:1037–8, 1037,

https://archive.org/stream/pdfy-Uy_BZ_QGsaLiJ4Zs/The%20Dead%20Sea%20Scrolls%20%5BComplete%20English%20Translation%5D#page/n297/mode/2up.

⁵⁷ Bruce Chilton, “Caiaphas (Person),” *ABD* 1:803–6, 804.

⁵⁸ Stephen Westerholm, “Pharisees,” *DJG* 609–14, 609.

of oral laws regarding purity, tithing, and the Sabbath, which was originally intended for those serving in the temple.⁵⁹

The Pharisees took great care to separate from the impure “people of the land” who failed to avoid contaminating themselves.⁶⁰ They sought to practice Judaism in every area of life while remaining in their communities. Thus, they did not form an exclusive community, as the Essenes did in Qumran.⁶¹ However, like the Essenes, they believed that the messiah would come to usher in the kingdom of God only when every Israelite fully obeyed all of the law of Moses.⁶² Consequently, Jesus’s teachings and behavior enraged them. They believed his refusal to adhere to the Sabbath observances in the Mishnah prevented the messiah from coming to rescue them from Rome’s domination.⁶³

During this intertestamental era, which is also called the Second Temple period, the study of prophecies concerning the end times flourished. Religious Jews asserted that God already reigned as King. Nevertheless, after centuries of foreign domination, they yearned for the coming of the messiah, the Lord’s anointed one who would save God’s people.⁶⁴ They saw themselves as the persecuted elect, and ached for their vindication, when the Lord would judge the kingdoms of this world and reestablish paradise on earth.⁶⁵

10) John 1:19–23: According to Mal 4:5, the prophet Elijah would return from heaven to precede the coming messiah at the end of the age (2 Ki 2:11–12).⁶⁶

a) Why did John the Baptist’s assertion that he came to fulfill Isa 40:3 indicate that Israel’s time of exile had not yet ended?

b) **John 1:24–34:** Note that John the Baptist was born several months earlier than his cousin Jesus (Luke 1:24–7).

What is the significance of John’s description of Jesus?

⁵⁹ Anthony J. Saldarini, “Pharisees.” *ABD* 5:289–303, 300.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁶¹ Roland Deines, “The Pharisees Between ‘Judaisms’ and ‘Common Judaism,’” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, Vol. 1: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism (ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 443–504, 498.

⁶² Philip S. Alexander, “Torah and Salvation in Tannaitic Literature,” in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, Vol. 1: The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism (ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 35–51, 35–6.

⁶³ Marinus De Jonge, “Messiah,” *ABD* 783–8, 783.

⁶⁴ Burge, *John*, 71–2.

⁶⁵ Dennis C. Duling “Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven: OT, Early Judaism, and Hellenistic Usage,” *ABD* 4:49–56, 51.

⁶⁶ Burge, *John*, 72.

11) John 8:12: In this passage, Jesus addressed his fellow Jews during the Feast of Tabernacles. This celebration commemorated Israel's deliverance from Egypt and expressed their hope for a second exodus, when the pillar of fire would guide them to the promised land of the age to come.⁶⁷ According to the Babylonian Talmud:

“At the conclusion of the first festival day of Tabernacles...they had made a great enactment. There were there golden candlesticks with four golden bowls on the top of each of them and four ladders to each, and four youths drawn from the priestly stock in whose hands were held jars of oil containing [almost ten gallons] which they poured into the bowls...There was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that was not illuminated by the light...Men of piety and good deeds used to dance before them” (*b. Sukkah 51a 39–47*).⁶⁸

a) Read John 8:12. How is Jesus “the light of the world?”

b) John 8:24–30: What would prevent the people from dying in their sins?

c) John 8:31–47: Why didn't the Pharisees recognize that Jesus was speaking of what he had seen in his Father's presence? How did Christ describe the devil? What event does this bring to your mind?

d) John 8:48–59: What astounding claim did Jesus make which incited the Pharisees to try to stone him for blasphemy (c.f. Exod 3:13–15)?

12) Mark 14:60–65: This occurred right after Jesus was arrested by the temple guards.

a) Why did the high priest accuse Jesus of blasphemy?

⁶⁷ Beasley-Murray, 127–8.

