

PENTATEUCH, AN ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

by Frank Decanio

Decanio's analytical study of the first five books of the Bible, providing a systematic analysis and synthesis of the Pentateuch's content, themes, and theological message.

6 Chapters

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01 - Introduction to the Pentateuch

The bibliography for the Introduction to the Pentateuch, as well as for Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy is presented at the end of this article. The Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible (both Hebrew and Christian) are foundational to all of Scripture and rank as one of the most important portions of the Word of God (Wolf 1991:17). This is so because its theological and historical revelations are necessary for an understanding of the rest of the Old Testament and the New Testament as well. These five books contain, for example, God's revelation about the origin of the world with its emphasis on the creation of man made in the image of God, how sin entered human history and the judgment that followed, and the origin of the nation of Israel and its covenant-relationship to Yahweh. For the Jew, these five books contained an authority that the rest of (their) Scripture—the prophets and the writings—did not seem to match. This is evident in that when the Jews were driven into exile, it was the books of Moses that were read most frequently in the synagogues. The first five books of the Bible have from the earliest of time been taken by the Jews to constitute a unity known to them as the Torah or Law. To the Jews, the word Torah best described this part of Scripture as this biblical Hebrew term means not only the "law" but also "teaching" or "instruction" which more completely characterizes God's communication to the Israelites through Moses (Wolf:1991:18). The first five books of the Bible have commonly come to be referred to as the Pentateuch, a word derived from the Greek penta, meaning, "five," and teuchos, originally meaning "a case for carrying papyrus rolls" but in later usage, meaning the "scroll" itself. The division of these writings into five separate books may owe its origin to a practical consideration as one scroll containing all the words would be unwieldy, whereas five scrolls could be handled quite easily (Wolf 1991:17-18).

Before developing a synthesis of the individual books of the Pentateuch, it is helpful to consider issues pertaining to its authorship, author, chronology of events and dating of composition, theological emphases, and covenant forms which dominate the compositional structure of the text from Exodus through Deuteronomy.

Much has been written on an introduction to the Pentateuch, and the topics considered here are discussed in detail in other works, some of which are cited in the text and referenced in the bibliography. The intent here is to deal with these issues only to the extent necessary to carry out the goal of this work which is to develop a synthesis of each book of the Pentateuch. Some of these topics have a direct bearing on developing such a synthesis, while others provide a framework within which to better understand the Pentateuch.

Authorship of the Pentateuch

Wolf (1991:51) has noted that few subjects in Old Testament studies have generated more discussion and more disagreement than the question of who wrote the Pentateuch. Opinions range widely with some arguing that every word was written by Moses, while others insist that Moses had nothing whatever to do with the writing of the Pentateuch. Instead it is claimed that certain ancient sources, labeled J, E, P, and D, were the original documents from which the

Pentateuch was formed, and that the writers of these alleged documents, the so-called Yahwist, Elohist, Priestly Code writer, and the Deuteronomist, are regarded as the true authors of the Pentateuch. (See, Archer 1985:83-108, and Wolf 1991:62-70, for a detailed discussion of the documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch.)

While the issue of authorship is minimally important in the process of understanding the Pentateuch, the issue of the text's unity of composition is important in order to develop a synthesis of the text. It is important, therefore for this study to establish authorship of the Pentateuch.

Conservative biblical scholarship, while acknowledging problems associated with Mosaic authorship, generally adheres to the traditional Jewish and Christian position, while liberal biblical scholarship tends to reject Mosaic authorship in support of the documentary hypothesis. This development of a synthesis of the Pentateuch is in agreement with the traditional Jewish and Christian position and assumes Mosaic authorship and, therefore, a unity of composition of the text. To argue in favor of Mosaic authorship would be extensive and not the purpose of this study. Nevertheless it is helpful to present in brief a case for Mosaic authorship. The case for Mosaic authorship The Pentateuch is, in a sense, an anonymous work since it does not explicitly state who wrote it. The question of authorship for the Pentateuch is complex. For example, in considering the authorship of Genesis it is evident that it deals with a vast period of time, none of which took place in Moses' lifetime. A reading of the Old Testament, however, gives the impression that the Pentateuch was written by Moses. Add to this the testimony of the New Testament, and considerations of the Pentateuch's unity of composition, a case can be made for Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Old Testament.

More specifically, a case for Mosaic authorship can be argued on the basis of,

1. statements concerning the writing activity of Moses as found in the Pentateuch itself, as found in the rest of the OT, and as found in the NT;
2. the theological and compositional unity of the complex text of the Pentateuch which tends to support the position of a single author/unity of authorship;
3. the implication that Moses' training in the educational system of Pharaoh in Egypt would have prepared him for this great literary task; and
4. the fact that the involvement of Moses as the principle human protagonist in the record of Israel's deliverance, desert experiences, and its birth as a nation in covenant-relationship with Yahweh, makes him the logical choice for not only the recording of those events, but, more importantly, as the author of the theological message forged from those events.

Points 3 and 4 require no supportive argument; they are reasonable logical assumptions. In what follows, consideration is given to explicit statements in the whole of Scripture which support Mosaic authorship, and, to reasons for assuming unity, both literarily and theologically, for the Pentateuch.

Explicit biblical statements in support of Mosaic authorship Statements found in the Pentateuch

Wolf (1991:53) has observed that a number of passages in the Pentateuch assert that Moses wrote at least part of it. In Exodus 17:14, for example, the Lord told Moses to write an account of

the battle with the Amalekites. Then also, as recorded in Exodus 24:4, Moses, at Mount Sinai, wrote down all the words and laws spoken by the Lord and repeated to the people. Numbers 33:1-2 says that at the Lord's command, Moses recorded the stages of the Israelites' journey from the time they came out of Egypt. In Deuteronomy 31:9 the text says that Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests and commanded them to read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing at the end of every seven years when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord. The literal understanding of this text requires that a written copy of the Law must have been in existence. The most comprehensive statement of Mosaic authorship in the Pentateuch is found in Deuteronomy 31:24, where it states that after Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law from beginning to end he commanded the Levites to "Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord."

Statements found in the rest of the Old Testament The Pentateuch is not the only portion of the Old Testament which associates these five books with Moses (Wolf 1991:54). For example, after Moses' death, God instructed Joshua to obey all the law given by Moses and to meditate upon the "Book of the Law" day and night (Joshua 1:7-8). Again, at the covenant renewal ceremony at Mount Ebal Joshua built an altar of uncut stones following instructions written in the Book of the Law of Moses (Joshua 8:31). The specifications for this altar are given in Exodus 20:25. Additionally, Joshua 8:34-35 emphasizes that all the words of the law were read to the people. Furthermore, in his farewell address to the nation, Joshua urges the people to be faithful to God by obeying "all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses" (Joshua 23:6).

Joshua was not the only one to make this association, for it is recorded in 1 Kings 2:3 that just before he died David challenged Solomon to keep the decrees and commandments written in "the Law of Moses." Also, 2 Kings 14:5-6 says of Amaziah that when he became king he killed his servants who had slain the king his father, but he did not put to death the sons of the slayers according to what is written in "the Book of the Law of Moses." And 2 Kings 18:6; 2 Kings 23:2 says that Josiah served the Lord with all his heart and soul "in accordance with all the law of Moses."

Biblical scholars, at least conservative scholars, are agreed that by the time of Ezra and Nehemiah in the fifth century B.C. the Pentateuch was attributed to Moses (Wolf:1991:54). This is supported by the phrase the "Book of Moses" which appears in Ezra 6:18 and Nehemiah 13:1 as well as in 2 Chronicles 25:4.

Statements found in the New Testament The authorship connection between Moses and the Pentateuch is even more direct in the New Testament (Wolf 1991:55) where there are numerous references to the "Law of Moses" or the "Book of Moses" (Mark 12:26), or just simply to "Moses" as in, "Moses and the prophets" (Luke 16:29, Luke 16:31; Luke 24:27; Acts 26:22). While the gospels contain many references to Moses and his writings, the most important ones are found in the gospel of John. In John 1:17 the gospel writer states that "the law was given through Moses." And in 1:45 he reports that Philip told Nathaniel he had "found the one Moses wrote about in the Law." In John 5:46-47, Jesus Himself declares that Moses wrote about Him, but the Jews did not believe that He was the Christ because they did not believe what Moses wrote. As His dispute with the Jews heated up, Jesus noted that Moses had indeed given them the Law but none of them kept it (John 7:19). In the ensuing dispute with the Jews, Jesus attributes the giving of circumcision

to Moses. But John notes here that it actually did not come from Moses but from the Patriarchs. John's clarification of this point supports the claim for Mosaic authorship. The institution of circumcision came through Abraham (Genesis 17:1-27) as the sign of the covenant God made with him, yet it comes down to the Jews through the Law of Moses (John 7:22-23). Significantly, the reference to Moses' giving the Jews circumcision implicitly attributes the authorship of Genesis to Moses. Genesis is the most difficult of the five books to link to Moses, thus if some connection can be made between Moses and the Book of Genesis a case can be made for Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch. The Pauline epistles use "Moses" in a similar manner as, for example, in Romans 10:5 where Paul says that "Moses describes . . . the righteousness that is by the law," and then goes on to quote Leviticus 18:5. In 2 Corinthians 3:15 Paul refers to the veil that covers the hearts of the Jews "when Moses is read." It would seem, that in these contexts "Moses" denotes the "Books of Moses," and thus the Pentateuch. Nowhere in the New Testament is there any hint that some individual authored the Pentateuch other than Moses.

Unity of composition in support of unity of authorship

Demonstrating the literary unity of the Pentateuch does not prove Mosaic authorship. However if such unity can be shown for major portions of the Pentateuch an argument can be made for unity of authorship which can be used to support a claim for Mosaic authorship. Unity of composition for the Pentateuch is not argued for in detail here but only broadly from the perspective of continuity in the overall story, narrative structure, and grammatical features.

Continuity/unity of narrative story The five books of the Pentateuch present a coherent picture of the origins of mankind, its fall into a state of sin, and the result of that fall. It also presents a coherent picture of the birth and development of Israel as a nation in covenant-relationship with Yahweh (Wolf 1991:18-19). Furthermore, except for Genesis, these books focus on the life and ministry of Moses whom God raised up to lead the sons of Israel out of bondage in Egypt and into that covenant-relationship with Himself, and to, but not into, the Land of Promise as a fulfillment of His promise to Abraham. The continuing role of Moses as the protagonist in Exodus through Deuteronomy, and the central focus of Yahweh's developing covenant-relationship with Israel, in accordance with the promises He made to Abraham, serve to unify the books of the Pentateuch.

Continuity/unity in narrative structure The main narrative sections of the Pentateuch are concluded by poetic material sometimes followed by an epilogue (see, for example, Sailhamer 1990:7-8). For example, at the close of the patriarchal narratives stands the blessings of Jacob which are written in poetic form in Genesis 49:1-33 and an epilogue in chapter 50. The Exodus narratives are concluded by the song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-27) written in poetic form, and the wilderness wanderings are followed by Balaam's oracles (Numbers 23:1-30; Numbers 24:1-25) written in poetic form. And at the end of the Pentateuch there is a double poetic section containing Moses' song of witness and blessing on the twelve tribes (Deuteronomy 32:1-52; Deuteronomy 33:1-29), followed by an epilogue (Deuteronomy 34:1-12).

Continuity/unity in grammatical features

Along with the overall continuity in the narrative, there are also certain grammatical features that underscore the unity of the Pentateuch. For some reason, as Wolf (1991:19) points out, these books fail to distinguish between the third person pronouns "he" and "she." Instead of making this

distinction like the rest of the OT, the Pentateuch uses only the masculine form.

Conclusion on Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch

While it is possible to conclude as some have that the witness of the Pentateuch itself to Mosaic authorship can be understood as confirming only that certain portions of the text were written by Moses, there is nevertheless other credible biblical evidence to support his writing of the text. And while it would seem that certain portions of the Pentateuch were additions from later periods of Israel's history (see, Wolf 1991:58-60), it does not invalidate that Moses could have written the majority of the text. For example, the declaration of the humility of Moses (Numbers 12:3) would hardly be convincing if it came from Moses' own judgment. Equally difficult to determine in the Book of Numbers is the origin of the Balaam story (Numbers 22:1-41; Numbers 23:1-30; Numbers 24:1-25). Since Moses was not a participant in these events, or even an observer of them, their origin as Scripture is somewhat problematic. These and other examples suggest later additions to the text of the writings. Nevertheless, there is reasonable evidence to support Mosaic authorship, and it is reasonable, therefore, to conclude along with both Jewish and Christian tradition, that authorship of the majority and essential content of the Pentateuch is to be ascribed to Moses. The person of Moses From a Jewish perspective, the dominant figure of the Pentateuch and, to a certain extent, of the entire OT is Moses. Abraham plays a key role in Genesis, but his stature and accomplishments do not match those of Moses. Although Abraham was the founding father of Israel, Moses was the one who organized the nation, promulgated their laws, and, under God, led them for forty years through the wilderness. Throughout this time he was a prophet, a priest, and, in effect, a king/ruler as he directed every facet of Israel's national life. The NT highly praises both Abraham and Moses, but it was Moses who appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, along with Elijah, to talk with Jesus (Matthew 17:3-8).

Though he was born into a Jewish household as a member of the tribe of Levi, he was raised an Egyptian by Pharaoh's daughter and given an education befitting a prince of the royal household. Moses' concern for his people in later life led directly to his self-imposed exile from Egypt. His calling by God after forty years in the desert of Midian set him aside as a prophet, one who would speak the word of God to the sons of Israel and to Pharaoh. In his role as a prophet, Moses was unique. When Aaron and Miriam claimed that God spoke through them as well as through Moses, God replied that he spoke with Moses face to face, not through dreams and visions (Numbers 12:6-8). The uniqueness of Moses' role as a prophet of God is demonstrated in his prediction that God "will raise up for you a prophet like me" (Deuteronomy 18:15, Deuteronomy 18:18). After many centuries of prophets coming and going, Israel was, at the time of Christ's appearance, yet looking for the prophet of whom Moses spoke (John 1:21). According to Acts 3:21-23 this was fulfilled in Christ.

Closely associated with Moses' prophetic role were the "miraculous signs and wonders" that Yahweh performed through him, first in Egypt, and then in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 34:10-11). A prophet was also a man of prayer interceding on behalf of others (see for example, Genesis 20:7). Moses' intercession on behalf of Israel (Exodus 32:11-14) clearly demonstrates his function as a mediator between God and Israel. The year that Israel spent at Mount Sinai was a significant time for Moses, for it was then that he served as lawgiver and became mediator of the covenant Yahweh entered into with the sons of Israel. The people were afraid to listen to the

powerful voice of God, so God spoke to Moses and Moses gave them the laws and statutes (Exodus 20:18-19). Moses "wrote down everything Yahweh had said" and read to the people from "the Book of the Covenant" (Exodus 24:4, Exodus 24:7). Moses' role as lawgiver is clearly connected with the writing of the Pentateuch since all five books are referred to as "the Law." At Mount Sinai Moses also directed the establishment of national worship under the leadership of the priests and Levites. Moses officiated at the ordination of the priests, offering the prescribed sacrifices and applying the blood required by the Levitical law (Leviticus 8:1-36). Thus, before Aaron was installed as high priest, Moses was Israel's priest. It is evident from this that in order for Moses to officiate at the inauguration of the Aaronic priesthood he necessarily must have been sanctified. Since there is no record of this happening, it is clear that God Himself must have sanctified Moses, likely at the burning bush incident when he was told by God to take off his sandals because he was on holy ground (Exodus 3:1-6; compare this with Isaiah 6:1-7). And it was Moses who received from Yahweh the plans for the construction of the Tabernacle and the regulations for the various offerings (Exodus 25:9; Leviticus 7:37-38). Significantly, Moses remained the spiritual leader of Israel even after the priests and Levites were carrying out their responsibilities.

Dating and chronology of the Pentateuch The importance of chronology in establishing a history of a nation has been underscored by Thiele (1983:33):

CHRONOLOGY IS THE BACKBONE of history. Absolute chronology is the fixed central core around which the events of the nation must be correctly grouped before they may assume their exact position in history and before their mutual relationships may be properly understood. Without exact chronology there can be no exact history. Until a correct chronology of a nation has been established, the events of that nation cannot be correctly integrated with the events of neighboring states. If history is to be a true and exact science, then it is of fundamental importance to construct a sound chronological framework about which may be fitted the events of states and the international world. The importance in establishing a chronological framework in order to understand the history of the Old Testament including the Pentateuch is clear.

Establishing a chronological framework of the Old Testament in general, and of the Pentateuch in particular, is problematic, however, because biblical data, the primary source for establishing a chronology, is generally with respect to some person, such as a king (see for example Jeremiah 1:2-3 and Daniel 1:1), or event, such as an earthquake (see for example Amos 1:1) and results, therefore, in a relative rather than "absolute" dating of events and persons. It is beyond the intent of this brief section to discuss what is meant by an absolute chronological framework. Suffice it to say that such a framework can be established for examining the history of a nation in relationship to other nations based on historical records of that nation. In order to establish an absolute chronology some chronological reference point needs to be established or identified. The Western world choose the birth of Christ as that reference point. Given that point (see Hoehner 1977:11-27 for a detailed determination of the date of the birth of Christ), a chronology can be derived backwards and forwards in time. This does not solve all the problems associated with establishing a robust chronological framework, one that will allow for the study of all nations. It is critical that there be points of intersection between nations, societies, cultures (see Daniel 1:1 as an instance of intersection between Israel and Babylonia). In establishing a chronological framework for the Old Testament including the Pentateuch, often times more data than the biblical record is needed.

The primary sources for developing an Old Testament chronology include, but are not necessarily limited to, biblical data, archaeological data, and astronomical data.

Sources of chronological data
Biblical sources
The primary source for knowledge of biblical events is, as Archer (1979:359) declares, the Bible itself. The frequent references to individual life spans and to regnal years of kings, as well as such chronological data as the interval between the Exodus and the building of the Temple of Solomon (1 Kings 6:1), and the length of the Egyptian sojourn (Exodus 12:40-41), serve to establish major chronological data points of OT Hebrew history.

Chart 1 summarizes biblical chronological data important for establishing a chronology of the Pentateuch. It is important to observe from this summary that much of this data provides chronological reference for the events relative to the Exodus. Thus establishing an absolute date for the Exodus is important for establishing a chronology of the Pentateuch. This is done in a subsequent section.

Chart 1 Summary of Biblical Chronological Data

Biblical Source

Chronological Data

Genesis 15:13

Israel to be enslaved and oppressed 400 years in a foreign country;

Exodus 12:2, Exodus 12:18

The Exodus from Egypt takes place on the 15th day, of the 1st month, of the 1st year (Note: from this point on, time in the Pentateuch; is referenced with respect to the date of the Exodus)

Exodus 12:40-41

Israel lived in Egypt 430 years to the day; (Note: this is referenced back in time from the Exodus)

Exodus 19:1

Israel arrived at Mount Sinai on the 15th day, of the 3rd month, of the 1st year after the Exodus;

Exodus 40:2

Erection of the Tabernacle on the 1st day of the 1st month (of the 2nd year) after the Exodus;

Numbers 1:1

Taking of the first census commanded at Sinai on the 1st day, of the 2nd month, of the 2nd year from the Exodus;

Numbers 10:11

Israel's departure from Sinai occurred on the 20th day, of the 2nd month, of the 2nd year after the Exodus;

Numbers 20:1

Israel arrives at Kadesh Barnea in the 1st month (of the 40th year?)