⁶⁸ Talmudist, “English Babylonian Talmud,” in *English Babylonian Talmud*, <https://archive.org/stream/babyloniatalmud07unknuoft#page/n181/mode/2up>.

b) Mark 15:1–14: What did Pilate recognize about Jesus’s accusers? Why didn’t he release Christ, even though he knew the arrest was unwarranted?

c) Mark 15:15–32: Scourging a convicted man with several leather straps to which sharp items had been attached was a standard practice prior to crucifixion.⁶⁹ The Jewish historian Josephus (37–100 AD) described a man who was “whipped till his bones were laid bare.”⁷⁰ As the most extreme form of execution, Roman officials reserved crucifixion for mutinous soldiers, conquered peoples, inhabitants of rebellious cities, and slaves.⁷¹ Typically, pious women prepared a narcotic solution of myrrh and wine to relieve the sufferer’s pain (Prov 31:6–7). Jesus refused to drink it.⁷² Those who taunted Christ referred to his statement after he cleansed the temple of its desecration and to the many miracles he performed (John 2:18–22; Luke 7:18–23).⁷³

Read Mark 15:15–32. What did those who mocked Jesus misunderstand about his suffering?

d) Mark 15:33–41: In contrast to the Jewish meaning of a “son of God,” as a perfect Israelite, for Romans the term referred to a semi-divine hero or the son of a deity. Beginning with the reign of Augustus (27 BC–14AD), Roman emperors claimed this title for themselves.⁷⁴

Who witnessed Jesus’s death? Why do you think his executioner recognized that “Truly, this man was the Son of God!”?

e) Mark 15:42–47: Tacitus, a 1st century AD Roman historian noted that officials refused burial to those they executed,⁷⁵ unless the condemned person received permission by a magistrate. Thus, those crucified usually remained upon the cross to rot or to be eaten by

⁶⁹Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 2001), 483–4.

⁷⁰Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, 6.5.3,

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0148%3Abook%3D6%3Awhiston+chapter%3D5%3Awhiston+section%3D3>.

⁷¹ O’Collins, “Crucifixion,” *ABD* 1:1207–10, 1207–8.

⁷² Keener, *IVPBBCNT*, Mark 15:23.

⁷³ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 39.

⁷⁴ Keener, *IVPBBCNT*, Matt 27:54.

⁷⁵Cornelius Tacitus, *Annals*, in *Complete Works of Tacitus* (ed. William Jackson Brodribb and Sara Bryant; trans. Alfred John Church; New York: Random House, 1942), 6.29,

[Http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0078%3Abook%3D6%3Achapter%3D29](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0078%3Abook%3D6%3Achapter%3D29).

birds and wild animals.⁷⁶ By asking for the corpse of a person executed for treason, Joseph risked the same fate for himself. Yet, as a member of the council which had asked Pilate to execute Jesus, this threat was likely reduced.⁷⁷ In addition to seeking to honor Christ, Joseph acted due to Deut 21:22–23.

Read Mark 15:42–47. Why do you think Pilate was willing to grant Joseph’s request?

Resurrection/Restoration Begins in the CSER Structure

13) Luke 24:1–12: Why were the women who took spices to anoint Jesus’s body prevented from completing their mission?

b) John 20:19: This event occurred on the day of Christ’s resurrection. Why were the disciples hiding?

c) John 20:20–23: In the opening of the book of Acts, Luke described his gospel as “about all which Jesus began to do and teach” (Acts 1:1). This implies that Acts depicts what Jesus continued to do through the Holy Spirit acting in human agents.⁷⁸ At this point in John’s gospel, the disciples became the apostles (*apostolos*): highly honored believers whom God sent as his envoys.⁷⁹ As in Hebrew,⁸⁰ a single Greek word means “wind,” “breath,” and “spirit.”⁸¹

Read John 20:20–23. How did Jesus commission the apostles to carry on his work? Compare this passage with the way God animated Adam in Gen 2:7.

14) 1 Cor 15:1–8: Years ago, my daughter and I were standing in our front yard. A group of teens came by, introduced themselves as from a local church, and asked if they could speak with us. Curious about what my eight year-old would say, I asked them to direct their questions to her. One of them said, “If God were to ask you, ‘Why should I let you into My Heaven?’ what would you say?”⁸² She immediately responded, “Jesus died for me.” Speechless, after about a minute, they wished us a good evening and headed next door.