Numbers 20:22

Israel set out from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor;

Numbers 22:1

Israel traveled to the plains of Moab and camped along the Jordan across from Jericho (in the 40th year);

Numbers 33:1

Israel set out from Rameses on the 15th day of the 1st month (of the 1st year) the day after the Passover (see also, Exodus 12:2);

Numbers 33:38, Numbers 22:24

Aaron died on Mount Hor on the 1st day, 5th month, of the 40th year after the Exodus;

Deuteronomy 1:1

It takes 11 days to go from Horeb (Mount Sinai) to Kadesh Barnea;

Deuteronomy 1:1-3

Moses spoke to Israel on the East bank of the Jordan (the plains of Moab) on the 1st day of the 11th month of the 40th year after the Exodus;

Deuteronomy 2:7

Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness;

Deuteronomy 2:14

Israel wandered in the wilderness for 38 years from the time they left Kadesh Barnea until the Exodus generation died off and Israel arrived at the plains of Moab;

Deuteronomy 34:7

Moses died on the Plains of Moab when he was 120 years old (therefore Exodus 2:1 to Deuteronomy 34:7 spans 120 years);

Joshua 4:19

Israel entered the Land on the 10th day, of the 1st month, (of the 41st year) after the Exodus;

Joshua 5:6

Israel moved about in the desert forty years from the time they had left Egypt until the time they entered the land of Canaan;

Joshua 14:7

Caleb was 40 years old when he spied out the land of Canaan (Numbers 13:1-16);

Joshua 14:10

Caleb was 85 years old at the time of the division of the Land (45 years from the time Moses spoke to him about his inheritance);

Joshua 24:29

Joshua was 110 years old when he died;

Judges 11:26

Israel had lived in the Land 300 years when Jephthah was judging;

1 Kings 6:1

Construction of Solomon's Temple began exactly 480 years after Israel came out of Egypt, in the 4th year of Solomon's reign, the 2nd month;

1 Kings 6:38

The Temple was completed in the 8th month of the 11th year of Solomon's reign;

Galatians 3:17

The Law came 430 years after the giving of the promise to Abraham;

Archaeological sources

Archaeological artifacts are important in establishing a chronological framework for the Pentateuch and the rest of the Old Testament because they can be used to determine the time period of successive layers of ancient Near Eastern archaeological sites. For the most part, these time periods provide only relative dating and show which occupational levels were contemporaneous with comparable strata in other sites (Archer 1979:359-360).

Livingston(1974:4-9) has noted that Palestinian archaeologists have discovered that the most reliable means to establish relative dating sequences is to carefully observe and record layers of soil through which they dig. For in these layers they have discovered that particular types of pottery are repeatedly found in particular layers that have the same sequence. Study of this archaeological condition has revealed that both soil layer and its matching type of pottery were tied with a specific people and their culture. Pottery chronology has, Livingston observes, been refined to the extent that archaeologists can, for the most part come within about fifty years of dating the beginning and end of any occupation site. Other artifacts found by archaeologists that aid in identifying people and dating events include such things as buildings, home utensils, implements used for farming, hunting, and manufacturing, weapons of war, art objects, tombs, bones, weights, coins, and, most importantly, inscriptions.

Helpful for deriving absolute dating during the era of Israel's kings was Assyria's practice of dating years by the name of an official known as the limmu, who normally held office for only one year. Incomplete limmu lists, recovered from archaeological artifacts, go back prior to 1200 B.C. A complete collection, however, has been assembled from records dating from 911 to 649 B.C., a time of importance in Israel's history as it spans the reigns of most of the nation's kings (Archer

1979:360). Thiele (1983) has dealt at length with the issue of dating the Hebrew kings in detail and has established a complete list.

Astronomical Sources As Livingston (1974:2) points out the king lists permit a largely relative chronology within Egyptian history, providing us with the knowledge that a certain king and the events of his reign preceded or followed some other king. What is not known from this information, however, is when these things occurred with respect to an absolute reference point, which for the West is the birth of Christ. Help in such cases can come from astronomical data.

Livingston (1974:1-2) provides a good example of the importance of astronomical data in helping to establish an absolute chronological framework from a stream of historical data that provides only a relative chronology. Writing on the Egyptian dynasties as reference points, he notes that the Sothic cycle makes it possible to assign an absolute date to the major dynasties and to many individual kings in Egyptian history. From the king lists a fairly complete relative chronology may be determined. However, it is not known from this data when these things occurred with respect to the absolute reference which the West has accepted, namely, the birth of Christ. However, given the event which marked the beginning of the solar year for the Egyptians, namely, the rising of the Dog Star, Sothis, it is possible to correlate the relative chronology of the Egyptian king lists with the absolute chronological framework accepted in the West. Livingston records that on good evidence the rising of Sothis occurred in A.D. 139, and the previous occurrence would have been in 1317 B.C. and the one prior to that in 2773 B.C. With this information, it has been possible to take the three instances of when Sothis is reported to have risen on a certain calendrical day in a certain royal year and, ascertaining where the calendar was in its cycle, assign an absolute date to the royal year. The earliest of these, he says, is 1872 B.C. Having determined this chronological framework, it is possible, Livingston argues, to establish a fixed checkpoint for another culture whenever that culture intersects with that of Egypt. Then given that point of intersection in the established chronological framework that culture's chronological information can be assessed and arranged.

Also referencing the Sothic cycle, Archer (1979:360) observes that it is possible to establish that the ninth year of Amenhotep I was 1545 B.C. In the ninth year of Amenhotep I, a heliacal rise of Sothis was observed on the ninth day of the third month of summer. Modern astronomers have calculated that, if the observation was made from Memphis or Heliopolis, such an observation could only have been made on that day in 1537 BC. If the observation was made in Thebes, however, it could only have taken place in 1517. The latter choice is usually accepted as correct since Thebes was the capital of early 18th dynasty Egypt; hence, Amenhotep I is given an accession date in 1526 BC, although the possibility of 1546 BC is not entirely dismissed. This is significant from a biblical perspective because if, as argued for below, the Exodus took place in 1446 BC (the early date) then it took place in the reign of the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep II (1450-1425) who followed Amenhotep I.

Chronological framework of the Pentateuch—Genesis through Deuteronomy In establishing a chronology for the Pentateuch two broad time periods are considered; the time period for Genesis, and the time period for Exodus through Deuteronomy. For Genesis, there are two chronological frameworks to be considered; that which is prior to the Patriarchs, and that which is for the Patriarchs. In the case of Exodus through Deuteronomy, the prominent chronological factor which

establishes the chronological framework is the date of the Exodus.

Chronological framework prior to the Patriarchs (Genesis 1:1-31; Genesis 2:1-25; Genesis 3:1-24; Genesis 4:1-26; Genesis 5:1-32; Genesis 6:1-22; Genesis 7:1-24; Genesis 8:1-22; Genesis 9:1-29; Genesis 10:1-32; Genesis 11:1-32) In constructing a chronology for the Pentateuch is important to understand that for the time period before the Patriarchs (Genesis 1:1-31; Genesis 2:1-25; Genesis 3:1-24; Genesis 4:1-26; Genesis 5:1-32; Genesis 6:1-22; Genesis 7:1-24; Genesis 8:1-22; Genesis 9:1-29; Genesis 10:1-32; Genesis 11:1-32), OT data are very limited and concise and there exists the possibility of gaps in the genealogical biblical records recorded in Genesis 5:1-32 and Genesis 11:1-32 (Archer 1979:361-365) as such genealogies were not intended to serve a narrow chronological purpose as is the case in the modern sense. Rather, like those in Matthew 1:1-25 or Luke 3:1-38, their main purpose was theological (see Kitchen 1966:37-38; and Archer 1979:361).

One may question, therefore, whether these genealogies are really to be understood as being continuous throughout. There are indications which suggest that this is not the case. One such indication is found in the phrase "A begat B" which does not always imply direct parenthood. This is shown by its use in Matthew 1:1-25 in cases where links are known from the OT to have been omitted. Terms like "son" and "father" can mean not only '(grand)son' and '(grand)father' but also 'descendant' and 'ancestor' respectively. Thus, in Genesis 5:1-32 and Genesis 11:1-32, 'A begat B' may often mean simply that 'A begat the line culminating in B.' In such cases, one cannot use these genealogies to fix the date of the Flood or of the earliest man, Adam (Kitchen 1966:37-38; see also, Archer 1979:361). In addition, there are some problems associated with the biblical data and external evidence as well. For example, Kitchen (1966:36) has observed that the time covered by the genealogies from Adam to Abraham, if taken to be continuous, is not nearly long enough when compared with external data. If the birth of Abraham is taken to be about 2000 B.C., as is generally argued for, then on the basis of the biblical chronological data the Flood would have occurred some 290 years earlier, at about 2300 B.C. However, on the basis of Mesopotamian evidence this date is excluded because it would fall some 300 or 400 years after the period of the Gilgamesh of Uruk for whom (in both Epic and Sumerian King List) the Flood was already an event of distant past.

All of this, however, does not necessarily mean the genealogical data recorded in Genesis 5:1-32 and 11 are without any factual basis. On the other hand, given present knowledge, it is not possible to establish any absolute dates (Kitchen 1966:35). It is not even possible to establish a relative chronology from Adam to Terah with reasonable certainty owing to the possibility of gaps in the genealogical biblical record (Archer 1979:361-365).

Chronological framework of the Patriarchs (Genesis 12:1-20; Genesis 13:1-18; Genesis 14:1-24; Genesis 15:1-21; Genesis 16:1-16; Genesis 17:1-27; Genesis 18:1-33; Genesis 19:1-38; Genesis 20:1-18; Genesis 21:1-34; Genesis 22:1-24; Genesis 23:1-20; Genesis 24:1-67; Genesis 25:1-34; Genesis 26:1-35; Genesis 27:1-46; Genesis 28:1-22; Genesis 29:1-35; Genesis 30:1-43; Genesis 31:1-55; Genesis 32:1-32; Genesis 33:1-20; Genesis 34:1-31; Genesis 35:1-29; Genesis 36:1-43; Genesis 37:1-36; Genesis 38:1-30; Genesis 39:1-23; Genesis 40:1-23; Genesis 41:1-57; Genesis 42:1-38; Genesis 43:1-34; Genesis 44:1-34; Genesis 45:1-28; Genesis 46:1-34; Genesis 47:1-31; Genesis 48:1-22; Genesis 49:1-33; Genesis 50:1-26)

Biblical scholars are not all agreed on the date of the Patriarchal age (Kitchen 1966:41). There are three independent 'main lines' of approach, Kitchen (1966:42-43) argues, that can be taken to establish a chronological framework for this important period of Israel's history. One approach seeks to determine if any major events in the Patriarchal narratives can be linked with external history. Another approach seeks evidence of chronological data preserved in the details of the narratives, such as personal names, legal usages, etc., which can be correlated with possible use in the Near Eastern context recorded in other documents. A third approach gives consideration to possible chronological links between the Patriarchal era and later epochs.

Major events and external history

According to Kitchen (1966:43-47), the main event of this kind is the raid of the four Eastern kings of Genesis 14:1-24. Archaeological data in the Transjordan suggests a date of ca. 1800 B.C., while the names of the four Eastern kings fit the period ca. 2000-1700 B.C. Additionally, the system of power-alliances (four kings against five) is typical of Mesopotamian politics within the period ca. 2000-1750 B.C. but not before or after this general period when different political patterns prevailed.

Chronological data preserved in narrative details

Again according to Kitchen (1966:47-53), the personal names of the Patriarchs and their families can be directly compared with identical or similarly formed names in Mesopotamian and Egyptian documents of the 20th to 18th centuries B.C. and occasionally later. Further, seasonal occupation of the Negev region on the southwest border of Palestine is archaeologically attested for the 21st to 19th centuries B.C., but not for a 1000 years earlier or for 800 years afterwards. It is known from Genesis 20:1; Genesis 24:62, that Abraham and Isaac spent time in this area, and from Genesis 26:12; Genesis 37:7 that they were keepers of flocks and herds and occasionally grew crops of grain. This activity would best fit the period of ca. 2100-1800 B.C. Additionally, Patriarchal customs of inheritance find close parallels in the Mesopotamian culture of ca. 1500 B.C., and in the Old Babylonian culture in Ur ca. 19th to 18th centuries B.C. And lastly, the price of twenty shekels of silver paid for Joseph in Genesis 37:28 is the price that would have been paid for a slave in about the 18th century B.C. Earlier than this, slaves were cheaper, with an average price of ten to fifteen shekels, while later they became steadily more expensive.

Links with later periods

Kitchen (1966:53-56) has observed that certain passages and genealogies in the Pentateuch link the Patriarchs to the period of the Exodus. One such link is found in Genesis 15:13, where Abraham was informed that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land where they would be oppressed as slaves for 400 years, and in Exodus 12:40-41, which records that the people of Israel had lived in Egypt for precisely 430 years. The discrepancy in these time periods can be accounted for, Kitchen suggests, by understanding the 400 years as a round figure in prospect, while the 430 years should be understood as more precise in retrospect. An additional link between the Patriarchal period and the time of Moses is found in Galatians 3:17 where Paul, in speaking of the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, mentions that the Law came 430 years after the promises were given. Several explanations have been set forth concerning the 430 years noted by Paul (see Kitchen 1966:53). Some have suggested that it began with Abraham, in which

case the 430 years included Israel's time of about 200 years in Canaan and about 200 years in Egypt. The Septuagint supports this view, but this conflicts with the clear statement in Exodus 12:40-41 that the Egyptian sojourn was 430 years exactly. Another suggestion is that the period began with the confirming of the Abrahamic Covenant with Jacob (Genesis 35:9-12). A third and perhaps best view is that the period began with the final confirmation of the Covenant to Jacob just prior to his moving to Egypt (Genesis 46:1-4). According to this last view, the period of time noted in Galatians 3:17 corresponds to the period of the sojourn in Egypt and correlates exactly with Exodus 12:40.

Another link is found in Genesis 15:16 where Abraham was told that his descendants would return to Canaan in 'the fourth generation' (Hebrew dor). The simplest explanation is that the four dor correspond to the 400 years, not to 'generations' in the modern sense. This, Kitchen says, is suggested by clear evidence from Ugaritic and early Assyrian sources which indicate that dor or daru can mean a 'span' or 'cycle of time' of eighty years or more.

Yet another link is found in the genealogies. Some scholars, Kitchen says, dismiss the figure of four centuries between the Patriarchs and the Exodus by appealing to Exodus 6:16-20, a 'genealogy of Moses and Aaron, which they interpret as four literal generations lasting in total only a century or more. But in doing so they overlook the following facts:

1. Exodus 6:16-20 is not a full genealogy, but only gives the tribe (Levi), clan (Kohath), and family-group (Amram by Jochebed) to which Moses and Aaron belonged, and not their actual parents. Evidence for this is found in the fact at the time of the Exodus the Amramites were numerous, and so Amram must be considered as having lived much earlier.
2. Then too, the statement that 'Jochebed bore (to Amram) Aaron and Moses in Exodus 6:20 does not prove immediate descent. Evidence here is found in, for example, Genesis 46:16-18 which indicates that the children that Zilpah 'bore' to Jacob include great-grandsons.
3. Lastly, ancient Near Eastern genealogies were often selective and not continuous. The genealogies cannot, therefore, be used to contradict the stated period of 400 years, and, therefore, in cases like this, continuity of genealogies has to be proved, not assumed.

Based on all these considerations, Kitchen (1966:56) concludes that the total evidence accords well with a chronological framework for the Patriarchs between the 20th to 18th centuries B.C.

Chronological framework for Exodus through Deuteronomy—The Date of the Exodus The major event which occurred during the time period which is recorded in Exodus through Deuteronomy was, as noted above, the Exodus. The date which this event took place is critical for establishing a chronological framework as all other events after it are keyed to it. It is important, therefore, to establish this date in an absolute chronological framework (i.e., the Western calendrical system) so that correlation can be made with other nations with which Israel's history intersected. The date of the Exodus is much debated. Two principal views exist concerning this date: the early date view (ca. 1446-1440 B.C.) during the reign of the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep II (1450-1425), and the late date view (ca. 1299-1232 B.C.) during the reign of Rameses II. Support for the early date comes from the biblical record and archeological data while support for the late date comes primarily from archaeological data (Hannah 1985 104-105). Much has been written on this issue. What follows is a very brief argument in favor of the early date.

Arguments for the early (15th century) date The traditional date of ca. 1446 B.C. is based on 1 Kings 6:1, which specifies very definitively that the fourth year of Solomon's reign was the four hundred and eightieth year after the Exodus (see Hannah 1985:104). It has been established that the fourth year of Solomon's reign was ca. 966 B.C. (see Thiele 1983:67-78 for the establishment of an absolute date in Hebrew chronology). This would establish the date of the Exodus at 1446 B.C. These figures seem to be corroborated by evidence found in Judges 11:26 where it is recorded that Jephthah said that Israel had possessed the land of Canaan for 300 years. The time of Jephthah's statement has been established at approximately 1106 B.C (see, for example, Merrill 1987:148-149). If the 300 years spoken of in Judges 11:26 refers back to the time when the Conquest proper began, then adding 40 years from the Exodus to the beginning of the Conquest, a date of 1446 B.C is obtained for the Exodus. On the other hand, if the 300 years spoken of in Judges 11:26 refers back to the time when the Conquest proper ended, then adding another six or seven years for the conquest of the land results in a date of 1452 or 1453 B.C. for the Exodus. While this evidence is approximate, it clearly supports the early date as opposed to the late date (see, Kaiser 1990:290).

Second, as Hannah (1985:104) points out, archeological evidence from Egypt during this period corresponds with the biblical account of the Exodus (see Unger 1954:140-145; and Archer 1964:215-216), particularly with respect to Amenhotep II.

Third, events in the region of Canaan about 1400 B.C. correspond with the Conquest under Joshua (Hannah 1985:104). In particular, archaeological evidence found at Jericho, Ai, and Hazor suggest that they were destroyed about 1400 B.C. Waltke (1972:47) has noted that all the accredited Palestinian artifactual evidence supports the literary account that the Conquest occurred at the time specifically dated by the biblical text.

Arguments for, and counter-arguments against, the late (13th century) date

While the argument advanced by proponents of the early date is straightforward and based on biblical evidence, proponents of the late dating of the Exodus, such as Kitchen (1966 57-75), argue the following points which are first stated and then argued against (see, for example, Hannah 1985:104-105):

1. Argument The Exodus could not have take place until after 1300 B.C. because while the Israelites were in Egypt, they built the city of Rameses (Exodus 1:11). If this city were named for the Pharaoh, Rameses II (1299-1232 B.C.), it is argued that the Exodus could not have occurred prior to 1290 B.C.

Counter argument This point is discredited on the basis of historical considerations. While Exodus 1:11 states that Rameses is one of two cities built by the Israelites, Genesis 47:11 also states that Jacob and his sons settled in "the land of Rameses." Whereas it is true that Rameses II was a prodigious builder, it is not at all certain that the city mentioned in Exodus 1:11 bore his name at first. It appears from Exodus 1:1-22 and Exodus 2:1-25 that Moses had not been born until after Rameses was built, and yet he was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus. The same problem exists with the appearance of the name "Rameses" in Genesis 47:11, hundreds of years before the reign of Rameses II. A likely explanation is that in both cases earlier names were updated by a later editor who used the more recent name. Support for this explanation is found with regards to

Genesis 14:14 where Abraham pursued the captors of Lot as far as Dan. But the name of the city was Laish until the tribe of Dan captured it and renamed it in the days of the Judges (Judges 18:29).

Another argument against the identification of Rameses as the pharaoh of the Exodus is the length of the reign of the king who preceded him. Rameses predecessor, Set I, reigned for only twelve years, clearly not long enough to account for the time Moses spent in Midian. On the other hand, Thutmose III, the pharaoh of the oppression according to early date view, ruled from about 1495-1450 B.C. This time span allows sufficient time for Moses to have taken refuge in Midian for 40 years (Acts 7:30) and then have been told at the burning bush that "all the men who wanted to kill you are dead" (Exodus 4:19).

2. Argument The 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1 is an approximate figure representing twelve generations. Since twenty-five years more nearly corresponds to a generation, the twelve generations (implied by 1 Kings 6:1) would be only about 300 years. Thus the Exodus would have occurred around 1260 B.C. and the Conquest about 1220 B.C.