⁷⁶William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 577–8.

⁷⁷Garland, *Luke*, 597.

⁷⁸Ajith Fernando, *Acts* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 50.

⁷⁹Danker, et al., “ἀποστολος” (*apostolos*), *BDAG*, 122.

⁸⁰Brown, Driver, and Briggs, “רוּחַ” (*ruakh*), *BDB*, 924.

⁸¹Danker, et al., “πνεῦμα” (*pneuma*), *BDAG*, 832.

⁸²Evangelism Explosion International, “Step One. Do You Know?”
<http://evangelismexplosion.org/resources/steps-to-life/step-1-do-you-know/>.

a) **Read 1 Cor 15:1–8.** According to the Apostle Paul what are the core elements of the gospel? Did my daughter's answer capture its essence? Why or why not?

15) Acts 1:1–3: What did Jesus do while he remained on earth after his resurrection?

b) **Acts 1:4–5:** Why weren't the apostles to leave Jerusalem to begin their mission right away?

c) **Acts 1:6–8:** Note that in Matt 24, Jesus spoke primarily about what are not the signs of his coming. Instead, he described the tribulations which would precede the destruction of the temple in 70 AD and the way God's people would live after that horrific event.⁸³ The one exception occurs in v. 14, where he said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole inhabited earth as a witness to all the people-groups, and then the end will come."

Read Acts 1:6–8. Why do you think that Jesus answered the apostles' question the way he did?

d) **Acts 1:9–11:** Just as there were two angelic witnesses to the empty tomb, so here another pair of credible observers appears (Deut 19:15).⁸⁴

What promise did they make?

16) Acts 2:1–8: Fifty days after Jesus was crucified, the Holy Spirit began to reside within all of Christ's disciples who had gathered together for prayer in Jerusalem.⁸⁵ This coincided with the Feast of Weeks, a festival in which all Jews in Israel brought the first fruits of their harvest to the temple (Lev 23:15–16). At some point, this feast had also become a commemoration of the Lord giving the law to Moses (Exod 20–24).⁸⁶

⁸³ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 899.

⁸⁴ Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, 38.

⁸⁵ Mark J. Olson, "Pentecost," *ABD* 5:222–3, 222.

⁸⁶ Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 130–1.

Concerning God's delivery of the law to Moses, the Babylonian asserts, "Every single word that went forth from the Holy One...he, split up into seventy languages" (b. Shabbat 88b).⁸⁷ The Jewish historian Philo (30 BC–40 AD) wrote this about the Lord speaking to Moses:

"And a voice sounded forth from out of the midst of the fire which had flowed from heaven, a most marvelous and awful voice, the flame being endowed with articulate speech in a language familiar to the hearers, which expressed its words with such clearness (sic) and distinctness that the people seemed rather to be seeing than hearing it."⁸⁸

a) Read Acts 2:1-8. Why were the Jews in Jerusalem so astonished?

b) Acts 2:14–21, 33: How did Peter respond to the allegation that the disciples were drunk? In what ways had the era predicted by Joel 2:28–32 arrived?

17) Romans 5:12–21: In this passage, we can discern the embedding of the Covenant/Sin/Exile/Restoration pattern begun with Moses into the Creation/Sin/Exile/Resurrection motif initiated with Adam (See page 2). An important key to understanding this text involves the corporate solidarity of patrimonial headship within Ancient Near Eastern societies. The head of a family represented every member of his clan, both for good and for ill (Exod 39:1, 6–7; Josh 7:20–26).⁸⁹

Read Rom 5:12–21. Why did death reign even before there was no law to break? How did Jesus succeed as the Second Adam where the first Adam failed? What three things result from the obedience of Christ?

18) Hebrews 9:11–22: Ever since his ascension into heaven, Christ has continued to minister in the heavenly tabernacle (Heb 8:1; 9:6, 24). There he mediates a covenant far superior to the earthly pact, which centered upon a sanctuary which was merely "a copy and a shadow" (Heb 8:5).⁹⁰ In other words, Jesus is the true high priest, serving at the real sanctuary.⁹¹

⁸⁷Talmudist, "English Babylonian Talmud," in *English Babylonian Talmud*, b. Shabbat 88b, http://halakhah.com/shabbath/shabbath_88.html#PARTb.