Counter argument

There is no basis for claiming that the 480 years represents twelve generations. The text of 1 Kings 6:1 is very explicit in reporting the year and month that construction on the Temple began. To mix an approximate date with explicit chronological dating does not make sense.

3. Argument

Archaeological data (accumulated in the late 1930's) suggests that the presence of strong opposition to the Israelites from the Edomites (Numbers 20:20-21) was impossible before 1300 B.C. because the region of the southern Transjordan was unoccupied from 1900-1300 B.C.

Counter argument More recent archaeological studies, however, has shown no occupational gap there from 1500-1200 B.C.

4. Argument Archaeological data suggests that Hazor did not fall to the Israelites until 1300 B.C.

Counter argument

However, Scripture states that Hazor fell twice; first in the days of Joshua (Joshua 11:10-11) and later in the time of Deborah and Barak (Judges 4:2, Judges 4:23-24). Further, there is evidence in one area of the excavated city of a destruction around 1400 B.C.

5. Argument

Archaeological evidence at the ancient sites of Lachish and Debir have uncovered a pattern of destruction which indicates that these cities were destroyed by fire in the 13th century B.C.

Counter argument The Book of Joshua, however, does not say that Lachish (Joshua 10:32) and Debir (Joshua 10:38-39) were destroyed, let alone by fire. The only cities that the Book of Joshua indicates were destroyed by fire are Jericho (Joshua 6:25) and Ai (Joshua 8:28) during the southern campaign, and Hazor (Joshua 11:13) during the northern campaign. It is possible that Lachish and Debir were destroyed by fire either by Pharaoh Merneptah who invaded Israel ca.

1230 B.C., or by the Sea Peoples who invaded the land about 1200 B.C.

There appears to be no valid reason for rejecting the biblical data. Consequently, the date of the Exodus is taken as 1446 B.C. on the basis of 1 Kings 6:1, with supporting evidence in Judges 11:26, and on the date of 966 B.C. as the fourth year of Solomon's reign.

Summary on a chronological framework for the Pentateuch

Based on the date of 1446 B.C. as the date for the Exodus, and using biblical data summarized in Chart 1.1, as well as extra-biblical data about the kings, nations, and people, interacting with Israel, and certain astronomical data, a chronological framework keyed to modern reckoning, can be established for the Pentateuch (see, for example, Archer 1979:364-368; Merrill 1987:31). Chart 2 presents a broad chronology of the Patriarchs and Israel's sojourn in Egypt.

Date of composition

Assuming Mosaic authorship, then the Pentateuch would have to have been written some time between the time of the Exodus and the death of Moses, namely, between 1446 and 1406 B.C. Given this, it is possible that Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus were composed during the one year Israel was encamped at Mount Sinai (1446-1445 B.C.). The books of Numbers and Deuteronomy would have to have been completed in the final year of Israel's forty years of wandering in the wilderness (1407-1406 B.C.). The Recipients The recipients of the Pentateuch are clearly the Israelites, redeemed and delivered from bondage in Egypt, separated to Yahweh, and then brought into covenant-relationship with Him at Sinai. It would seem that the books of the Pentateuch were directed to every generation of Israel because the covenant entered into at Sinai and renewed on the Plains of Moab was cut with every generation and not just the one ratifying it as recorded in Deuteronomy 29:14-15. However, having said that it is clear that the immediate recipients of the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus would likely have been the Exodus generation, while the immediate recipients of the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy would have been the second generation from the Exodus, or the soon-to-be "Conquest" generation. The relationship between geography, time, and major events in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, may be summarized as Chart 3 shows.

Lastly, it is helpful to see in graphic form, as shown in Chart 4, the chronological relationship of the Pentateuch with the rest of Israel's OT history.

Theological types of Christ appearing in the Pentateuch

Identifying major theological themes and emphases is an important aspect of correctly understanding a book of the Bible. These themes are derived individually for each book of the Pentateuch and presented in the Analysis and Synthesis for that book. There is, however, one aspect of these themes which runs throughout the Pentateuch and it is appropriate to discuss it here in the introduction. That theme is theological types of Christ.

Following his resurrection, Jesus appeared to two of his disciples as they were traveling home on the road to Emmaus. Not recognizing him, they engaged him in conversation which led to his chiding them for not understanding that the Christ was to have suffered before entering into his glory. Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself (Luke 24:13-27). One of the ways in which Jesus is revealed in

the Scriptures is by means of what is called a type. A biblical type may be defined as a historical person, object, institution, or event that has, in addition to its historical significance, a divinely intended future significance. In this function, it foreshadows a corresponding person, object, institution, or event, known as an antitype. Types are limited to only two categories, and any supposed type that does not fit one of these two categories is not legitimate. A type can be substantiated when the NT designates it as one. A second category allows for types that are not explicitly designated as such but are strongly implied by the meaning expressed in the text. In this later case, there is a correspondence between type and antitype. The following is a summary of the types of Christ revealed in the Pentateuch.

Adam as a type of Christ

Adam is recognized as a type of Christ in as much as the NT explicitly designates him as such; “. . . as did Adam, who was a pattern (type/typos) of the one to come” (Romans 5:14). Both entered the world through a special act of God as sinless men. Adam is the head of the old creation; Christ is the Head of the new creation. Through Adam’s one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men; through Christ’s one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all who believe in Him (Romans 5:15-19).

Melchizedek as a type of Christ

Melchizedek (righteous king of Salem) is declared a type of Christ in Hebrews 7:1-28. Speaking of him, the writer of Hebrews declares that without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, he, like the Son of God remains a priest forever (Hebrews 7:3). Thus Melchizedek typifies Christ as high priest. For as David declares of Christ in Psalms 110:4, “The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

Isaac as a type of Christ In Genesis 22:1-24 it is recorded that Abraham was called upon by God to offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice, a burnt offering (Genesis 22:2). The similarity between this and what is implied by John 3:14-16, strongly suggests a typical relationship between Isaac and Christ through a correspondence of circumstances. This is strengthened when it is taken into consideration that Isaac was born of miraculous circumstances, and was the heir to all the promises of God. Furthermore, as Christ willingly gave himself up to be the “lamb of God,” so too it would seem that Isaac gave himself in obedience to his father even unto death.

Joseph as a type of Christ

Joseph typifies Christ in some ways with respect to His first and second advents. Joseph, like Christ at His first advent, was rejected by his brothers and sold into slavery for a price. Like Christ, Joseph suffered persecution and hardship before being exalted. Like Christ, Joseph endured several levels of humiliation going from favorite son, to servant, and then slave before being exalted as ruler of the land (see Php 2:1-30). Like Christ, Joseph was maltreated by his brothers who intended it for evil but God effected it for good. In this regard Joseph was sent before his brothers to prepare the way for their deliverance in the time of great famine (Genesis 45:4-8; Genesis 47:23-25; Genesis 50:20-21). In this way Joseph was used to effect blessing upon the elect seed and other families of the earth in a typical fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, even as Christ will do at His second coming. Further, Joseph typifies Christ at His second coming in that

he tested his brothers to see if they had truly repented even as Christ will purify his brothers during the Tribulation and lead them to repentance. In summary, Joseph and Christ are both objects of special love by their fathers; both are hated by their brethren; both are rejected as rulers over their brethren; both are conspired against and sold for silver; both are condemned though innocent; and both are raised from humiliation to positions of exaltation by the power of God to be agents of blessing. Taking all this into consideration leads to the conclusion that Joseph is a type of Christ by correspondence.

Judah as a type of Christ

Judah, the elect line through whom the ruler would come (Genesis 49:10), is a type of Christ at His first coming by correspondence in the willing offer of himself as a substitute for his brother. When the sons of Israel are tested by Joseph, Judah, as Christ who came after him, offers himself as a substitute in place of his brother Benjamin (Genesis 44:32-33).

Moses as a type of Christ

Moses is a type of Christ by correspondence in a number of ways. Most notable, he is the only biblical person other than Christ to hold the three offices of prophet (Deuteronomy 34:10-12), priest (Exodus 32:31-35), and king, [although Moses was not king, he nevertheless functioned as ruler of Israel] (Deuteronomy 33:4-5). As a prophet, Christ was the prophet like Moses of whom Moses spoke (Deuteronomy 18:15; John 1:45; Acts 7:37). Further, both were endangered in infancy, both renounced power and wealth, both were rejected by their brethren, both were deliverers, lawgivers, and mediators. Additionally, Moses, like Christ, offered himself as a substitute for the nation after the people sinned by worshiping the golden calf at Sinai. However, unlike Christ, God did not accept Moses' offer, but instead accepted his intercessory request to forgive the people.

Passover lamb as a type of Christ The Passover lamb is a type of Christ with respect to the sacrificial offering of himself. By correspondence, the lamb, like Christ, was without blemish and was sacrificed as a substitute with the blood being applied to effect atonement for sin. In this same way, every animal sacrifice offered to effect atonement for sin is a type of Christ. Furthermore, the NT declares that Christ is the Passover Lamb, the Lamb provided by God (John 1:29, John 1:36; 1 Corinthians 5:7). **The Rock as a type of Christ** The rock from which water sprung in the wilderness is a type of Christ, for 1 Corinthians 10:4 declares that "they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." **The bronze serpent as a type of Christ** The bronze serpent on the stake (Numbers 21:4-9) is a type of Christ as Jesus Himself declares in John 3:14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." Both the serpent and Christ are lifted up. Faith is involved in both cases. Those who looked on the serpent were delivered and received, or did not loose, their physical life, while all who "look" on Christ lifted up on the cross by faith receive eternal life. **The sacrifices and feasts of Israel as types of Christ** The typological significance of the sacrifices and feasts of Israel is discussed in the Analysis and Synthesis of the Book of Leviticus presented in Leviticus 4:1-35.

Covenants of the Pentateuch

Three covenants are recorded in the Pentateuch; the Noahic, the Abrahamic, and the Mosaic. From the perspective of biblical history, the Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant are of primary importance in that they play a major role in the developing relationship between Yahweh and Israel. In the following, each covenant is briefly discussed in terms of its nature, function, and form. The nature and function of the covenants of the Pentateuch A covenant in the OT is a sworn agreement between two parties, where no blood relation exists. The Pentateuch contains examples of covenants between individuals, nations, and between God and man. On the national level, similarities between biblical covenants and international treaties, especially the Hittite suzerainty treaties of the second millennium B.C., have been recognized. The basic structure of these treaties has been compared at length with the covenant entered into by Yahweh and Israel at Mount Sinai. This comparison has led to the conclusion that there is a strong possibility that God relates to Israel as a suzerain relates to a vassal, and that Yahweh required the same allegiance demanded by the Hittite king. (See Mendenhall 1955 & 1962, and, Kline 1963, who deal with the issue of covenant in Israel in detail; see also Livingston 1974:153-157.)

Noahic Covenant The Noahic Covenant was an everlasting covenant made with Noah and his descendants—all of humanity from that point on in time—in which God promised unconditionally that never again would He destroy the earth and all the flesh on it with a flood (Genesis 9:8-11). As a sign of the covenant, God designated the rainbow as a reminder (to mankind) of His binding promise. While this covenant is important because it reveals that God would never again bring a flood judgment on mankind, it provides no revelation concerning His relationship with Israel or the nations as do the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants.

Abrahamic Covenant

God's covenant with Abraham marks the theological high point of Genesis and perhaps of the entire Pentateuch. (See Mitchell 1970 for a consideration of Abram's understanding of the covenant.) First expressed in Genesis 12:1-3 in the form of a promise, it is then formally encoded and instituted as a covenant in Genesis 15:9-21 with the sign of the covenant specified in Genesis 17:1-27, and then sealed with an oath in Genesis 22:15-18. Affirmation and expansion of the covenant is recorded in Genesis 13:1-18, Genesis 17:1-27, and Genesis 22:1-24. Isaac and Jacob, the elect seed of Abraham, receive confirmation of the covenant in Genesis 26:2-5 and Genesis 35:11-12, respectively. In summary, God promises to bless Abraham, to make him into a great nation, to give him and his descendants the land of Canaan as an inheritance, and to bless all the nations of the earth through him. Like the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant is everlasting (Genesis 17:7, Genesis 17:13, Genesis 17:19), and it is unconditional. The only stipulation was that Abraham leave family and home and travel to an unknown land that God would reveal to him (Genesis 12:1). In the ceremony ratifying the covenant, God alone took an oath passing between the pieces of the slaughtered animals (Genesis 15:17). Abraham and his male descendants were required to be circumcised as a sign of the covenant (Genesis 17:10-11). Galatians 3:17-18 emphasizes the promissory nature of the Abrahamic Covenant and affirms that the giving of the Mosaic Law did not set aside the former covenant which came 430 years later. After the passing of several centuries, God proved His faithfulness by remembering His covenant with Abraham and effected Israel's redemption from Egypt in order to bring the now great number of descendants of Abraham into relationship with Himself and give them the land of Canaan even as He had promised Abraham (Exodus 2:24; Exodus 6:5).

Mosaic Covenant In leading the sons of Israel out of Egypt God was separating them to himself, and in this process he proposed, at Mount Sinai, to make a covenant with them (Exodus 19:1-5). The heart of the Mosaic Covenant is the Ten Commandments. The first of these commandments is foundational to the whole covenant-relationship forbidding Israel to have any other God but Yahweh—"you shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). Significantly, this is the stipulation that Israel continuously violated from the very beginning until they were expelled out of the Land of Promise and driven into Babylonian exile. The Mosaic Covenant differs from the Abrahamic Covenant in that it is not called an everlasting covenant. Yet certain aspects of the covenant are referred to as "lasting" or "permanent." For example Israel was to observe the Sabbath "as a lasting covenant." Observing the Sabbath was the sign of the Mosaic Covenant, corresponding to circumcision as the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant. Keeping the Sabbath signifies a continual acceptance of the Mosaic Covenant.

After forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the Mosaic Covenant was renewed by the new generation as they were poised to enter into and take possession of the Land of Promise. This was necessitated by the fact that the Exodus generation had effectively broken the covenant by their defiant refusal to obey Yahweh and enter and take possession of the land of Canaan. Such treaty renewal was apparently common among the Hittites when one of their vassal kingdoms had had a change in rulership. At the time of Israel's covenant renewal, the stipulations were brought up to date in light of Israel's changing conditions of going from a nomadic to a sedentary lifestyle. According to Deuteronomy 29:1, the covenant made with the new generation on the Plains of Moab contained some additional stipulations, but was still built on the foundation of the original covenant. Thus, this covenant renewal should not be viewed as a new, or even an additional covenant, but an update to the original in view of Israel's changing situation. This is indicated by the repetition of the Ten Commandments recorded in Deuteronomy 5:1-33. The form of the Pentateuch covenants The royal, or land grant covenant form of the Abrahamic covenant

Though Abraham's opportunity to participate in the covenant privileges was obviously conditioned on his leaving Ur and his family and journeying to Canaan, the subsequent covenant was unconditional. As many scholars now recognize, the covenant and its circumstances were in the form of a royal (land) grant, a legal arrangement well attested in the ancient Near East. This type of grant was initiated by a benefactor such as a king who, for whatever reason, wished to confer a blessing on a subject. It was often construed as a reward for some service rendered by the subject, but many times there was no expressed rationale. The grant was a boon explicable by nothing other than the sovereign pleasure of the benefactor. And just as its bestowal was unconditional so was its maintenance. The covenant could stand regardless of the behavior of its recipient. Thus the Abrahamic Covenant should be viewed as an unconditional grant made by Yahweh to His servant Abraham, a grant that was to serve a specific and irrevocable function. (See Weinfeld 1970 for a detailed discussion of the covenant of grant in the OT and the ancient Near East.) The suzerainty-vassal covenant form

It has been observed (see Mendenhall 1955 & 1962, and Kline 1963) that in the Hittite international treaty texts there are nearly always found six elements which constitute the treaty between suzerain and vassals, but the order is not fixed. Rather, there is considerable variation in the order of the elements as well as the wording. Occasionally, one element or another may be lacking. These elements include a preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, provision for the

preservation of the treaty, invocation to the gods, specification of curses and blessings, and a ratification ceremony.

Preamble The preamble identifies the suzerain, or "great king," who is the author of the covenant and the one giving it to his vassals. The emphasis is upon the majesty and power of the king.

Historical prologue The historical prologue describes in detail the previous relationship between the king and his vassals. In particular, great emphasis is placed on the deeds which the king has performed for the benefit of the vassals. What this description amounts to is that the vassal is obligated to perpetual gratitude toward the great king because of the benevolence, consideration, and favor which he has already received. Immediately following this, the devotion of the vassal to the great king is expressed as a logical consequence. The vassal, therefore, is exchanging future obedience to specific commands for past benefits which he received without any real right.

Stipulations The covenant stipulations state in detail the obligations imposed on and accepted by the vassal. They include typically:

1. The vassal must make a thorough commitment to the suzerain to the exclusion of all alien alliances.
2. The vassal agrees to a prohibition of any enmity against anything under the sovereignty of the great king. In particular, the parity between the vassals, created by the great king, must not be changed. One vassal cannot be a slave or dependent of another vassal. Every hostile action against a co-vassal is hostility against the king himself, and the king promises to take the part of the oppressed.
3. The vassal must answer the call to arms sent him by the king. To fail to respond is a breach of the covenant.
4. The vassal must hold lasting and unlimited trust in the king. The vassal must not permit any evil words against the king, for this is the beginning of rebellion.
5. The vassal must not give asylum to refugees from any source.
6. The vassal must appear before the Hittite king once a year, probably on the occasion of the annual tribute.
7. Controversies between vassals are unconditionally to be submitted to the king for judgment.

Provision for deposit in the temple and periodic public reading

Since the treaty was under the protection of the deity, one copy of the treaty was deposited in a sanctuary of the vassal and another in the sanctuary of the suzerain. At periodic intervals the treaty was to be read publicly.

Invocation of the gods as witnesses to the covenant

Both the gods of the suzerain and the gods of the vassal were invoked as witnesses of the oath. Most interesting is the inclusion of the mountains, rivers, springs, sea, heaven and earth, the winds and the clouds, to witness the making of the treaty.

Curses and blessings formula The gods called upon to witness the oath are called upon to execute curses or blessings according to the vassal's obedience or disobedience.

Ratification ceremony/formal oath In addition to the six fundamental components, there was a formal oath by which the vassal pledged his allegiance to the suzerain. Accompanying the oath was a solemn ceremony which constituted a procedure for ratifying the treaty. The Mosaic covenant form in relationship to the suzerainty treaty form On the surface, the covenant Yahweh presented to Israel at Sinai seems a complex of disparate elements; e.g., the Ten Commandments, the Book of the Covenant, the priestly instructions, the enumeration of curses and blessings, etc. While the exact relationship of all these parts is not particularly clear from the perspective of a modern reader, it seems appropriate to define Israel's constitution in terms of a suzerain-vassal relationship because there is a remarkable resemblance, as Mendenhall (1955 & 1962) and Kline (1963) have observed, between Yahweh's covenant with Israel and the suzerainty-vassal type of international treaty found in the Ancient Near East. This is demonstrated in the following summary correlation.

Preamble The preamble to the Mosaic Covenant is found in Exodus 20:2 a where Yahweh declares, "I am the Lord your God." Yahweh, who is the great king, is the author of the covenant and the one presenting it to His vassals, the Israelites, the descendants of Abraham. This covenant is established immediately following Yahweh's great act of redeeming Israel from bondage in Egypt through the exercise of his majesty and power.

Historical prologue The details of the historical prologue to the Mosaic Covenant are found in Exodus 20:2 b—"I am . . . who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery," and in Exodus 19:4-5—"You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession." This historical prologue does not relate back to Abraham, although that is clearly in view from Genesis, but rather back to the immediate past to which all of Israel could relate in as much as they had lived through it. A much more complete historical prologue is recorded in Deuteronomy 29:1-29 when Moses, at the end of his life, led Israel in a covenant renewal on the Plains of Moab, and again in Joshua 24:1-27 when Joshua, nearing the end of his life, led the Israelites through a covenant renewal at Shechem.

Stipulations The stipulations of the Mosaic Covenant are declared in the form of the Ten Commandments recorded in Exodus 20:1-17. The first five of these commandments specify the fundamental framework within which Israel is to relate to Yahweh as their God and King. Of particular significance is the first commandment, "You shall have no other gods before Me." This is the first and most important obligation of the covenant because it required Israel to stop all forms of idol worship and accept Yahweh as their one and only God and King. The remaining commandments specify the fundamental framework within which the people of Israel are to relate to one another. Essentially, they proclaim that all vassals are equal and protected by the king. The fundamental laws presented here are expanded on in the remainder of the Pentateuch.

Provisions for deposit in the Temple and periodic public readings

Provisions for the deposit of the covenant in the ark are found in Exodus 25:16, Exodus 25:21; Exodus 40:20, and Deuteronomy 10:2-5, which require Israel to place the two tablets of the

covenant in the ark of the covenant. Provision for the public reading of the covenant is specified in Deuteronomy 31:9-13 where Moses commanded Israel to read the Law at the end of every seven years. The invocation of the gods as witnesses

Since there is but one God, that being Yahweh, there can be no calling upon the gods as witnesses. However, when Moses is leading the new generation of Israel through a covenant renewal on the Plains of Moab prior to their entering the Land, he calls on heaven and earth as witnesses (Deuteronomy 30:19). The curses and blessings formula

There is no explicit section of blessings and curses in the formulation of the covenant given in Exodus; there is only the promise of God that Israel would be his treasured possession if the people obeyed him (Exodus 19:5). However, with the giving of the Levitical law for priests and worshippers there is in Leviticus 26:1-46 a detailed specification of blessings in response to obedience to the covenant stipulations and curses as a result of disobedience. Further, at the time of the renewal of the covenant through Moses, a very distinct and comprehensive list of blessings and curses is added to the covenant in Deuteronomy 28:1-14 and Deuteronomy 28:15-68, respectively.

Ratification of the covenant The initial ratification of the covenant is recorded in Exodus 24:1-18. But ratification of the covenant was not restricted to this one event, but rather was necessarily repeated with each renewal of the covenant as is recorded in Deuteronomy 29:1-29 when Moses led Israel in a covenant renewal on the Plains of Moab, and in Joshua 24:1-33 when Joshua led Israel in covenant renewal at Shechem.

Summary of Mosaic Covenant in terms of Suzerainty Treaty Components

Further identification of the Mosaic Covenant components with the suzerainty treaty components is primarily based on a summary by Hannah (1985:137) as:

Mosaic Covenant Compared with Suzerainty Treaties

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02 - Analysis and Synthesis of Genesis

Analysis and Synthesis of Genesis The analysis and synthesis approach to biblical studies applied here to Genesis is a methodology developed by the author (DeCanio, 2007) in conjunction with his doctoral studies at the University of South Africa. An abbreviated version of this work entitled, *Biblical Hermeneutics and a Methodology for Studying the Bible* will be posted on bible.org. The bibliography for this study of Genesis is presented at the end of the article, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Analysis of the context of Genesis The aim of this analysis is to consider aspects of the context in which the book of Genesis was written, such as its authorship, recipients, time period of historical events and composition, and its biblical context, which may be useful in understanding the book as a whole.

Authorship The authorship of the Book of Genesis is, like the authorship of the other books of the Pentateuch, anonymous. Both internal and external evidence is lacking to reasonably establish the author of Genesis. While the NT speaks of the Law as 'Moses' or the 'books' or 'law' of Moses, it nowhere points specifically to Genesis by itself in these terms. Portions of the Pentateuch record the strategic role Moses played in its making. This is seen from his first written records of the curse against Amalek (Exodus 17:14) and the book of the Sinai covenant (Exodus 24:3-7) to the writing and safekeeping of his initial exposition of the law (Deuteronomy 31:24-26). It would seem that, as argued in the *Introduction to the Pentateuch*, the core and substance of the books of the Pentateuch from Exodus to Deuteronomy are the work of Moses. Yet the NT, in attributing the Pentateuch as a whole to Moses, would seem to imply Mosaic authorship for Genesis as it does for Exodus through Deuteronomy. Thus, Mosaic authorship of Genesis may be established on the basis of its unity with the other books of the Pentateuch and on the basis of the outstanding qualifications that Moses had for writing such a book which is foundational to an understanding of the remainder of the Pentateuch. For further details on the authorship of the Pentateuch, see, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Recipients As discussed in the *Introduction to the Pentateuch*, the most immediate recipients of the Book of Genesis would likely have been the Exodus generation. Yet it is clear that the intended audience was to extend to all future generations of the elect seed of Abraham who would be born under the Mosaic covenant (see, Deuteronomy 29:14-15).

Time period of historical events and composition

Date of events The events recorded in Genesis span from the creation of the world until the death of Joseph. While it is not at all possible to date the beginning of the world, the dating of events during the life of the patriarchs can be determined with reasonable accuracy with respect to modern reckoning. In the *Introduction to the Pentateuch* a discussion is presented on the chronological aspects of the Pentateuch. There it was determined that events beginning with Abram and ending with the death of Joseph span about 350 years going from about 2166 B.C. to

1806 B.C. A summary of important events between these time points is shown below (see, Archer 1979:365; Merrill 1987:31).

Date of composition

Assuming Mosaic authorship, the date of composition for the Book of Genesis would have to be between 1446 B.C. (the date of the Exodus) and 1406 B.C. (the death of Moses). A likely possibility is during the year that Israel spent encamped in the wilderness at Sinai when Moses probably composed most, if not all, of the Books of Exodus and Leviticus. Such an assumption would place the date of composition of Genesis between 1446 and 1445 B.C.

Summary of Important Events in the Pentateuch Biblical Context The biblical context consists of three components; the historical element, the socio-cultural element, and the theological element.

Historical element

Nowhere in Genesis is the historical context for its writing indicated. However, if the date of its composition is, as noted above, during the period of time Israel spent at Sinai, then the historical context for the writing of Genesis would necessarily have been Israel's redemption and Exodus from Egypt, and Israel's entering into covenant-relationship with Yahweh. The historical context for understanding Genesis, however, is not the occasion for its writing, but rather the historical circumstances which are revealed in the progress of the narrative as it moves from the Creation to the death of Joseph. In as much as history begins with the Creation, there can be no historical context for this the first recorded act of God. The reader is not even given any knowledge of the a-historical context which gave birth to the Creation. From that point on, however, the historical context for succeeding circumstances is documented in Genesis to the extent needed to understand the narrative flow and theological progression of God's relationship with man. It is important to recognize, therefore, that there is not one historical context for the book of Genesis. Rather, this context is changing as the Genesis narrative progresses from the beginning to the end. In view of the significant progressive development of this context, it will not be discussed here but will be noted and made use of to the extent needed in the process of understanding the book as a whole.

Socio-cultural element

Aspects of the socio-cultural context of the Pentateuch can be determined from the text of the Pentateuch itself, and from any number of works such as Livingston (1974). Knowing this context is helpful in providing the reader with the socio-cultural framework for understanding more fully the lives and movements of the Patriarchs. It provides the setting for the narratives, and it is therefore helpful in understanding certain passages of the text more completely. However, it is not critical to understanding Genesis as a whole. Therefore, the socio-cultural data that comprises this element will not be set forth here, but will be brought into play to the extent needed to enhance an understanding of those passages which are socio-culturally dependent.

Theological element Of the three elements which comprise the biblical context, the theological element is by far most important for understanding the book of Genesis both as a whole and in part. This component is complex because there is a progression of the theological revelation as the narrative moves from the Creation to the death of Joseph. For this reason, it is both necessary and

helpful to partition Genesis into six major contexts—Pre-creation, Creation (Genesis 1:1-31; Genesis 2:1-25); The Fall (Genesis 3:1-24; Genesis 4:1-26); Noah through the Flood (Genesis 5:1-32; Genesis 6:1-22; Genesis 7:1-24; Genesis 8:1-22; Genesis 9:1-29; Genesis 10:1-32); The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9); and The Patriarchal Era (Genesis 11:10-32)—which can be identified from the Genesis narrative. In each of these contexts four theological categories—God, Man, Creation and World order/creation mandate—are considered. Note that there is a progression of theological revelation even within the framework of these contexts, and that a particular theological context comprises the prior theological contexts and the theological revelations for that particular context.

Analysis of the text of Genesis The goal of the analysis of the text of Genesis is to consider such aspects of this written document as a broad descriptive overview of it, its major theological themes, and its literary characteristics, in order to derive a synthetic structure of the text as a whole.

Broad descriptive overview

Chapter

Descriptive Summary

1

The creation of the heavens and the earth;

The Creation mandate/world order for the heavens, the earth, and all living creatures;

1–2

The creation of the man and the woman in the image of God;

The planting of a garden in Eden as a habitat for the man and the woman;

3

The fall of the man and the woman into a state of sin;

The judgment against the man, the woman, and the serpent;

The expulsion of the man and the woman from the Garden;

4

The murder of Abel by Cain;

The judgment against Cain;

The descendents of Cain;

The birth of Seth;

5

The descendents of Adam from Seth to Noah;

6

The universal wickedness of all mankind except for Noah;

The pronouncement of judgment against all mankind except for Noah;

The deliverance provided for Noah, his family, and representative living creatures from the coming flood;

7

The building of the ark;

The entry of Noah, his family, and the representative living creatures into the ark;

The coming of the flood and the destruction of all living beings and creatures except for Noah and his family;

8

The recession of the flood and drying of the land;

The coming out of Noah, his family, and all the representative animals from the ark;

The sacrifice Noah offered to God;

The promise God made with Himself to never again destroy all living things by means of a flood;

9

The new world order;

Confirmation of God's covenant with Noah, his descendants, and with all living creatures;

The sign of the covenant;

The sin of Ham;

The judgment against Canaan;

10

The descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth;

11

The Tower of Babel and the settling down of the people;

The judgment of confusion of languages, and the separation and scattering of the people;

The line of descent from Shem to Abram;

The move of Terah, Abram, and Lot from Ur to Haran;

12

The call of Abram;

The promises of seed and blessing to Abram;

The obedience of Abram;

The arrival of Abram and Lot in the land of Canaan;

The promise of the Land to Abram;

The sojourn of Abram into Egypt due to famine in the Land;

13

The separation of Abram from Lot;

The confirmation of the promises to Abram;

14

The rescue of Lot by Abram;

The blessing of Abram by Melchizedek;

15

The promises made to Abram confirmed by God;

The promise of an son from Abram's own body;

The covenant God cut with Abram as a guarantee of His promises to Abram;

The informing of Abram that his descendants would be oppressed as slaves for 400 years in a foreign land;

16

The conception and birth of Ishmael through Hagar the Egyptian slave;

17

The confirmation of the covenant with Abram and his descendants;

The changing of Abram's name to Abraham to reflect the fulfillment of God's promise to make Abram into a great nation;

The sign of the covenant God made with Abraham;

The changing of Sari's name to Sarah;

The promise of an son reaffirmed through Sarah;

18

The visit of the Lord on the way to destroy Sodom and its surrounding towns;

The promise of a son through Sarah;

The intercession of Abraham for the righteous of Sodom;

The reaffirmation of a son through Sarah;

19

The rescue of Lot and his daughters;

The sin of Lot's daughters;

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah;

20

The deceptiveness of Abraham toward Abimelech in his sojourn in Gerar;

21

The birth of Isaac in fulfillment of God's promise;

The casting out of Hagar and Ishmael;

The covenant Abraham made with Abimelech;

22

The testing of Abraham's faith through God's command to sacrificelsaac as a burnt offering;

The reaffirmation of the covenant;

23

The death and burial of Sarah;

The purchase of a burial plot in Mamre by Abraham;

24

The provision of a wife (Rebekah) for Isaac;

25

The marriage of Abraham to Keturah;

The provisions Abraham made for his sons;

The death and burial of Abraham;

25

The descendants of Ishmael;

The births of Esau and Jacob;

The contempt of Esau for his birthright;

26

The confirmation of the Covenant with Isaac;

The deceptiveness of Isaac toward Abimelech;

The conflict between Isaac and Abimelech over water rights;

The reaffirmation of the Covenant with Isaac;

The witness to God's blessings on Isaac;

The covenant between Isaac and Abimelech;

27

The stealing of Esau's blessing by Jacob;

The hatred of Jacob by Esau;

28

The sending of Jacob to Paddan-aram;

The dream of Jacob at Bethel;

The confirmation of the Covenant with Jacob;

29

The arrival of Jacob at Paddan-aram;

The deception of Laban in Jacob's marriage to Rachel;

The children born to Jacob through Leah;

30

The children born to Jacob through Rachel's maid Bilhah, Leah's maid Zilpah, and then through Leah and Rachel;

The contention between Jacob and Laban;

The increase of Jacob's wealth;

31

The fleeing of Jacob with his family and wealth from Laban;

The pursuit of Jacob by Laban;

The treaty between Jacob and Laban;

32

The preparations made by Jacob for meeting Esau;

The prayer of humility and petition made by Jacob to God;

The wrestling of Jacob with God at Peniel;

33

The meeting and reconciliation of Jacob with Esau;

The safe arrival of Jacob at Shechem;

34

The defilement of Dinah by Shechem;

The revenge taken against the men of Shechem by Simeon and Levi;

35

The return of Jacob to Bethel;

The reaffirmation of the Covenant with Jacob;

The death of Rachel in giving birth to Benjamin;

The defilement of Bilhah by Reuben;

The death of Isaac;

36

The descendants of Esau who moved to the hill country of Seir;

The descendants of Seir, the original inhabitants of Seir later known as Edom;

37

The account of Jacob and his family after he settled again in the land of Canaan;

The two dreams Joseph had when he was 17 years old;

The selling of Joseph into slavery;

38

The unrighteous behavior of Judah;

39

The blessing of Joseph in Potiphar's house;

The tempting of Joseph by Potiphar's wife;

The casting of Joseph into prison by Potiphar;

40

The interpretation of the dreams of Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and chief baker by Joseph;

41

The interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams by Joseph;

The making of Joseph ruler over Egypt under Pharaoh;

The fulfillment of Pharaoh's dreams just as Joseph had said;

42

The first visit of Joseph's ten older brothers to Egypt to buy grain;

The appearing of Joseph's brothers before him;

The testing of the brothers by Joseph;

43

The return of Joseph's brothers to Egypt after Judah offers himself personally responsible for Benjamin's safety;

The dining of Joseph with his brothers;

44

The testing of the brothers by Joseph by means of his silver cup;

The offering of Judah as a substitute for Benjamin;

45

The revealing of Joseph to his brothers;

The instruction given by Joseph to his brothers to return to Canaan, get their father Jacob, their families, and herds, and move to Egypt;

46

The setting out of Jacob to Egypt;

46

The reaffirmation of the Covenant with Jacob;

The assurance of God's presence with Jacob in Egypt;

The arrival of Jacob in the region of Goshen;

47

The audience of Jacob with Pharaoh;

The management of Pharaoh's resources by Joseph during the famine;

The blessing of God on the children of Jacob in Egypt;

The preparations made by Jacob for his death;

48

The reminder of Jacob to Joseph of the Covenant God made with Abraham and confirmed with him (Jacob) and which extends to his descendants;

The blessing of Jacob on Joseph's sons, claiming Manasseh and Ephraim as two of his sons with an equal share in the inheritance of the Land ;

49

The prophecy of Jacob to his sons regarding what will happen to each of them in the days to come;

The charge of Jacob to his sons to bury him in the cave that Abraham had purchased in the land of Canaan;

The death of Jacob;

50

The mourning for Jacob;

The burial of Jacob in the land of Canaan;

The assurance of Joseph's his good intentions to his brothers;

The charge of Joseph to his brothers concerning what to do with his body when he dies;

Major theological themes

It is not the intent of this section to develop and discuss in detail all aspects of the major theological themes identified in Genesis. Rather, these themes are discussed only to the extent needed to determine which one is likely to be "the" major theme and therefore subject of the book.

God God and creation The book of Genesis begins by introducing God who existed before the Creation (Genesis 1:1a). Genesis does not argue for the existence of God, rather it is written with the fundamental presupposition that before the world was created, God was—"In the beginning God". Genesis also claims that it was God who created the world (Genesis 1:1 b). The theological implication of Genesis 1:1 is that God is self-existing, that He is eternal, that everything exists because He created it, and that He transcends the Creation. The Book of Genesis is clear that it was God who created the world and all that it comprises (Genesis 1:1-31 – Genesis 2:1-25). This includes the heavens, consisting of the sun, moon, and stars, and, of noted prominence, the earth and all that it contains, including the land, seas, vegetation, animals, birds, and sea creatures. Genesis also is clear that God created man, and that He created man in His own image. While Genesis does not provide the details of God's act of creation, it makes it very clear that evolution was not a part of the process, and, in particular, that man did not evolve from other creatures.

Genesis further informs the reader that God created the world by the power and authority of His word; "Let there be . . . , and it was so" (Genesis 1:3, Genesis 1:6, Genesis 1:9, Genesis 1:11, Genesis 1:14, Genesis 1:20, Genesis 1:24). The implication here is that God acts on the basis of His own will, sovereignty, authority, power, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, etc., to create the world giving it its form and function as He determined it. He is the One, therefore, the only One who is Sovereign and Lord over the universe, for He is the One who spoke the Creation into

existence (Gen ch. 1). There can be no higher authority than the One who speaks and brings into existence what did not exist before except as a concept within His own understanding.

Genesis also reveals God as the One in whom life exists. The implication here is that life is inherent in God. “Life” was not created for He breathed into man the breath of life and man became a living being (Genesis 2:7).

Then too, Genesis reveals that God is a relational being who created man in His own image to have a relationship with him that is unique in all of the Creation (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 3:8). Even after the Fall, when man entered into a state of sin and separation from God with the result that that relationship was broken, God is shown as choosing, calling, and separating to Himself certain individuals—the seed of the woman—for reasons known only to Him (Genesis 5:22-24; Genesis 6:8, Genesis 6:13, Genesis 7:1; Genesis 12:1, Genesis 12:7, etc.; Genesis 26:1-3, Genesis 26:23-24; Genesis 28:10-22; Genesis 31:3; Genesis 32:24-30; Genesis 35:1, Genesis 35:9; Genesis 46:1-4). While God is mysterious to man, it is clear from the text of Genesis that He nevertheless wants man to know Him to the extent man can within the limitation of the capacities He has given man. We see this, for example, in God’s interactions with Adam, Cain, Enoch, Noah, and then especially with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with whom He entered into a covenant–relationship, and through that, a unique relationship with all of Israel.

God and judgment

Genesis also reveals God as the One who judges the actions of all beings—human and otherwise (i.e., the serpent)—and executes judgment by pronouncing punishment upon those who violate His commands, decrees, order of life. This is seen in the case of Adam, Eve, and the serpent (Genesis 3:8-19), Cain (Genesis 4:9-15), all mankind in Noah’s generation (Genesis 6:5-7, Genesis 6:12), all mankind in the generation after the Flood (Genesis 11:5-9), and in the case of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:20, Genesis 19:29). The implication here is that it is God alone who establishes what is good and what is evil based on His own inherent nature. That it is God alone who has the authority and power to hold all beings accountable to Him. And that it is God alone who pronounces and executes judgment not through an army of angelic beings but through His word of judgment. Thus Genesis reveals God as the Judge, the One to whom all beings are accountable.