⁸⁸Philo, "On the Decalogue," in *The Works of Philo Judaeus*, Vol. 3 (trans. Charles Duke Yonge; London: Bohn, 1855), 11, 146, <https://archive.org/stream/workspphilojudaeu03philuoft#page/146/mode/2up>.

⁸⁹Niehaus, *Ancient Near Eastern Themes in Biblical Theology*, 138.

⁹⁰Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, 206.

⁹¹Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 400.

a) **Read Heb 9:11–22.** What does the shed blood of Christ accomplish on our behalf?

b) **Heb 9:23–28:** Israel’s high priest entered the most holy part of the tabernacle each year on the Day of Atonement after making a sacrifice to cover his own sins. Only then could he mediate forgiveness for Israel’s people (Lev 16:11–15). In contrast, Jesus’s blood was shed exclusively to cover the sins of others, not his own (2 Cor 5:20–21).⁹²

Read Heb 9:23–28. Why can we have confidence that all our past, present, and future sins have been forgiven? How does this knowledge affect the way we view death and the return of Christ?

c) **Heb 10:11–18:** A priest could not offer sacrifices from a seated position (Exod 27:1).⁹³ That Jesus sits at the right hand of God indicates that he no longer needs to offer sacrifices and that he now has all authority (Ps 110:1).⁹⁴ Waiting “until his enemies might be laid as a footstool of his feet” refers to the practice of a conqueror stepping on the necks of his defeated foes (Josh 10:24–26).⁹⁵ The Assyrian Emperor Assurbanipal praised the god who “had brought those not submissive to me in submission under my yoke, [and] with power and might had made me stand upon [the neck] of my foes.”⁹⁶ Egypt’s Pharaoh Tutankhamun did this figuratively. He possessed a wooden footstool bearing his name and prisoners of various ethnicities separated by nine bows, with each bow representing a traditional enemy of Egypt.⁹⁷

Note the paradox in v. 14 between God seeing us as “having been made perfect for all time” and our experience as “the ones who are being made holy.” The Lord’s declaration, “And their sins and their lawlessness, I shall remember no more” has the connotation of not giving consideration to something. It does not mean actually forgetting.⁹⁸

Read Heb 10:1–18. How do we know that the Old Testament sacrifices were insufficient to cover sins? What is the result of Jesus’s offering of himself?

⁹² Guthrie, *Hebrews*, 315.

⁹³ Keener, *IVPBBCNT*, Heb 10:11–14.

⁹⁴ Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 450.

⁹⁵ Danker, et al., “ὑ*ποποδιον” (*hypopodion*), *BDAG*, 1040.

⁹⁶ Assurbanipal II, “The Rassam Cylinder,” in *ARAB*, section 833, 2:320,

https://archive.org/stream/LuckenbillAncientRecordsAssyria02/Luckenbill_Ancient_Records_Assyria02#page/n327/mode/2up.

⁹⁷ The Global Egyptian Museum, “Footstool Carved with Figures of Prisoners,”

<http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/detail.aspx?id=15108>.

⁹⁸ Danker, et al., “μῆμνησκομαι” (*mimnēskomai*), *BDAG*, 652.

d) Heb 10:19–25: The veil of the temple represented the place where the human and the divine met, protecting the ark of God’s presence from human sinfulness. Even the high priest could pass through it only once a year after ritual cleansing. Even then his life was in jeopardy (Lev 16:2–6, 11–17, 29–30).⁹⁹

The Apostle John recorded that Jesus proclaimed with a loud cry “It is finished!” (John 19:30), indicating that he had accomplished his mission of redemption. Then he “gave up his spirit.”¹⁰⁰ At that moment, the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom (Mark 15:37–38). As a result, those who claim allegiance to Christ can approach God with “our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience” and “our bodies washed with pure water.” The cleansing of our bodies alludes to baptism.¹⁰¹

Read Heb 10:19–25. Why can we draw near to God? What effect does redemption have upon our hearts, consciences, and bodies? How does the Lord call us to relate to one another?