God and promise

Genesis reveals God as “covenant maker.” He is the One who enters into an unconditional covenant with Noah and all mankind, promising that He would never again destroy the earth by flood (Genesis 9:8-17). More significant is the revelation that God makes an unconditional covenant with Abraham promising to bless him and his descendants (Genesis 12:1-3), and to bless all the nations of earth through his seed (Genesis 12:3, Genesis 22:18). It is through this covenant that God works to reestablish His relationship with, not all mankind, but only with those whom He chooses. Thus God is revealed in Genesis as giving His word of promise in the outworking of His plan and purpose for the world and for man in particular. The major portion of the Genesis text is concerned with God’s word of promise to Abraham.

Man

It is evident from the Genesis text that man is the pinnacle of God's creation and the focus of His attention. What is theologically significant, as well as amazing, is that God created man in His own image (Genesis 1:26-28). Implied in the creation account of man, therefore, is that man is not only a material being, but a spiritual being as well in that God is a spiritual being. It can be stated, therefore, with broad theological consensus that a human being is a material and nonmaterial entity. Eichrodt (1967:131). has observed that the distinction between an inner, spiritual aspect and a physical aspect of human nature which was to be found in both creation stories is not simply an opinion peculiar to these accounts, but a constituent element of the whole Old Testament view of humanity. A biblically-based conceptualization of the immaterial aspect of human nature is generally characterized by three anthropological concepts; spirit, soul, and heart. Thus when God informs Adam that if he disobeyed His command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would surely die, He had in mind not only physical death, which did not immediately occur, but spiritual death which did occur immediately and which can be understood broadly as separation from God.

Genesis also reveals that man was not created to be a free agent but was responsible to God for his actions. This is seen in the responsibility God gave him to rule over his habitat, to cultivate and keep the Garden, and to obey His command. Very significantly, in creating man in His own image, God created man with the capacity to choose between good and evil and thus able to rebel against Him.

Man's fall into a state of sin, as documented in Genesis 3:1-24, marred, but did not destroy, the image of God in him. Further, the fall of man into a state of rebellion against God leads to the pronouncement and execution of judgment which forces man to live out his life under the immediate dominion of the evil one instead of under the immediate dominion of God. While man's fall into a state of rebellion against God resulted in the breaking of his personal relationship with God, God made provision for the eventual restoration of that image and relationship.

Hope is promised through the seed of the woman who will enter into conflict with the seed of the serpent (the evil one). This is revealed in God's judgment against the serpent—"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (Genesis 3:15). Conquest of the serpent (evil one), who led mankind from a state of fellowship and blessing into a state of separation and cursing, is guaranteed as the promise is given that the seed of the woman will mortally wound the serpent (evil one). The theological implication of this text is enormous. In effect it says that there will be a battle between good and evil in the history of man, and in that battle the seed of the woman will destroy the serpent (evil one). The one who led man into rebellion against God will be defeated by the seed of the woman, a man! Though not stated explicitly, there is in this the root of a redemption which would restore the original image of God in man, and, with that, restore man to that personal and unique relationship with God. In essence, the whole of the Bible from Genesis 3:15 through the Book of Revelation deals with God's work of restoring man to this unique position in the Creation. With a new world order set in place, man embarks into a world in which personal relationship with God is no longer possible and man, in his state of sin, can do nothing to change it. Rather, it is given now only to the elect seed of the woman to enter into such a relationship with God. In the plan and purpose of God, He now elects a seed in every generation who can enter into personal relationship with Him, and to whom it has been appointed that he should stand against

the serpent (evil one) and his seed. We see this starting with Abel and going through to Abraham. However, beginning with Abraham, the elect seed narrows down to the elect seed of Abraham.

It is through Abraham and his elect seed that God will now effect His plan to reestablish personal relationship with man and to rule over the Creation through man. Not just a seed through Abraham, but the chosen seed of promise through Sarah. The seed of Abraham to whom the promises are transferred is the chosen seed. Thus, God unilaterally promises Abraham that He will bless him and his seed, making him into a great nation by multiplying his seed, and giving to him and his descendants the land of Canaan as an everlasting inheritance, and that through Abraham and his chosen seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed. The fulfillment of that work is found in and through Jesus Christ, the God-Man, the Seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16) whose death and resurrection provided the means for restoring the image of God and reestablishing man's relationship with God. The whole of redemptive history is moving in this direction.

God-man relationship

Biblical evidence for relationships between God and man is extensive. The first is found in the beginning of the book of Genesis where God and Adam are shown to be in personal relationship in the Garden, and the last is found at end of the book of Revelation where God and all those whom He has redeemed are observed to be in relationship with Him in the new Jerusalem. Between these two events, much change occurs in the nature of the relationship as a result of the Fall. In spite of man's fall into a state of sin and spiritual separation from God, God never abandons man but rather at critical points in history He redefines the basis for, and the nature of, God-man relationship. A most important aspect of that change is that God now enters into personal relationship only with those whom He calls to Himself.

Evidence of God-man relationships can be inferred from God's creation of man in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 5:1, Genesis 9:6) as they came into being possessing qualities of life which are unique to God, though obviously not to the same extent (Erickson 1985:515). This has great implications with respect to God-man relationships, for man has been given the inherent capability to relate to and interact with God in a way that is unique in all of the creation. Since God reveals Himself as a social, relational being within the triunity of the Godhead (Gruenler 1986:1-3, and, 1989:178-179), the implication is that man is also a social, relational being, and able, therefore, to relate in this way not only to other humans but to God as well.

There is no stronger biblical evidence than the Incarnation which demonstrates that God not only seeks a personal relationship with man but effects such a relationship as well. This is seen in the mission of the Incarnate Son who proceeded from the Father (John 8:42) to reveal the Father to man (John 1:18, John 12:45, John 14:7-9, John 17:6, John 17:25-26; 1 John 5:20), and then to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin (John 10:11, John 10:15, John 10:27-28) so that those who received Him might be reconciled to the Father (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20) through faith in the Son (John 1:12; Acts 16:30-31), and receive the right to become a child of God (John 1:12) and thus enter into a personal relationship with God. Christ spoke of this relationship in clear and certain terms in His so-called high priestly prayer. Among other things, He prayed for all who will believe in Him (John 17:20-26) asking the Father that they may be one just as the Father and Son are one—'just as you are in me and I am in you.' He then asked that in the same way they too may

be in the Father and the Son. He strengthens this notion of relationship by stating, 'I in them and you in me,' . . . that 'the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.'

Evidence may also be inferred from the 'tabernacling' of God with and in those whom He calls. The notion of God's 'tabernacling' among humans is introduced and developed under the Old Testament economy as His dwelling with His covenant people (Exodus 19:5-6, Exodus 29:45, Exodus 40:34-35). The tabernacling of God with His people was brought to its highest level of fulfillment with the incarnation of the Son of God (Matthew 1:23; John 1:14). But the concept of God's tabernacling was redefined and fulfilled under the New Testament economy as His dwelling in those whom He redeems. Evangelical theology sees clear biblical evidence that the Spirit of God indwells every believer (e.g., John 7:37-39, John 14:16-17; Acts 2:1-4; Romans 8:9, Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 6:19; Galatians 4:6; 1 John 3:24, 1 John 4:13, 1 John 4:15). This indwelling is an abiding presence of the Spirit in the believer's heart (Galatians 4:6) and includes the Spirit's witness to the believer's spirit about his/her relationship to God (Romans 8:16-17).

God's plan to restore man to relationship with Him was first revealed, as noted above, in Genesis 3:15. God's efforts to accomplish this act of restoration took on more specific form with the call of Abraham and the covenant He made with him, for that covenant, though oriented toward the descendants of Abraham, had all mankind in view as God promised Abraham to bless all mankind through his seed (Genesis 12:3; Genesis 22:18). That seed, the Apostle Paul has noted, was Christ (Galatians 3:16). Thus on the grand scheme of the Bible as a whole, God is at work at restoring man to a right relationship with Him. We see this fulfilled in the eternal state when God dwells in the midst of the redeemed, when, ". . . the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God" (Revelation 21:4).

Sin/evil The origin of sin/evil in the world that God created and declared to "be good" is a mystery that remains undisclosed in biblical revelation. What is clear from the very beginning of the Book of Genesis is that rebellion against God existed in the Garden prior to the fall of man. This is manifested in the serpent's attitude toward God which questions God's truthfulness and challenges His authority. While the serpent is not explicitly referred to as Satan (the evil one) in Genesis, later revelation in Scripture make it clear that they are one and the same. For example, Revelation 20:2 identifies Satan as "the serpent of old," and John 8:44 declares Satan to be "the father of lies".

What is also clear from Genesis is that sin, in its most basic form, is rebellion against the revealed will of God and is manifested in disobedience to what He has commanded. Further, it is clear that there is a penalty associated with sin. In the case of the original sin, that penalty consisted of an awareness of guilt, a curse upon the creation, the man, and the woman, all of which brought pain and suffering into life through the broken relationships between the man and the woman and between man and God (which is seen in their expulsion from the Garden), and through the prospect and reality of physical death. Though all the descendants of Adam are judged for their individual sins, it is apparent that the judgment executed on Adam has been passed on to all of his descendants (see Romans 5:12-19).

Thus, what is clear from Genesis is that sin is a reality and that it alienated man from God. In some mysterious sense, man had become like God. "The man," God says, "has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:22). By attempting to reverse the roles and assert his independence of limitations, man became a marred and defective image, one who could no longer represent his sovereign in an unhampered and perfect way. Sin had introduced an alienation that affected not only the God–man relationship and the man–woman relationship, but also made man a dying creature who could never hope to fulfill the creation mandate as long as he remained in that condition. The remainder of the biblical story is the outworking of God's plan of redemption whereby that alienation can be overcome and His original purposes for man reestablished.

Divine judgment

Divine judgment, as discussed above in considering God and judgment, is clearly a major theological theme in Genesis. This is seen, first of all, in the judgment that God executes on the man and the woman for their disobedience to His command, and on the serpent/evil one for his opposition to God as manifested in his deceiving and tempting of the woman (Genesis 3:14-19). In this act of divine judgment God is not a distant participant but is present in some way holding all participants accountable and pronouncing judgment on them. This act of divine judgment resulted in radical change in the world order; the relationship between God and man is now broken; the relationship between the man and the woman is now strained, and the earth has become contrary to the man's efforts in farming. In stead of work being a joyful act it now becomes one of tiresome toil. In addition to this, there is now a struggle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent that is to be carried out on the stage of world history. The scope of this judgment, though seemingly personal, falling as it were upon Adam and Eve, was in effect universal as from that point on it affected everyone born of Adam (Genesis 5:1-31; Romans 5:12-19).

Next, God is seen executing judgment on Cain for killing his brother, Abel (Genesis 4:9-15). Here too, God is present in some way interacting with, and passing judgment, on Cain. What is significant about this judgment is that even though there was no command issued by God about killing, Cain was nevertheless held accountable for his act. The scope of this judgment was individual and personal. And then God executes judgment on all mankind, with the exception of Noah and his family, for their wickedness (Genesis 6:5–Genesis 7:24). In this case God is not acting directly to pronounce judgment, but indirectly through Noah of whom it is written in Hebrews 11:7 that, "By his faith he condemned the world . . .". The scope of this divine judgment was universal, as it fell upon all of mankind in Noah's generation except Noah and his family, all living things except the representative ones God directed to Noah, and the earth which likely was changed drastically as a result of the flood. This divine judgment also resulted in a change of world order as God gave man everything that lives and moves as food, and put the fear and dread of man upon every creature that moves on the ground, flies in air, or swims in the sea. Thus there was now a radical change in relationship between man and all the animals, birds, and fish. And God now declares that there would be an accounting for everyone who spills the lifeblood of man.

God's judgment then falls on all mankind for intending to build a city and a tower (Genesis 11:1-9). Here God is seen as coming personally to investigate the situation and then passing judgment on the people, apparently without manifesting His presence. This judgment greatly changed the world order as it had the effect of separating groups of people from one another creating a situation

where they could not understand each. The scope of this judgment appears to be universal.

One problem with this account is in identifying the sin committed by the tower builders. Was it a matter of human pride in that the tower builders wanted to make a name for themselves (Genesis 11:4)? Or were the people on the plain of Shinar defying God's command to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 9:1) as the three references to being scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth (Genesis 11:4, Genesis 11:8-9) suggest? If this is the case, then the punishment of scattering the people far and wide over the whole earth seems already to have been effected in Genesis 10:1-32. Thus, it would seem that the Tower of Babel episode took place prior to the dispersion of the families of the three sons of Noah and was the likely cause of their dispersion. This conclusion is supported by the fact that chapter 10 already refers to the different languages spoken by the nations as they spread throughout the world (Genesis 10:5, Genesis 10:20, Genesis 10:31). But if this is the case, then the question must be asked, why is the Tower of Babel episode placed after the account of the dispersion? One possibility is that the Plain of Shinar is the likely geographic location for Ur of the Chaldeans, the home of Abraham whose story is next presented.

Lastly, we are informed of God's judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah for their great wickedness (Genesis 19:23-29). Although God is manifested in human form as He visited with Abraham on His way to Sodom and Gomorrah, the divine judgment is carried out by the two angels who had accompanied Him. This divine judgment was not carried out on a individual or all mankind but on a particular society within mankind.

Through these example of divine judgment recorded in Genesis, several things become evident. First, there is a progression of evil as the human race multiplies and settles the earth. Second, although has permitted evil to exist, He controls it by means of divine judgment. There is implied in God's judgment against the serpent (Genesis 3:15—"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.") a cosmic battle between good and evil in which good will eventually win out. So the divine judgment against evil is seen to impact man both personally and corporately.

Election, calling, and separation The result of sin was death, both physical and spiritual death. Physical death was delayed in coming, but the conditions which would bring about that death were immediately set in place through a process of physical deterioration. Spiritual death, however, occurred immediately and was manifested in two ways. First there was a separation from the presence of God as Adam and Eve were physically driven from the presence of God in the Garden and not permitted to return. And secondly, they were now in a spiritual state of enmity with God. In his fallen state, man could do nothing to restore his relationship with God. It was, however, in the plan and purpose of God to do so. But that plan did not include all mankind. Rather, God was now going to work out His plan and purpose through the seed of the woman, that is, through all those whom He elects/chooses, calls, and separates to Himself. The Genesis text reveals this implicitly up to Noah. However, beginning with Noah and continuing through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the text explicitly reveals God's sovereignty in electing, calling, and separating to Himself a seed whom He will bless, and through whom He will bless all the nations.

Covenant In the course of events recorded in the Book of Genesis, God makes two unconditional covenants; one with Noah and all his descendants after him (Genesis 9:8-17), and another with

Abraham and all his elect seed after him (see, for example, Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 13:14-18; especially Genesis 15:1-21 and Genesis 17:1-14; Genesis 22:15-18). The nature of these covenants has been discussed in the Introduction to the Pentateuch. What is presented here are the specific details of the Noahic and Abrahamic covenants. The Noahic covenant In the aftermath of the Flood, God made an unconditional and everlasting covenant with Noah and his descendants and with all flesh on the earth (Genesis 9:8-17). The components of this (the Noahic) covenant include:

1. a unilateral declaration by God to fulfill what He promises (Genesis 9:9-11 a)
2. the covenant stipulation: the promise to never again destroy the earth and all flesh on it by flood (Genesis 9:11 b)
3. the covenant sign, the rainbow (Genesis 9:12-17)

It is significant to note that the Noahic covenant is preceded by the command originally given to Adam to "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth" (Genesis 9:1, Genesis 9:7). The next part of the command given to Adam—"subdue it (the earth)" and "rule over the fish," and so forth—is, however, radically different in its Noahic form because now the earth was cursed and alienation had fractured the harmonious structures of sovereignty that had attended the pre-Fall creation. "Subdue" and "rule" now have come to be expressed as "The fear and dread of you will fall upon the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea" (Genesis 9:2). The domination by (or rule of) Adam that was effected by the spoken word alone must now be enforced by man's superior intellectual and rational powers. Voluntary subservience in the animal world has been replaced by coercion, and man and animals now will live in uneasy coexistence. The Abrahamic covenant The provisions of the covenant The covenant made with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, and confirmed and enlarged to him in Genesis 12:6-7; Genesis 13:14-17; Genesis 15:1-21 (where it is formalized); Genesis 17:1-14; and Genesis 22:15-18, defined certain basic promises God made to Abraham:

1. that Abraham's name shall be great;
2. that a great nation would come from Abraham ;
3. that in Abraham all the families of the earth shall be blessed;
4. that to Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan shall be given as an everlasting inheritance/possession;
5. that the multitude of Abraham's seed would be as the dust of the earth;
6. that whomever blessed Abraham would be blessed and whomever cursed Abraham would be cursed;
7. that Abraham would be the father of many nations;
8. that kings would proceed from Abraham;
9. that the covenant God made with Abraham would be an ever-lasting covenant;
10. that God would be the God of Abraham and his seed;

11. that Abraham's seed shall possess the gate of their enemies; A consideration of these promises indicates that they consist of three fundamental components: land, seed, and blessing, and that they apply personally to Abraham, to national Israel and universally to all the nations. To Abraham personally God promises to bless him, make a great nation from him (his seed would be innumerable, Genesis 13:16; Genesis 15:5), make his name great (Genesis 12:2) and make him a vehicle for blessing others (Genesis 12:3). Further, Abraham is promised the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession (Genesis 13:15; Genesis 17:8). And this covenant which God is establishing with Abraham (Genesis 17:2-4), would be an everlasting covenant, for God promises to establish it not only with Abraham, but with his seed after him throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant (Genesis 17:7). In Genesis, the nations are blessed through Joseph's provision of food during the time of severe famine (Genesis 41:57). This, however, is only a typical fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. The NT makes it clear that the primary blessing that is in view in this covenant is the spiritual blessing that would come through Jesus Christ, the "Seed of Abraham" (see, Acts 3:25-26; and Galatians 3:16). Paul, in writing to the Galatians, calls this promise "the gospel in advance" (Galatians 3:8). In this application of the promise, all those who have faith in Christ "are blessed along with Abraham" (Galatians 3:6-9; Galatians 3:14) who believed God and God "reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6; Galatians 3:6).

Formalization of the covenant with Abraham

Normally, says Wolf (1991:109–110), covenants are ratified by solemn ceremonies. Genesis 15:1-21 contains an account of such a ceremony. In the words of Wolf, Abraham was instructed to kill a heifer, a goat, and a ram, and cut them in two, and arrange the halves in two rows. Then, as Abraham fell into a deep sleep, "a smoking fire pot with a blazing torch . . . passed between the pieces" (Genesis 15:17). It would seem from the text that the "fire" passing between the slaughtered halves of the sacrifices was God. By passing between the pieces God was committing Himself to the terms of the covenant with a self-maledictory oath. If He violated the covenant, He would in effect be subject to the same fate as the animals. In this regard, it is significant that the Hebrew expression for "make a covenant" is literally "cut a covenant," an expression which likely has reference to the sacrifice of animals in connection with the ratification ceremony.

There is only one other reference in the Bible to the actual passing between the pieces of an animal from which biblical support for this understanding can be obtained. That is in Jeremiah 34:18-19, where Yahweh condemned the men of Judah for breaking a covenant guaranteeing freedom for the Hebrew slaves. For even though they cut a calf in two and "walked between the pieces," they violated their agreement and earned God's wrath in the process.

Nature of the covenant

It is theologically significant that in Genesis 15:1-21 only God walked between the pieces, not Abraham. This is a clear indication that this was a unilateral covenant in which God unconditionally guaranteed that His promises to Abraham would be fulfilled. The Abrahamic Covenant as presented in the Book of Genesis and referred to throughout all of Scripture is always treated as unconditional in nature. In a conditional covenant, that which was covenanted depended on the recipient of the covenant for its fulfillment, not on the one making the covenant. Certain obligations or conditions would need to be kept by the recipient of the covenant before the giver of the covenant would be obligated to fulfill what was promised. This type of covenant has an "if"

attached to it. The Mosaic Covenant made by God with Israel is such a covenant. In an unconditional covenant, on the other hand, that which was covenanted depended solely on the one making it for its fulfillment. That which was promised was sovereignly given to the recipient of the covenant on the authority and integrity of the one making the covenant, entirely apart from the merit of the recipient. It was a covenant with no "if" attached to it whatsoever. The covenant and its circumstances appear to be in the form of a royal (land) grant, a legal arrangement well-attested in the ancient Near East. The so-called "Covenant of Grant" is discussed in the Introduction to the Pentateuch as the model for the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant.