10) Gal 3:6–9: Paul wrote Galatians after the church he had planted was visited by people who claimed that true believers would keep the Mosaic law. This included accepting circumcision just as Abraham had (Gen 17:9–14).¹⁰² The verses which Paul quoted appear in Gen 15:6 and Gen 12:3 prior to Abraham’s circumcision (See page 2).

a) Read Gal 3:6–9. Why is that order of events important? How was Abraham reckoned as righteous?

b) Gal 3:10–14: Here Paul quoted from the “curses” section of the Pentateuch (Deut 27:26; Deut 21:23). The Essenes in Qumran sent a letter of exhortation to the priests in Jerusalem in the second half of the 1st century BC. It outlined twenty sacrificial and purity regulations which the priests failed to uphold to the Essenes’ satisfaction.¹⁰³ After the list of complaints and remedies, the author wrote, “And also we have written to you some of the *precepts of the torah* (works of the law) which we think are good for you and for your people...And it shall be *reckoned to you as in justice* (righteousness) when you do what is upright and good before him, for your good and that of Israel” (4QMMT).¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Carol Meyers “Veil of the Temple,” *ABD* 6:785–6, 785.

¹⁰⁰ Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 621.

¹⁰¹ Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 523.

¹⁰²T. David Gordon, “Abraham and Sinai Contrasted in Galatians 3:6–14,” in *The Law is not of Faith: Essays on Works and Grace in the Mosaic Covenant* (ed. Bryan Estelle and J. VanDrunen Fesko David; Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2009), 240–58, 240.

¹⁰³ Lawrence H. Schiffman, “Legal Texts at Qumran.” *DNTB* 636–9, 637.

¹⁰⁴Garcia Martinez, “Some of the Fragments of 4QMMT,”

<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rak/courses/427/texts/4QMMT.htm>. Italics mine. Words in quotation marks are alternate translations from the Hebrew text.

In contrast, Paul argued, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, becoming on our behalf our curse.” Therefore, gentiles should not place themselves under the Mosaic law.¹⁰⁵ While ceremonial laws no longer apply, the New Testament is clear that the moral regulations of the Old Testament (OT) remain in force.¹⁰⁶ God has replaced the old covenant by the new one promised in Jer 31:31–34.

Read Gal 3:10–14. What is the fate of anyone relying upon observance of ceremonial rituals for salvation? How did Christ redeem us from the curse of the law? How can Christians distinguish between the OT laws which are no longer in force and those which God still calls us to observe?

c) Gal 3:15–18: Look at the diagram of the CSER Structure on page 2. Why doesn't the Mosaic law invalidate the covenant God made with Abraham in Gen 15?

d) Gal 3:19–25: How did the law of Moses function in our lives before we came to Christ?

e) Gal 3:26–29: The Christian missionaries from a Jewish background urged these gentile believers to become “full converts” by accepting circumcision.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, Paul employed Hos 1:10 to argue against the proselytizers. After Hosea's wife committed adultery, the Lord told the prophet to name the illegitimate child, “Not my People,” for in the same way Israel embraced spiritual adultery and God no longer considered them his. However, the Lord then said, “And it will be in the place in which it is said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ it will be said to them ‘[You are] sons of the living God.’”

Paul stressed that one becomes a descendant of Abraham by faith, not by ethnicity (Cf. Rom 9:6–8).¹⁰⁸ God now welcomes outsiders as sons (Eph 2:11–13). In this passage, Paul alluded to the early Christian practice of stripping off one's old clothing for baptism and afterward putting on a pure white robe, symbolizing the replacement of sin with Christ's virtues.¹⁰⁹

Read Gal 3:26–29. How did Paul say that people become sons of God? What is the significance of having “been clothed with Christ?” Who can be included? What is the role of the Mosaic law in the lives of believers now due to what Christ has done?

¹⁰⁵ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 122.

¹⁰⁶ Jonathan F. Bayes, *The Threefold Division of the Law* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: The Christian Institute, 2012), 12–3, <http://www.christian.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/the-threefold-division-of-the-law.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷ McKnight, *Galatians*, 197.

¹⁰⁸ Keener, *IVPBBCNT*, Gal 3:26.

¹⁰⁹ McKnight, *Galatians*, 198.