While the fulfillment of the covenantal promises is unconditional, it is important to recognize that an unconditional covenant may have blessings attached to it that are conditioned to the response of the recipient. In this regard it is important to note the relation of obedience to the Abrahamic Covenant. Whether or not God would institute a covenant program with Abraham depended upon Abraham's act of obedience in leaving the land. When once this act was accomplished, and Abraham did obey God, God instituted an irrevocable, unconditional program. Whether there would be a covenant program with Abraham depended upon Abraham's act of obedience. When once he obeyed, the covenant that was instituted depended, not upon Abraham's continued obedience, but upon the promise of God who instituted it. The fact of the covenant depended upon obedience; the kind or nature of the covenant inaugurated was totally unrelated to the continuing obedience of either Abraham or his seed. This obedience, which became the basis of the institution of the covenant, is referred to in Genesis 22:18, where Abraham's obedient offering of Isaac is presented not so much as evidence of Abraham's response to God for blessing, but as a vindication of God's unconditional promise to Abraham. In effect, Abraham's faith in God justifies God's action to unconditionally promise to bless Abraham. This would suggest that while God promises unconditionally to fulfill His covenant with Abraham, faith in God and His covenant is necessary in order to enter into the blessings promised. That faith is required to enter into the unconditional blessings of the covenant is clearly seen in the sign of the covenant.

Sign of the covenant When Abraham was 99 years old, almost 25 years after the original promise, God appeared to him and reaffirmed His covenant again promising both the land and numerous descendants which would come through a seed born to be born to him by Sarah (Genesis 17:1-27). On this occasion God also instituted a rite—circumcision which was to be the sign of the covenant (Genesis 17:10). The circumcision of a child by his father was to be a sign of the father's faith in God and in the covenant He made with Abraham and his descendants. In circumcising a son the father indicated that he believed the covenant would be fulfilled if not in his own day, then in his son's day, and he wanted his son to bear the sign of faith that would bring him the blessings of the covenant.

Conversely, those without faith, those who did not submit to circumcision were excluded from the benefits of the covenant, for God commanded, "Any uncircumcised male . . . will be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant" (Genesis 17:14). Without the exercise of faith, one could not partake of the blessings of the covenant. So in obedience to the command of God, Abraham himself was circumcised along with all the male members of his house (Genesis 17:26-27).

Covenant-relationship A major aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant, and, as we learn from the Book of Exodus, of the Mosaic Covenant, is that of covenant-relationship. The Abrahamic

Covenant establishes a covenant-relationship between Yahweh and Abraham and his descendants after him; Yahweh will be their God and they will be His unique people. Whereas the Abrahamic covenant is unilateral and unconditional, and therefore can never be broken, the Mosaic covenant, which is bilateral and conditional, can be broken. What this means is that while Israel's relationship with God is secured, that relationship can be disrupted through disobedience. Furthermore, this covenant ultimately applies only to the elect seed of Abraham, for as the Apostle Paul has noted, the seed of Abraham are not so because of their physical descent from Abraham, but are the children of the promise, the elect (Romans 9:6-8).

Blessing A major theological theme introduced in Genesis is that of blessing. It is apparent from the Book of Genesis that God seeks to bless mankind, but such blessing is not unconditional for God does not tolerate disobedience and unbelief. It is evident from the creation narrative that God blessed man (Genesis 1:28). That blessing extended not only in the physical-material world, but in the spiritual realm as well, for the man enjoyed intimate fellowship with God in the Garden (Genesis 3:8). But with disobedience came a lack of blessing. Fellowship with God was broken (Genesis 3:22-24), and the blessing of the earth was turned into a curse, as it no longer cooperated with the man but worked contrary to his desire (Genesis 3:17-19). Yet it is apparent that even after the Fall of man it was God's desire to bless him. This is evident in His dealings with Adam and Eve after they sinned in that while judgment followed, hope was given (Genesis 3:15) and provision was made for restoration (Genesis 3:21). Even in the case of Cain God sought to warn Cain about the direction in which he was heading (Genesis 4:6-7). In the ensuing widespread corruption throughout mankind, God called Noah and his family to bless them (Genesis 9:1), and, through them, the whole earth for all future generations (Genesis 9:8-17). Nowhere is God's desire to bless man more apparent than in His dealing with Abraham and his descendants to whom He unconditionally promised to bless and to be the means through which He would bless all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:1-3).

Faith

While God's word of promise to Abraham concerns the building of a great nation and the possession of the land of Canaan, the immediate issue in the realization of the promise involves the provision of a seed, not just any seed, but an elect seed coming through Sarah, for if Abraham had no seed there could be no fulfillment of the promise. Consequently, in God's delay in providing a seed, the focus of attention becomes the giving of a seed for Abraham through Sarah. Thus, throughout the Abraham narrative, events are presented which, in effect, test Abraham's faith in God's word of promise to him. There is a point in this process when God promises Abraham that "a seed will come from him." This is the seed who will be Abraham's heir, and thus heir to God's word of promise (Genesis 15:4), the one through whom many descendants of Abraham will come (Genesis 15:5). Abraham responds to this promise by God with faith which God then reckons to Abraham as righteousness (Genesis 15:6). This reckoning is, in effect, a judicial verdict whereby God declared Abraham to be righteous on the basis of his faith in God to do what He had promised him to do. The climax to this sequence of events comes when God commands Abraham to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering to Him. Not only does this command place Abraham in the position of killing his son whom he greatly loved, but also of destroying the heir to the covenant. But by this time in his walk with God, Abraham's faith in God has developed to the point where he believes that God must and will raise Isaac up from the dead in order to keep His word of promise.

Evidence for this is seen in Abraham's statement to his men that he and Isaac would go and worship and return (Genesis 22:5). The Book of Hebrews gives witness to this faith that Abraham demonstrated (Hebrews 11:17-19).

World order

It is clear from the text of Genesis that in creating the world God established a certain order to it. For example, world order in the physical realm is seen in the separation of the heavens and the earth and in their movements so as to provide for day and night, and for signs for seasons, days and years. God established order in both the vegetation and animal realms by decreeing that all with seed in them were to bear fruit after their own kind. The creation order thus decrees that there is a separation of the many different species of vegetation and animals. World order is seen in the creation of man in the image of God. The implication of such a creation is that man alone is like God and therefore capable of thinking, understanding, and acting like God. Of all the creatures of God's creation, man alone is created with the necessary nature to enter into a personal relationship with God. World order is clearly established by man's relationship to God. God is man's creator, man's life derives from God's life (God breathed into man the breath of life) and therefore man is responsible to God and subservient to Him (Genesis 2:16-17). Created in the image of God, man functions as God's agent on earth and is given the authority to rule over the creation (Genesis 1:26-28). Thus in the creation order man stands over the rest of creation.

World order is also manifested in the relationship God established between the man and the woman—a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh (Genesis 2:24). Lastly, world order is seen in God's action to bless His creatures (man and animal), and in His decree that they should all be fruitful and multiply filling the earth and the seas. The world order established by the relationship between man, the animals, and the rest of creation is such that although man has been given a mandate and authority to rule over the creation as an agent under God, there existed harmony between man and the animals/living creatures (Genesis 1:29-30) and harmony between the man and the woman (Genesis 2:25). From the time of the Creation until the Fall a world order existed in which everything was good. Man was in harmony with God, man, and the creation. There was nothing but blessing and joy in the life of man as he lived in personal relationship with God and his wife, and the earth willingly brought forth its fruit for man. However, all that changed with the Fall. As a result of sin man not only was in a process of dying physically, but also he became separated from God and was now spiritually dead. Thus, as a result of man's sin, the personal relationship that existed between God and man was, from man's side of the relationship, irreparably damaged as God cursed the man and drove him from His presence. Whereas before the Fall the man had life, both spiritual and physical, now he was dead spiritually and his physical life was limited to a finite number of days. While it was the plan of God to reestablish a personal relationship with man, the basis for that relationship could no longer be same as it was before. A new basis must be established. That basis, which is at first implied by the text, is God's election, calling, and separation of a seed, the seed of the woman, to Himself. That election, calling, and separation of a seed manifests itself in the life of the individual by faith in God. This becomes explicitly clear in the calling of Abraham. The relationship between the man and the woman was also drastically changed as there was now suspicion of motives between them (Genesis 3:12) and a ruling of the man over the woman (Genesis 3:16). In addition, the earth would no longer willingly yield its fruit

for man (Genesis 3:17-19). Rather man would now have to toil with hard labor in order to get the land to produce the food needed to live. And, man would now be living knowing that he is in the process of dying physically (Genesis 3:19). Lastly, man would now be living under the dominion of the evil one, and, in this environment, God decreed that there would be enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the evil one (Genesis 3:15). There would no longer be harmony in the world that God had created. The world order changes again in the aftermath of the Flood as God, in making an everlasting covenant with Noah, promises He would never again destroy the earth by flood. However, the harmony between man and the animal world was greatly changed as God put the fear of man on the animal world and gave every moving thing that is alive to man for food. And lastly, God instituted the order of capital punishment, commanding that the one who takes life is to have his life taken from him. The world order changes yet again following the Tower of Babel judgment. Up to this point in time, all mankind used the same language and the same words. However, because of the nature of their sin—they refused to obey the creation mandate, “Be fruitful and increase in number ; fill the earth and subdue it.” (Genesis 1:28 / Genesis 11:1-4)—God confused man’s language so that the people could not understand one another’s speech. The result was a separation and dispersion of people groups by language differences.

Lastly, the world order changes with the call of Abraham as God promises unconditionally to bless all the nations of the earth through the seed of Abraham. We now know that that seed is Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:8, Galatians 3:16). Thus, in this new world order, it will be through the seed of Abraham that God is going to not merely restore the world order that existed before the Fall, but establish an eternal world order in which sin is no longer possible and God Himself dwells among His redeemed people in personal relationship with them (Revelation 21:1–Revelation 22:5).

Literary characteristics The literary characteristics of Genesis are considered in terms of its literary form and structure with a view toward determining a structural organization that represents the book as a unified and coherent whole, that is, as a synthesis of the book.

Literary form

Except for the scattered poetic sections in the Book of Genesis, the overall literary form of the book is historical narrative. Recall from the discussion on history and narrative literature in, Introduction to Literary Forms found in the Bible, that the purpose of this narrative type of literature is not the recording of past events for the sake of presenting a complete history, but rather for the purpose of instruction through the development of a theological message based on the historical events. Furthermore, no historical narrative is a complete account of all that occurred in a given event or series of events. To accomplish his intent of instruction, the biblical author must select those events that most effectively relate not only what happened but also the meaning and theological significance of what happened.

Literary structure The literary structure of Genesis must be determined from the text itself, that is, from the narratives Moses used to construct the book. There are several possibilities that arise naturally. A structure based on the use of the term *toledot* The structure of Genesis is marked by an initial section and then 11 sections with headings (see Ross 1985:22–24). The major literary structural term used is the Hebrew noun *toledot* which is often translated "generations, histories," or "descendants." In the context in which this term is generally used, *toledot* has the sense of "these are the generations of . . .". The word has been traditionally viewed as the heading of a

section. According to this view the book has the following structural arrangement:

Creation (1:1–2:3) Toledot of the heavens and the earth (2:4–4:26) Toledot of Adam (5:1–6:8) Toledot of Noah (6:9–9:29) Toledot of Shem, Ham, and Japheth (10:1–11:9) Toledot of Shem (11:10–26) Toledot of Terah (11:27–25:11) Toledot of Ishmael (25:12–18) Toledot of Isaac (25:19–35:29) Toledot of Esau (36:1–8) Toledot of Esau, father of the Edomites (36:9–37:1) Toledot of Jacob (37:2–50:26) The views on this understanding and arrangement, however, vary. Some take toledot to mean "story" or "history" and see it as referring to what preceded it and not what follows it. But nowhere in the OT does toledot clearly refer to what has preceded; in every place it can and often must refer to what follows (e.g., in Ruth 4:18 the word looks forward to Perez's line). This observation is justified on the basis of the root from which the noun comes. Since toledot is derived from a Hebrew verb which means, to bear, to generate, it refers to what is "brought forth." This formula word for Genesis, then, marks a starting point, combining narrative and genealogy to move from one point (or toledot) to the end (or the next toledot). It would seem, therefore, that it is used by Moses to move along the historical lines from a beginning to an ending. With this understanding, the toledot heading introduces the historical result of an ancestor and could be loosely rendered, "This is what became of". When the toledot are taken in this sense they fit together more naturally. This is particularly the case with regard to Genesis 2:4 where the toledot introduces the historical result of the cosmos, and Genesis 2:4–Genesis 4:26 presents what became of the heavens and the earth, namely, the Fall of man and the murder of Abel. The story does not present another Creation account; instead, it carries the account from the point of the climax of the Creation (the creation of man made in the image of God) to the corruption of the Creation as a result of sin; "This is what became of the heavens and the earth". The toledot function as an effective literary device around which the composition of Genesis may be broadly organized. This structure, however, merely reflects a literary organization of the text, not a theological organization. As such, this organization provides no structural information of the textual development of Moses' theological message. A structure based on a progression of narratives

Alternatively, Genesis could be structured in terms of the major stories developed in the text. This literary organization, which is readily determined from the text, takes the following form:

Chapters 1–2

Creation Story

Chapters 3–11

Judgment Story

Chapters 12–24

Abraham Story

Chapters 24–26

Isaac Story

Chapters 27–36

Jacob Story (Pt. 1)

Chapters 37–45

Joseph Story

Chapters 46–50

Jacob Story (Pt. 2)

While this organization provides insight into the relationship of the narratives developed in Genesis, and in that sense is perhaps more appealing from a literary perspective, it too provides little if any understanding into the theological organization of the text and therefore of the theological message it develops. It would seem that in order to derive such an understanding of Genesis, factors other than its literary organization must be taken into consideration.

Synthesis of Genesis as a unified and coherent theological whole The analyses discussed above contribute to an understanding of Genesis as a unified and coherent theological whole. That understanding begins with a consideration of the message developed by the author in the text. Based on this information, a synthetic structure and synthesis of the text is then derived.

Development and statement of the message of Genesis In determining the message statement of Genesis it is helpful to remember that most likely it was written for the generation of Israelites whom God redeemed from bondage in Egypt. From a theological perspective, it would seem, therefore, that Genesis serves the purpose of instructing the Exodus generation, and succeeding generations as well, concerning Israel's origins and the promises God made to the Patriarchs, promises that were now about to be fulfilled. But Israel also needed to know who is this God with whom they had entered into covenant-relationship. Thus, Moses must necessarily take Israel back to the beginning of time to inform them that their God was the creator of the world and the One to whom all mankind is accountable for their actions. With this in mind, an examination of the "Broad Descriptive Overview" presented above reveals that from a theological perspective there are three pivotal events in Genesis which seem to be determining factors in the development of its message. They are:

the creation (chs. 1–2);

the fall of man (ch. 3)

the call of Abraham and the covenant God made with him (ch. 12)

More specifically, these pivotal events involve:

the creation of the world, and man made in the image of God to have a personal relationship with God and to rule over the earth under God (Genesis 1:26-28);

the fall of man into a state of sin (Genesis 3:1-13), and the ensuing judgment of God which established conflict between the seed of the evil one and the seed of the woman resulting in the eventual conquest over the evil one through the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:14-19);

the promise of God to Abraham to bless him and his descendants, and to bless all the families of the earth through him (Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 13:14-17; Genesis 15:14-17; Genesis 17:1-21; Genesis 22:16-18).

In these three major events there is a progression from the "very good" world which God created purposefully, to the fallen world in which God is working to bring about His purposes in creating the world and man.

Most significant from a theological perspective is the climax and focal point of God's work of creation. Man was created in the "image of God." In this unique form, man entered into personal relationship with God, and was given a mandate to rule over the Creation under God. This sets the stage for all of history which is to follow, for with the Fall of man, God sets about the task of reestablishing His relationship with man and His rule over the Creation through man. But this work of God is not for the benefit of all mankind but only for those whom God elects/chooses and calls to himself. The fall of man into a state of rebellion against God leads to the pronouncement and execution of judgment which forces man to live out his life under the immediate dominion of the evil one instead of under the immediate dominion of God. Yet, while judgment is effected, hope is promised through the seed of the woman who will enter into conflict with the seed of the evil one (Genesis 3:15). Conquest of the evil one, who, by deception, led mankind from a state of blessing into a state of cursing, is guaranteed as the promise is given that the seed of the woman will mortally wound the evil one (Genesis 3:15). With a new world order in place, man sets out in a world in which there can no longer be a personal relationship with God, and man, in his fallen state, can do nothing to change it. Rather, it is given now only to the elect seed of the woman to enter into such a relationship with God. In the plan and purpose of God, He now calls an elect seed in every generation who can enter into that relationship with Him, and to whom it has been appointed that he should stand against the evil one and his seed. This is seen starting with Abel and going through to Abraham (chs. 4–11). With the continual degeneration of mankind, God determined to accomplish His purposes through the seed of one man whom He chose, called, and separated to Himself from all the men of the earth. It is through Abraham and his elect seed that God will now work to bring about His plan and purpose for man. Not just a seed through Abraham, but the chosen seed of promise through Sarah. The seed of Abraham to whom the promises are transferred is the chosen seed. Thus, God unilaterally promises Abraham that He will bless him and his seed, making him into a great nation by multiplying his seed, and giving to him and his descendants the land of Canaan as an everlasting inheritance, and that through Abraham all the nations of the earth will be blessed (Genesis 12:3; Genesis 22:18).

Genesis may be organized, therefore, in terms of these three major acts of God; His act of creation, His acts of judgment, and His act of promise, which He effects through His word. This suggests the following broad theological organization of Genesis:

While this extended section is bounded by God's word of promise to Abraham and the typical fulfillment of that word of promise through Joseph, the focus of the section is on the theologically significant transfer of the promises first to Isaac and then to Jacob. The transfer of the promises to the elect line stands in sharp contrast to the non-elect line, of whom little is said except for its genealogy. This theological focus, expressed through a chiasmic literary structure, emphasizes the continuity of the Abrahamic Covenant—the promises of God do not die with Abraham. Furthermore, while certain aspects of God's word of promise to Abraham are fulfilled in the Joseph narrative, these are clearly typical fulfillments, for both Jacob (Genesis 48:21, Genesis 49:29-32) and Joseph (Genesis 50:24-25) express expectant hope at the end of their lives that God will fulfill His promises in the land of Canaan. The message of the Book of Genesis may be determined

from the previous considerations. Most helpful is the broad theological organization proposed above. That organization suggests that a possible subject/major theological theme for Genesis is the Word of God which He speaks in response to his sovereign will. Specifically, Genesis records: The Word of God in creation, The Word of God in judgment, The Word of God in promise.

These statements may be combined and more details added to form a more complex message statement which is an expression of Moses' theological judgment/evaluation of the events he selected and recorded in the text of Genesis:

Note that the verb *irrupt*, used to describe the action of God's word in creation has the meaning of: "to break or burst in suddenly."

It is used here (in contrast to *erupt* which has the meaning of "to break forth, to break out of a pent-up state, usually in a sudden and violent manner") to convey the idea that God is "outside of" that which His action is accomplishing. Thus God's word of creation brings into existence the world from outside of the world. In part, this is saying that God transcends (to exist above and independent of) the universe or world which He created, and so His word of creation comes from outside of the world He created. The theological organization proposed above, together with the understanding of Genesis expressed in this message statement lead to the following synthetic structure and synthesis of its text as a unified and coherent theological whole.