20) Gal 5:1–6: When Paul wrote this, Jews employed the imagery of the yoke used to control oxen as an analogy for their obligation to obey the law of Moses.¹¹⁰ For example, a rabbi said, “Whoso receives upon him the yoke of the Law (ie. one who devotes himself wholly to study), the community removes from him the yoke of the government and the yoke of worldly cares; but a student who breaks from him the yoke of the Law, the community lays upon him the yoke of the government and the yoke of worldly cares” (*b. Avoth* 3:5).

In contrast, Paul equated seeking to gain God’s approval by keeping the law of Moses with wearing a yoke of slavery. Peter had attested that even scrupulous Jews had not been able to bear that yoke (Acts 15:5–11).¹¹¹ Since Paul himself had been circumcised, he was asserting that legalism and faith in Christ cannot reside together.¹¹²

a) Read Gal 5:1–6. How does legalism create bonds which are difficult to break? Why did Paul say that we must stand firm against seeking God’s favor by our obedience?

b) Gal 5:13–26: Paul quoted Lev 19:18 as the summary of the Mosaic law. He equated “flesh” with our natural way of living. This includes trying to obey God’s commands without the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Paul embedded a chiasm in this passage (Gal 5:16–18). A chiasm is an A–B–C–B–A thought structure, where the focus often, but not always, lies on C. He put the central emphasis upon the conflict between flesh and Spirit. As we live by the Spirit, he sets us free from the flesh and the law,¹¹³ enabling us to live in a way which pleases God.¹¹⁴

This fruit emerges as the product of the Holy Spirit, not by our efforts to practice godliness.¹¹⁵ Note that “fruit” is singular here: those who walk by the Spirit produce all nine qualities. Each of these character traits functions as one facet of a single gem shining forth, rather than arising from different jewels.¹¹⁶ Thus we cannot claim, “I have all the fruit of the Spirit, except for this one....”

Since we have been crucified with Christ (Gal 2:20), the demise of our flesh occurred at conversion, when we died with Christ (Rom 6:1–7).¹¹⁷ According to Augustine, a 4th–5th century theologian, human existence occurs in one of four states:

1. Able to sin, able not to sin (Adam and Eve prior to the fall)
2. Not able not to sin (those without Christ)
3. Able not to sin (Christians living during the partial restoration of God’s kingdom)
4. Not able to sin (believers who have been glorified after death/Christ’s return).¹¹⁸

¹¹⁰ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 216–7.

¹¹¹ Murray J. Harris, *Slave of Christ: A New Testament Metaphor for Total Devotion to Christ* (ed. D. A. Carson; New Studies in Biblical Theology; Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: InterVarsity Press; Apollos, 1999), 93–4.

¹¹² Longenecker, *Galatians*, 228.

¹¹³ McKnight, *Galatians*, 269.

¹¹⁴ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians* (ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 345.

¹¹⁵ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 259.

¹¹⁶ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 262.

¹¹⁷ Schreiner, *Galatians*, 351.

¹¹⁸ Augustine, *The City of God*, 22.30.3.

The way I live may look identical to that of someone seeking to earn salvation. Knowing how much I have been forgiven overflows into tremendous gratitude for the love of Jesus (Ps 119:1–7). I am continually astounded that Christ would die for me: someone who hated him and attacked his people. One who has been forgiven much, loves much (Luke 7:47). When we fall in love, we naturally desire to find ways to please our beloved. This adoration, coupled by the power of the Holy Spirit, changes us from the inside out, effecting a transformation clearly visible to others.

Read Gal 5:13–26. How are we to use our freedom in Christ? What does it mean to “walk in the Spirit?” How can we tell if we are doing that?

21) 1 Pet 1:1–5: The cities named here are located in modern day Iran and Turkey. In this era between the first and second coming of Christ, we live in the tension of the “now and not yet.” We exist simultaneously in the old age of sin, resulting in death; and in the already inaugurated new age when God reckons us as righteous, yielding eternal life.¹¹⁹

a) What do we already experience due to our union with Christ?

b) **1 Pet 1:6–9:** What characterizes our lives now? Where do we place our hope?

22) 1 Pet 2:4–8: When constructing a new building, how the builders set the cornerstone determines the alignment of the entire structure. Therefore, Peter insisted that Christ is the sure foundation upon which we must build our lives.¹²⁰ The quotations here come from Isa 28:16 (v. 6), Ps 118:22 (v. 7), and Isa 8:14 (v. 8).

a) **Read 1 Pet 2:4–8.** How did Peter describe Jesus in these verses?

b) **1 Pet 2:9–10:** The terms Peter used for Christians in v. 9 derive from Exod 19:6, Isa 43:20–21 and Deut 7:6; while those in verse 10 arise from Hos 1:10 and Hos 2:23.

¹¹⁹N. T. Wright, *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2009), 80.

¹²⁰ Chrys C. Caragounis, “Stone, Cornerstone,” *DLNT*, 1126–9, 1128.

Read 1 Pet 2:9–10. Why is Peter’s use of Old Testament designations applied to gentile readers significant? What do they mean?

c) 1 Pet 2:11–12: How are we to respond to the difficulties we face in this world? Why?

23) Rev 5:1–4: The events described in Revelation refer to one of the following: 1) incidents which took place when the Apostle John wrote this book during the reign of Domitian; 2) circumstances which are yet to occur; and 3) those which have already happened and shall be repeated in the future.¹²¹ This vision of heaven given to the Apostle John refers a milestone yet to come. While those in heaven revere God as the creator in chapter 4, they turn their attention here to worshipping Christ as our redeemer.¹²²

Read Rev 5:1–4. What is the significance of the following titles?

a) Rev 5:5: The Lion from the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:8–12) —

The Root of David (Isa 11:1–12) —

b) Rev 5:6: A lamb standing as if slain (Exod 12:5–7, 13 and 1 Cor 5:7–8) —

c) Rev 5:7–10: Why is the lamb worthy to open the scroll? How are the people in verses 9–10 described? What does the future hold for them? Who will participate in the song of praise to the Father and the Son?

¹²¹David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1998), lxxv.

¹²²Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, 128–9.

Restoration Complete in CSER Structure

24) Rev 21:1–8: Note that these events of this passage occur after a one thousand-year period described in Rev 20:1–6. Revelation 21–22 portrays the fulfillment of Isa 65:16–66:2, among a host of other Old Testament passages. The verses we are skipping after this depict details of the new Jerusalem.

a) Read Rev 21:1–8. Why will there be neither a temple, nor a sun, nor a moon?

b) Rev 21:24–26: What will those who will be admitted bring into the city? Discuss what that will look like.

c) Rev 21:27: Who will be refused entry?

d) Rev 22:1–2: How do this river and the trees evoke images of Eden (Gen 2:9–10) and fulfill Ezekiel’s vision of the end-time temple in Ezek 47:1–12?¹²³

e) Rev 22:3–7: In ancient Israel, the high priest wore a gold flower across his forehead engraved with the words “Holy to the Lord.” This symbolized that he was set apart and graciously forgiven (Exod 28:36–8).¹²⁴

Read Rev 22:3–7. What is the significance of all God’s people having his name written upon our foreheads?

¹²³ Keener, *Revelation*, 499–500.

¹²⁴ Durham, *Exodus*, 388–9.

25) 1 John 3:1–3: When at last our hope of seeing Jesus face-to-face has been fulfilled, the “now and not yet” state in which we now exist shall have ended, and our exaltation with Christ shall begin.¹²⁵ Anthony A. Hoekema describes it well:

“In the life to come we shall see the image of God not only in its perfection but also in its completion. All of God’s people, from every age and every place, resurrected and glorified, will then be present on the new earth, with all the God-reflecting gifts that have been given them. And all of these gifts, now completely purged of sin and imperfection, will be used by [humanity] for the first time in a perfect way. Then, throughout eternity, God will be glorified by the worship, service, and praise of his image-bearers in a scintillating and totally flawless reflection of his own marvelous virtues. And the purpose for which he created mankind will have been accomplished.¹²⁶”

a) Conclude by reading 1 John 3:1–3. What is our hope? How do we who long to see Jesus conduct ourselves?

¹²⁵I. Howard Marshall, *The Epistles of John* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 388–9.

¹²⁶Hoekema, *Created in God's Image*, 101.