Synthetic structure of Genesis The synthetic structure of Genesis is presented first in broad form and then in detail.

Broad synthetic structure of Genesis I. The Word of God in creation (1:1–2:25) A. God's words of creation in bringing into existence the heavens, the earth, and man (1:1–2:3) B. God's work of creation in making the man, the woman, and the Garden (2:4–25) II. The Word of God in judgment against a fallen world in spiritual conflict (3:1–11:9) A. God's word of judgment against man and the serpent/evil one (3:1–24) B. God's word of judgment against Cain (4:1–26) C. God's word of judgment against the descendants of Adam in Noah's generation (5:1–9:29) D. God's word of judgment against the descendants of Noah (10:1–11:9) III. The Word of God in promise to Abraham and his elect seed (11:10–50:26) A. God's word of promise to Abraham (11:10–25:18) B. God's word of promise to Isaac the elect seed of Abraham (25:19–26:35) C. God's word of promise to Jacob the elect seed of Isaac (27:1–36:43) D. The typical fulfillment of God's word of promise to Abraham through Joseph (37:1–47:26)

E. The expectant hope of the elect seed in the fulfillment of God's word of promise to Abraham (47:27–50:26) **Detailed synthetic structure of Genesis I.** The Word of God in creation (1:1–2:25) A. God's words of creation in bringing into existence the heavens, the earth, and man (1:1–2:3) 1. Prologue to the Creation (Genesis 1:1-2) 2. God's creative acts bringing into existence the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:3-25) 3. God's creative acts bringing into existence man (Genesis 1:26-30) 4. Epilogue to the Creation (1:31–2:3) B. God's work of creation in making the man, the woman, and the Garden (Genesis 2:4-25) 1. God's breath of life imparting life to man (Genesis 2:4-7)

2. God's provision of a garden for the man to live in with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of it (Genesis 2:8-14) 3. God's test of obedience for the

man (Genesis 2:15-17) 4. God's creation of the woman to meet the man's need for like companionship (Genesis 2:18-25) II. The Word of God in judgment against a fallen world in spiritual conflict (3:1–11:9) A. God's word of judgment against man and the serpent/evil one (Genesis 3:1-24) 1. The fall of man into a state of sin and dominion under the evil one (Genesis 3:1-7) 2. The judgment of God brought about as a result of man's rebellion (Genesis 3:8-19) 3. The new world order in the aftermath of the Fall (Genesis 3:20-24) B. God's word of judgment against Cain (Genesis 4:1-26) 1. The birth of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-2) 2. The sin of Cain (Genesis 4:3-15) 3. The continuation of the seed of the evil one and the seed of the woman (Genesis 4:16-26) C. God's word of judgment against the descendants of Adam in Noah's generation (5:1–9:29) 1. The generations of Adam, from Adam to Noah (Genesis 5:1-32)

2. God's word of judgment against all mankind, and His provision for preserving Noah from the judgment (Genesis 6:1-22)

3. The execution of God's word of judgment and His preservation of Noah and his family through the ark (7:1–8:22) 4. The new world order in the aftermath of the flood, and the sin of Ham (Genesis 9:1-29) D. God's word of judgment against the descendants of Noah (10:1–11:9) 1. The generations of the sons of Noah (Genesis 10:1-32)

2. God's word of judgment against all mankind: The confusion of man's language at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9) III. The Word of God in promise to Abraham and his elect seed (11:10–50:26) A. God's word of promise to Abraham (11:10–25:18)

1. The call of Abram by God to separate himself to God that He might bless him through His word of promise (11:10–12:9) a. God's word of election from Shem to Abram (Genesis 11:10-32) b. The call of Abram to obedience with the promise of blessing (Genesis 12:1-9)

2. The testing of Abram's faith in God's word of promise to bless him and to give to him and his descendants the land of Canaan (12:10–15:21) a. The threat to Abram's faith in God's promise to bless him in the land due to famine in the land (Genesis 12:10-20) b. The threat to Abram's faith in God's promise to give him the land due to the controversy with Lot over the land (Genesis 13:1-18) c. The threat to Abram's faith in God's promise to bless him due to the offer by the king of Sodom to keep the retrieved riches of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 14:1-24) d. The affirmation of God's intent to fulfill His word of promise to Abram: the cutting of a covenant (Genesis 15:1-21) 3. The testing of Abram's faith in God's promise to provide a seed (16:1–20:18) a. The threat to Abram's faith in God's promise to provide a seed due to Sarai's barrenness and the birth of Ishmael, born to him through his union with Sarai's maid (Genesis 16:1-16) b. Confirmation of the covenant and of God's promise to provide a seed for Abram now to be called Abraham (Genesis 17:1-27) c. The appearance of God to Abraham and the reiteration of His promise to provide a seed for him (Genesis 18:1-15) d. Abraham's intercession for Lot and his family demonstrating God's protection of His elect in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (18:16–19:38) e. The threat to Sarah's being able to be the seed bearer due to Abraham's lack of faith in God to protect him from Abimelech (Genesis 20:1-18)

4. The testing of Abraham's faith in God's promise to establish His covenant through Isaac (21:1–22:19) a. Fulfillment of the seed of promise through the birth of Isaac, the elect seed (Genesis 21:1-21) b. Abimelech's testimony that God was with Abraham and blessing him

(Genesis 21:22-34) c. The threat to Abraham's faith in God's promise to continue the covenant through Isaac due to God's command to sacrifice him as a burnt offering (Genesis 22:1-19) 5. Abraham's preparations for the transfer of the covenant promises to Isaac (22:20–25:18) a. The informing of Abraham of his brother's descendants (Genesis 22:20-24) b. Abraham's expectant hope in the fulfillment of the covenant promises: The purchase of a parcel of land in Canaan to bury Sarah (Genesis 23:1-20) c. Divine provision for the continuation of the covenant promises through an elect seed: The marriage of Isaac to Rebekah (Genesis 24:1-67) d. Identification of Isaac as the heir to Abraham's estate and as the heir of God's covenant with Abraham (Genesis 25:1-11) e. Identification of the non-elect line of Abraham through the generations of Ishmael (Genesis 25:12-18) B. God's word of promise to Isaac the elect seed of Abraham (25:19–26:35)

1. The testing of Isaac's faith in God's promise to provide a seed who would be heir to the covenant (Genesis 25:19-34)

2. The testing of Isaac's faith in God's promise to give the land to the descendants of Abraham (Genesis 26:1-6) 3. The divine confirmation that Isaac is the elect seed to whom the covenant promises are transferred (Genesis 26:7-33) 4. Confirmation that Esau is not the elect seed (Genesis 26:34-35) C. God's word of promise to Jacob the elect seed of Isaac (27:1–36:43) 1. Jacob's deception to get Isaac's blessing (Genesis 27:1-46) 2. The transfer of the covenant promises to Jacob (Genesis 28:1-22)

3. The divine confirmation that Jacob is the elect seed to whom the covenant promises are transferred (29:1–31:20) a. God's blessing of Jacob with many sons through his marriage to Leah and Rachel, Laban's daughters, and through his union with their maids, Bilhah and Zilpah (29:1–30:24) b. God's blessing of Jacob with great wealth through his tending of Laban's flocks and herds in spite of Laban's deception (Genesis 30:25-43) c. God's blessing of Jacob with a safe return to the Land of Promise and to his father's house (31:1–33:20)

4. Simeon's and Levi's massacre of the men of Shechem in righteous indignation because of the defilement of their sister Dinah (Genesis 34:1-31) 5. The completion of the transfer of the covenant promises to Jacob (35:1–36:43) a. God's affirmation to Jacob at Bethel that he is the heir to the promises (Genesis 35:1-15) b. The completion of the elect family with the birth of Benjamin, and the completion of the transfer of the covenant promises to Jacob with the death of Isaac (Genesis 35:16-29) c. Identification of the non-elect line of Isaac through the generations of Esau (Genesis 36:1-43) D. The typical fulfillment of God's word of promise to Abraham through Joseph (37:1–47:26)

1. God's separation of Joseph to Himself to prepare him through testing to administer the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant to the elect seed and to "all peoples of the earth" as a typical fulfillment of His word of promise to Abraham (37:1–41:57) a. The election and rejection of Joseph as God's chosen ruler (37:1–38:30) b. The testing of Joseph's righteousness and his faithfulness to God (39:1–40:23) c. The vindication of Joseph through his elevation to ruler over all Egypt (Genesis 41:1-57)

2. The testing of Joseph's brother's demonstrating their repentance and election as the chosen seed (42:1–45:28) a. The first visit of Joseph's brothers to Egypt (Genesis 42:1-38) b. The second visit of Joseph's brothers to Egypt (43:1–45:28)

3. The typical fulfillment of God's word of promise to bless the elect seed of Abraham and to bless 'all the families of the earth' through his seed as typified by Joseph (46:1–47:26)

E. The expectant hope of the elect seed in the fulfillment of God's word of promise to Abraham (47:27–50:26) 1. The expectant hope of Jacob expressed at the end of his life (47:27–49:33) a. Jacob's hope expressed in his charge to Joseph to be buried in the Land of Promise (Genesis 47:27-31) b. Jacob's hope expressed in his blessings of the elect seed (48:1–49:28) 2. The expectant hope of Joseph expressed at the end of his life (Genesis 50:1-26) a. The expectant hope of Joseph expressed in his carrying out Jacob's charge to be buried in the promised land (Genesis 50:1-14) b. The expectant hope of Joseph expressed in his instructions to the sons of Israel to carry his bones back to the promised land when God brings Israel out of Egypt and returns them to Canaan (Genesis 50:15-26) Synthesis of Genesis

Based on the message statement and synthetic structure developed above, a synthesis of the text of Genesis may be constructed as follows.

I. The Word of God irrupts in power and authority to create the world and man whom He makes in his own image. (1:1–2:25)

A. God's words of creation irrupt in response to His sovereign will to bring into existence the heavens and the earth and their fullness, and man whom He makes in His own image to have personal relationship with him and to invest him with authority and power to rule over the earth. (1:1–2:3)

B. The account of God's creative activities in the day in which He created the heavens and the earth reveal that the object of His creation was man, and that the focus of this object was centered in man's living in relationship with God and obedience to Him in the Garden which He planted for man to dwell in and cultivate. (Genesis 2:4-25)

1. The account of God's creative activity reveal that He formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life. (Genesis 2:4-7)

2. The account of God's creative activity reveal that He planted a garden and caused trees to grow which were good for food, including the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that He placed the man there to dwell in it and cultivate and keep it. (Genesis 2:8-14)

3. The prohibition which God placed on the man from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil tests his obedience to God and presents him with a consequence of death in the event he should disobey God. (Genesis 2:15-17)

4. The need of the man for a companion like himself, impressed upon him through his naming all the animals, moves God to create the woman from the man's rib and bring her to him that he might cleave to her in intimate relationship and become one with her. (Genesis 2:18-25)

II. The Word of God responds in righteousness and justice to man's act of disobedience by executing judgment on a world fallen under the dominion of the evil one, pronouncing the ultimate conquest over the evil one through conflict with the (elect) seed of the woman, and by limiting the immediate influence and spread of evil throughout the earth. (3:1–11:26)

A. God's word of judgment falls upon the world, now fallen and under the rule of the evil one as a result of man's sin, to pronounce a curse on man, the serpent/evil one, and the creation, yet in grace He provides hope by promising to preserve a seed of the woman through whom He will do conflict with the seed of the evil one, and through whom He will effect ultimate conquest over the evil one. (Genesis 3:1-24)

1. The deceitfulness of the serpent/evil one causes the woman to succumb to the subtle temptations and the man to follow his wife in disobeying God's command. (Genesis 3:1-7)

2. God's word of judgment falls upon the world in the aftermath of man's fall into a state of sin with the pronouncement of punishment against the serpent/evil one, the woman, and the man, and with a curse upon the earth, yet hope is found in God's word that the seed of the woman will ultimately defeat the evil one. (Genesis 3:8-19)

3. The new world order brought on by the Fall of man requires man to be expelled from the Garden and from the presence of God and to live out his life under the curse and in a world under the dominion of the evil one. (Genesis 3:20-24)

B. God's word of judgment falls upon Cain (the seed of the evil one) to limit the immediate influence and spread of evil after he kills his brother Abel (the seed of the woman), but hope is provided as God gives Seth, the new seed of the woman, in place of Abel. (Genesis 4:1-26)

C. God's word of judgment falls upon all the descendants of Adam removing the universal spread of wickedness and violence by destroying all flesh on the earth through the flood, yet hope continues as He delivers Noah and his family by means of the ark and establishes a new world order in the aftermath of the flood through Noah and his sons. (5:1–9:29)

1. The account of the generations of Adam traces the election of the seed of the woman in each generation from Adam to Seth, and then through Enoch, who walked with God and did not experience death, to Noah. (Genesis 5:1-32)

2. God's word of warning to Noah of impending judgment upon all mankind because of the widespread corruption on the earth prepares him for delivering himself, his family, and representatives of the animal world from the flood waters through the construction of an ark. (Genesis 6:1-22)

3. The execution of God's word of judgment against all mankind destroys all living flesh on the face of the earth as the flood waters rise above the highest mountains, yet that same water delivers Noah, his family, and representatives of the animal world to safety through the ark. (7:1–8:22)

4. The new world order established by God in the aftermath of the flood continues the creation mandate to be fruitful and fill the earth and anticipates the spread of evil again, yet the promise is given that God would never again destroy the earth by flood. (Genesis 9:1-29) a. The new world order requires Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, creates disharmony between man and the animal world by sanctioning an animal diet for man, institutes capital punishment for homicide, and establishes a covenant between God and Noah and all living flesh promising that God would never again destroy the earth by flood. (Genesis 9:1-19) b. The conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the evil one resumes, in spite of the cleansing of

evil from the face of the earth, as Ham dishonors his father, and Noah curses Canaan, the son of Ham, while blessing Shem and Japheth for honoring him. (Genesis 9:20-29)

D. God's word of judgment falls on the descendants of Noah halting their corporate rebellion through their unified action in the land of Shinar. (10:1–11:9)

1. The account of the generations of Noah traces the settling of the nations in the new world through the movements of the descendants of Noah's three sons, Japheth, Ham, and Shem. (Genesis 10:1-32)

2. God's word of judgment pronounced on all the descendants of Noah confuses their one language and scatters the people abroad from the land of Shinar over the face of the whole earth thwarting their corporate rebellion manifested in their pride in building a city and great tower stretching to the heavens and in their determination not to obey God's decree to multiply and spread out and fill the earth. (Genesis 11:1-9)

III. The Word of God intervenes in history with grace and mercy, to promise unconditionally to bless Abraham and his elect seed and all the peoples of the earth through him, even as He intervened in history to use Joseph to bless the elect family and the families of the earth during an extended time of widespread and great famine. (11:10–50:26)

A. God's word of promise, sworn by oath to Abraham, intervenes in history to bless Abraham and his elect seed, whom He calls and separates to Himself to walk before Him in faith and obedience. (11:10–25:18)

1. God's word of election selects a seed in each of the generations of Shem until Abram is called and, in obedience to God, separates himself from his country and family and moves to the land of Canaan so that God might fulfill His word of promise to bless him, and bless all the families of the earth through him, and give to his descendants the land of Canaan. (11:10–12:9)

2. Abram's faith in God's promise to bless him and give him the land is tested, while God affirms His commitment with the encoding of His word of promise into a formal covenant which He unilaterally swears to uphold. (12:10–15:21) a. Famine in the land of Canaan causes Abram to compromise his faith in God's promise to bless him in the land as he seeks relief in Egypt, but God's infliction of diseases on Pharaoh and his household protects Sarai from Pharaoh who then orders Abram to take his wife and go, leaving him no alternative but to return to Canaan. (Genesis 12:10-20) b. Abram's response to the controversy between his herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen affirms his faith in God's word of promise to give him and his descendants the land of Canaan, for he allows Lot to choose the more fertile land of the Jordan Valley while he remained in the land. (Genesis 13:1-18) c. Abram's refusal to accept the king of Sodom's offer to keep the plunder taken from Sodom and Gomorrah and recaptured by Abram, affirms his faith in God to bless him for he did not want any man to say he made Abram rich. (Genesis 14:1-24) d. God's unilateral cutting of a covenant with Abram affirms His intention to fulfill His word of promise, but this fulfillment will be delayed for Abram's descendants will first be enslaved and oppressed for 400 years in a foreign land until the iniquity of the Canaanites is complete. (Genesis 15:1-21)

3. Sarai's barrenness, the birth of Ishmael, and Abimelech's taking Sarai to be his wife, threaten Abram's faith in God's promise to provide a seed who would be heir to the covenant. (16:1–20:18)

a. Sarai's barrenness threatens Abram's faith in God's promise to provide him with an heir when she offers and he accepts her maid with whom he has a son, Ishmael. (Genesis 16:1-16) b. Abram's desire to have Ishmael be heir to the covenant brings a rebuke from God and a promise that Sarah would bear him a son through whom the covenant would be established as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. (Genesis 17:1-27) c. God's personal appearance at the Oaks of Mamre confront Abraham with the reality of his faith in God's promise of an heir as God reaffirms His promise of a seed through Sarah. (Genesis 18:1-15) d. Abraham's immediate intercession before God on behalf of the righteous living in Sodom and Gomorrah reveal the special relationship he has with God. (18:16-19:38) e. Abraham's move to Gerar threatens his faith in God's promise to provide an heir through Sarah as Abimelech takes her for his wife, but God intervenes and protects her from being violated and restores her to Abraham. (Genesis 20:1-18)

4. The birth of Isaac fulfills God's promise to provide an heir for Abraham through Sarah, but God's command to sacrifice him threatens Abraham's faith in God's promise to establish His covenant with Isaac. (21:1-22:19) a. Sarah's conception and birth of Isaac fulfills God's word of promise to provide an heir through her, and the jealousy aroused in Ishmael necessitates that he be sent away confirming that Isaac and not Ishmael is the elect seed of Abraham. (Genesis 21:1-21) b. Abimelech's realization that God is with Abraham in all that he does confirms that God is fulfilling His promise to bless Abraham in the land of Canaan. (Genesis 21:22-34) c. God's command to Abraham to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering threatens his faith in God's promise to establish His covenant with Isaac, but Abraham's obedient is vindicated as God at the last moment halts Abraham from slaying Isaac and provides a substitute sacrifice, and then swears that because Abraham was obedient He would surely keep His covenant promises. (Genesis 22:1-19)

5. Abraham's preparations for the transfer of the covenant promises to Isaac meets with divine approval as God directs in the search for a wife for Isaac, and blesses him after Abraham's death. (22:20-25:18) a. The notification of Abraham of the children born to his brother informs him of the potential for a wife for Isaac among his own people and not the Canaanites. (Genesis 22:20-24) b. Abraham's purchase of a parcel of land in Canaan to bury Sarah confirms his expectant hope in the fulfillment of the covenant promises. (Genesis 23:1-20) c. Divine guidance for a wife for Isaac leads Abraham's servant to Rebekah the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, assuring continuation of the elect line as Isaac takes Rebekah in marriage. (Genesis 24:1-67) d. Abraham's provision for making Isaac his sole heir identifies him as the elect seed to whom the covenant promises will be transferred, while God's blessing of Isaac after the death of Abraham confirms that Isaac is that heir. (Genesis 25:1-11) e. The account of the generations of Ishmael traces the descendants of Abraham to whom God's word of promise was not transferred. (Genesis 25:12-18)

B. God's word of promise to Isaac and His blessing him confirms him as the elect seed of Abraham to whom the covenant oath is transferred, while Isaac's faith in God's promises demonstrate that he is the elect seed. (25:19-26:35)

1. Rebekah's barrenness threatens Isaac's faith in God to provide an heir through whom the covenant promises would continue, but his prayer to God affirms his faith which is rewarded by God as Rebekah conceives and gives birth to twins, yet God's purposes in election are made sure

as He identifies the younger as the elect seed. (Genesis 25:19-34)

2. Famine in the land threatens Isaac's faith in God's promise to give the land of Canaan to the descendants of Abraham for it caused him to move in the direction of Egypt, but God's command not to go down to Egypt and His confirmation that His covenant with Abraham will be continuous with Isaac, leads Isaac to respond in faith and remain in the Land of Promise. (Genesis 26:1-6)

3. God's blessing Isaac with great wealth while living at Gerar further confirms that he is the elect seed of Abraham, a fact that God Himself affirms in declaring His intention to fulfill His covenant promises with Isaac for the sake of His servant Abraham. (Genesis 26:7-33) 4. Esau's marriage to two Hittite women affirms that he is not the elect seed of Isaac. (Genesis 26:34-35)

C. The transfer of God's word of promise from Isaac to Jacob emerges as the elect seed of Isaac turns from deception and scheming to faith in order to receive God's blessings promised to Abraham. (27:1–36:43)

1. Jacob's deceiving Isaac into conferring on him the blessings of the first-born, instead of trusting God for the blessing, infuriates Esau making it necessary for Jacob to flee the Land of Promise and go to his family in Mesopotamia. (Genesis 27:1-4)

2. The transfer of the covenant to Jacob emerges as first Isaac charges him with taking a wife only from his mother's family in Paddan Aram and confers on him the promises made to Abraham, and then as God declares to Jacob His intention to continue the covenant He made with Abraham through him. (Genesis 28:1-22)

3. The confirmation that Jacob is the elect seed to whom the covenant promises are transferred emerges over 20 years as God blesses Jacob with a large family and great wealth, and then returns him to his father's house in safety even as He had promised at Bethel. (29:1–31:55) a. God's blessing Jacob with eleven sons through his marriage to Leah and Rachel and his union with their maids, Bilhah and Zilpah, fulfill Isaac's wish for God's blessing on Jacob to be fruitful and to become a community of peoples, thus confirming that he is the elect seed of Isaac. (29:1–30:24) b. God's blessing of Jacob with great wealth through his tending of Laban's flocks and herds in spite of Laban's deception, fulfills Isaac's wish for God's blessing Jacob, thus confirming that he is the elect seed of Isaac. (Genesis 30:25-43) c. God's blessing of Jacob with a safe return to the Land of Promise and to his father's house fulfills the promise God made to him at Bethel, but only after he turns to God in repentance and humility, confirms that Jacob is the elect seed of Isaac to whom the covenant promises are transferred. (31:1–33:20)

(1) Jacob's separation from Laban to return to the land of his father with his large family and great wealth with which God had blessed him in spite of Laban's attempts to cheat him, confirm he is the elect seed of Isaac and heir to the covenant. (Genesis 31:1-55)

(2) Jacob's return to the land of his father, which he anticipated with great fear because of the anger which Esau had for him, becomes a joyful reunion with Esau as God fulfills His promise to return Jacob safely, but not before he wrestles with God through the night and repents and in humility asks God for deliverance. (32:1–33:20)

4. The massacre of the men of Shechem by Simeon and Levi, done in righteous indignation because of the defilement of their sister Dinah by Shechem the Hivite, puts an end to threat of

intermarriage between the elect line and the Canaanites, and points out the need for the elect family to be separated from the people of Canaan. (Genesis 34:1-31)

5. The death of Isaac, occurring after Jacob's return to Bethel, completes the transfer of the covenant to Jacob his elect seed, while the account of the generations of Esau identifies the non-elect line of Isaac. (35:1–36:43) a. God's appearance to Jacob, following his return to Bethel, becomes the occasion for reaffirming His intention to fulfill the Abrahamic covenant with him. (Genesis 35:1-15) b. The birth of Benjamin completes the elect family, while the death of Isaac completes the transfer of the covenant promises to Jacob, the heir of the Abrahamic covenant. (Genesis 35:16-29) c. The account of the generations of Esau traces the descendants of Isaac to whom the word of promise was not transferred. (Genesis 36:1-43)

D. God's word to Joseph in a dream separates him to God to effect a typical fulfillment of His word of promise to Abraham by using him to bless the elect family and all peoples of the earth. (37:1–47:26)

1. The separation of Joseph to God to administer typically the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant to the elect seed and to all peoples of the earth results in rejection by his brothers, the testing of his righteousness and faithfulness, and ultimately in his vindication as God providentially works to elevate him to rule over Egypt. (37:1–41:57) a. The separation of Joseph to God, effected through dreams, reveals the unrighteousness of the elect family as his brothers reject God's chosen ruler and sell him into slavery. (37:1–38:30)

(1) God's word to Joseph in a dream separates him from his family to rule over them, but jealousy and hatred turn his brothers against him in rejection. (Genesis 37:1-11)

(2) Jealousy and hatred find expression in plans to kill God's chosen ruler, but God's providence overrules and Joseph is sold into slavery while deceit convinces Jacob that Joseph was killed and devoured by a beast of the field. (Genesis 37:12-36)

(3) The unrighteous state of the elect family, seen in their contempt and hatred for God's chosen ruler, is confirmed by Judah's unjust behavior towards Tamar, the Canaanite woman he took as a wife for his son, and whom he declared to be more righteous than himself. (Genesis 38:1-30) b. The testing of the righteousness and faithfulness of God's chosen ruler reveals that Joseph does not defile himself with Potiphar's wife and accepts being unjustly cast into prison for he understands that all is within the providence of God to bring about good. (39:1–40:23)

(1) The continual advances of Potiphar's wife to seduce Joseph into having sexual intercourse with her prove vain as Joseph remains faithful to God and does not submit to unrighteous behavior. (Genesis 39:1-18)

(2) The lies of Potiphar's wife cause Joseph to be unjustly cast into prison, yet God's blessing of Joseph causes him to find favor with the jailer while His providence causes Joseph to be in a position to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker. (39:19–40:23) c. The providence of God works through Pharaoh's dreams to elevate Joseph to rule over all Egypt in a time of severe famine, thus vindicating him and placing him in a position to administer His blessings to the elect family and to other peoples of the earth as well. (Genesis 41:1-57)

2. The righteousness and faithfulness of the elect seed is brought to light as Joseph's testing of his brothers reveals they have repented and turned away from their unrighteous behavior of the past and are now seeking to do what is right in the sight of God. (42:1–45:28) a. The first visit of Joseph's brothers to Egypt provides Joseph with the opportunity to determine whether they had killed Benjamin even as they had tried to kill him, while the dilemma that his brothers find themselves in causes them to search their souls over what they had done to Joseph and to confess that they were guilty of sinning against him. (Genesis 42:1-38) b. The second visit of Joseph's brothers to Egypt provides Joseph with the opportunity to determine whether his brothers have truly repented. (43:1–45:28)

(1) The offering of Judah to be held personally responsible to Jacob for Benjamin's safety stands in sharp contrast to his previous proposal to sell Joseph into slavery for profit. (Genesis 43:1-15)

(2) Benjamin's appearance before Joseph evokes strong emotions in Joseph and favored treatment of his full brother. (Genesis 43:16-34)

(3) Joseph's plot to test the true repentance of his brothers seemingly places Benjamin in grave danger. (Genesis 44:1-13)

(4) The true repentance of Joseph's brothers manifests itself in Judah's offering of himself as a substitute for Benjamin. (Genesis 44:14-34)

(5) Joseph's revealing of himself to his brothers displays his conviction that they had truly repented and his great love for them, while explaining to them that it was God who sent him before them into Egypt and not them, in order to bless and preserve them. (Genesis 45:1-28)

3. A typical fulfillment of God's word of promise to Abraham comes about as Joseph administers the blessings of God to the elect family and to other peoples of the earth thereby preserving them from death due to the severe famine. (46:1–47:26)

E. The expectant hope of the elect seed in the complete fulfillment of God's word of promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is expressed in both Jacob's and Joseph's instructions concerning their burial in the land God promised to Abraham. (47:27–50:26)

1. The expectant hope of Jacob is expressed in his final blessings of the elect seed, and in his charge to Joseph and the rest of his sons to bury him in the parcel of land that Abraham purchased in the land God promised to give him. (47:27–49:33)

2. The expectant hope of Joseph is expressed in his carrying out Jacob's charge to bury him in the land promised to Abraham and in his own instructions to the sons of Israel to take his bones with them when God brings Israel out of Egypt and returns them to the land of Canaan. (Genesis 50:1-26)

03 - Analysis and Synthesis of Exodus

Analysis and Synthesis of Exodus The analysis and synthesis approach to biblical studies applied here to Exodus is a methodology developed by the author (DeCanio, 2007) in conjunction with his doctoral studies at the University of South Africa. An abbreviated version of this work entitled, *Biblical Hermeneutics and a Methodology for Studying the Bible*, will be posted as an article on bible.org. The bibliography for this study of Exodus is presented at the end of the article, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Analysis of the context

Authorship

There are several internal claims in the Book of Exodus which directly ascribe authorship to Moses. He is told to record on a scroll the episode of Israel's victory over Amalek (Exodus 17:14). He is instructed to write down the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:4, Exodus 34:27-29). He "wrote down everything Yahweh had said" (Exodus 24:4), which included at least the Book of the Covenant (20:22-23:33). These internal claims are supported by a strong association of Mosaic authorship for the Pentateuch found in other OT books and in NT books as discussed in the *Introduction to the Pentateuch* (see, also, Kaiser 1990:287-288). When all the evidence found in Scripture is considered, along with Moses' qualifications for writing Exodus and the remaining books of the Pentateuch, it is hard to deny the strong likelihood of Mosaic authorship.

Recipients

It would seem that Moses' original readership would have been the Exodus generation of Israelites as well as all future generations who entered into covenant-relationship with Yahweh. While the covenant-relationship is offered to Israel, it is clear from the Book of Exodus that a response of faith is necessary to truly enter into that relationship.

Time period of the historical events and composition

Date of events The events of the Book of Exodus span from sometime after Joseph had died and a new Egyptian king came to power who did not know Joseph, to the setting up of the Tabernacle at Israel's encampment at Mount Sinai. Now Exodus 12:40-41 states that Israel had lived in Egypt 430 years to the day when Moses led them out. Further, Exodus 19:1 notes that in the third month after coming out of Egypt, on that very day, Israel came into the wilderness of Sinai. And lastly, Exodus 40:17 says that the Tabernacle was erected on the first day of the first month of the second year of Israel's exodus from Egypt. Thus, Exodus 12:1-51; Exodus 13:1-22; Exodus 14:1-31; Exodus 15:1-27; Exodus 16:1-36; Exodus 17:1-16; Exodus 18:1-27; Exodus 19:1-25; Exodus 20:1-26; Exodus 21:1-36; Exodus 22:1-31; Exodus 23:1-33; Exodus 24:1-18; Exodus 25:1-40; Exodus 26:1-37; Exodus 27:1-21; Exodus 28:1-43; Exodus 29:1-46; Exodus 30:1-38; Exodus 31:1-18; Exodus 32:1-35; Exodus 33:1-23; Exodus 34:1-35; Exodus 35:1-35; Exodus 36:1-38; Exodus 37:1-29; Exodus 38:1-31; Exodus 39:1-43; Exodus 40:1-38 spans a period of one

year. Now Exodus 2:1-25 begins with the birth of Moses which took place about 80 years before the Exodus (Exodus 7:7). Thus Exodus 2:1-25; Exodus 3:1-22; Exodus 4:1-31; Exodus 5:1-23; Exodus 6:1-30; Exodus 7:1-25; Exodus 8:1-32; Exodus 9:1-35; Exodus 10:1-29; Exodus 11:1-10; Exodus 12:1-51 spans about 80 years. It is very difficult to determine how long Israel was in Egypt before they had increased greatly and was viewed as a threat by the Egyptians. Clearly it had to be more than 30 years for that would not have been enough time for such a great multiplication of Israelites to have occurred. A time span of 100 years would be required with an annual growth rate somewhat higher than 5% in order to reach a population expansion large enough to field an army of some 660,000 men. Thus the events in Exodus 1:1-22 could have spanned a time period of 250-330 years. A date of 1446 B.C for the Exodus has been supported in the Introduction to the Pentateuch. This would date the birth of Moses at about 1526 B.C. and the erection of the Tabernacle at 1445 B.C. Thus the majority of events recorded in the Book of Exodus occurred between 1526 and 1445 B.C., a time span of 81 years.

Date of composition

Moses' leadership of Israel began when he was 80 years old (Exodus 7:7). The date for the composition of the Book of Exodus must, therefore, be between that point in time and when he died just prior to Israel's entrance into the Land of Promise (Deuteronomy 34:7). It is reasonable to assume, however, that the one year Israel spent in the wilderness at Sinai would have presented Moses with a good opportunity to write the majority, if not all of Exodus. Taking the date of the Exodus as 1446 B.C., the Book of Exodus could have been written as early as 1445 B.C.

Biblical context Historical element The historical context to the Book of Exodus is presented in the first chapter. Israel was in Egypt, Joseph was dead along with all those of his generation, and the new Pharaoh had no idea who Joseph was or what he had done for Egypt. In the course of time Israel had multiplied greatly, in fulfillment of Yahweh's word of promise to Abraham (Genesis 13:16), and the Egyptians began to view the sons of Israel as a potential threat to their security. To neutralize that threat, the Egyptians forced the sons of Israel into bondage and made them to serve Egypt with hard labor. But the more that Egypt afflicted Israel, the more they multiplied and spread out over the land.

Socio-cultural element The socio-cultural context of Exodus has two distinct aspects; from the beginning up to the Exodus, and then from the Exodus to the end of the book. Initially Israel is living in bondage to the Egyptians and subject to their desires. During this time they live in a social community of houses and likely villages perhaps organized around their tribal clans. Although they are subject to harsh labor, they apparently live moderately well having plenty of food to eat.

However, with the Exodus, all that changes. Though they are now free from Egyptian domination, they are now subject to Yahweh. Whereas before they lived in a sedentary way in houses and villages, they are now living in tents and are wandering in the wilderness and then encamped at Mount Sinai. Furthermore, food and water which was plentiful in Egypt are now scarce in both quantity and type, and they are totally dependent on Yahweh to provide everything for them.

Theological element The theological element for Exodus looks back on Genesis and subsumes all of its theological revelation as its context. However, major additions to this context must be made as Yahweh reveals Himself through His mighty plagues brought against the Egyptians, through the

covenant-relationship He proposes to Israel, through His laws specified in the Mosaic Covenant, through His anger and wrath which He brings against Israel for their disobedience to the covenant stipulations, but also through His grace and mercy which He extends to Israel in response to the mediation of Moses. In addition to the Abrahamic Covenant, the single most dominant addition to the theological context for understanding Exodus is the Mosaic Covenant and the covenant-relationship which it specifies between Yahweh and Israel. This addition to the theological context controls not only understanding Exodus but the rest of the Pentateuch and in deed the rest of the Old Testament. So important is this covenant to Israel's history that when the New Testament era opens we find Jesus living under it.

Analysis of the text Broad descriptive overview

Chapter

Descriptive Summary

1

Oppression of Israel by the Egyptians

2

Moses' birth and preparation

3

Moses' call by Yahweh to deliver Israel

4

Moses' objections to Yahweh's call

Moses' submission to Yahweh's call

5

Moses' first encounter with Pharaoh

Moses calls on Pharaoh to let Israel go

Pharaoh's response

Israelites' response

Moses' response

6

Yahweh' response

Genealogy of Moses and Aaron

7

Yahweh's commitment to deliver Israel after bringing judgment on Egypt

First plague: blood

8

Second plague: frogs

Third plague: gnats/lice

Fourth plague: flies

9

Fifth plague: death of livestock through severe pestilence

Sixth plague: boils on man and beasts

Seventh plague: hail

10

Eighth plague: locusts

Ninth plague: darkness

11

Tenth plague: death of first-born announced

12

Institution of the Passover to protect first-born of Israel

Death of Egypt's first-born executed

Israel's departure from Egypt

13

Institution of dedication/redemption of Israel's first-born males to/from Yahweh

Yahweh's protective presence; cloud by day, fire by night

14

Deliverance through the Red Sea

Destruction of pursuing Egyptian army

15

Song of deliverance

Israel's grumbling over bitter water

16

Israel's grumbling over lack of food;

Yahweh's provision of manna

Institution of the Sabbath as a day of rest

17

Israel's grumbling over lack of water; the rock struck

Israel's defeat of Amalek

18

Jethro's counsel to Moses; division of responsibility

19

Covenant proposed and accepted

20

The Ten Commandments

21-23

The laws of the covenant

Laws dealing with society

Laws dealing with civil and religious obligations

Laws dealing with Sabbaths and Feasts

Laws dealing with the conquest

24

Ratification of the covenant

Yahweh's giving of the Stone Tablets

25

Yahweh's command to construct a Tabernacle

Specifications for the ark and the mercy seat

Specifications for the table of bread

Specifications for the lamp-stand

26

Specifications for the curtains

Specifications for the boards

Specifications for the veils

27

Specifications for the bronze altar

Specifications for the court

Specifications for the oil for the lamp

28

Specifications for the priest's garments

29

Specifications for the priest's consecration

30

Specifications for the altar of incense

Specifications for the atonement money

Specifications for the laver

Specifications for the anointing oil

Specifications for the incense

31

Appointment of the craftsmen for building the Tabernacle

The Sign of the covenant: the Sabbath

Israel's breaking of the covenant through worship of the golden calf

Yahweh's anger to destroy Israel

Moses' intercession on behalf of Israel; Yahweh's relenting

32

Moses' anger toward Israel

33

Israel's repentance

Moses' intercession on behalf of Israel

Yahweh's revelation of Himself to Moses

34

Yahweh's renewal of the covenant

35

Israel's freewill offerings of the material for the Tabernacle

36

Moses' giving of the material to the builders

Fabrication of the curtains, boards, veils

37

Fabrication of the ark, table, lamp-stand, altar of incense

38

Fabrication of the brass altar, laver, court

Summary of material given by Israel

39

Fabrication of the priestly garments

Moses' inspection of the work

40

Erection of the Tabernacle by the builders

Moses' consecration of the Tabernacle

Moses' ordination and consecration of Aaronic priesthood

Yahweh's indwelling of the Tabernacle

Major theological themes The major theological themes of the Book of Exodus clearly center on the developing concept of covenant-relationship between God and Israel. This relationship is founded first of all in the plan and purposes of God as revealed in part in the Book of Genesis through God's word of decree in creating man in His own image (Genesis 1:26-28), in God's word of promise to Adam in cursing the serpent/evil one (Genesis 3:15), and in God's word of promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:2-3; Genesis 13:14-16; Genesis 15:4-5, Genesis 15:13-18; Genesis 17:1-8; Genesis 22:15-18). It is clear from Genesis that God is calling out an elect people, the seed of the woman, and separating them to Himself to bring them back into relationship with Him, to reestablish His rule through them, to bless them, and to bless others through them. In this context of developing covenant-relationship four major theological themes stand out: (1) promise and fulfillment; (2) the revelation of Yahweh as the sovereign God who rules over nations and peoples and passes judgment on them, as the God of redemption, and as the God of the covenant; (3) redemption; and (4) the covenant and covenant-relationship.

Promise and fulfillment The Book of Exodus is based upon the fulfillment of Yahweh's promises to Abraham. While fulfillment may not always be complete, the point of theological concern is not to be placed on the degree of fulfillment but on the kind of fulfillment. The following demonstrates promises and/or prophecies that are specified in the Book of Genesis and fulfilled in the Book of Exodus. The promise of a great nation A recurring promise that God made to Abraham was to

make him into a great nation (cf. Genesis 12:2 a; Genesis 13:6; Genesis 22:17). The fulfillment of this promise is seen in Exodus 1:7 which notes, "But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them." The prophecy of enslavement In Genesis 15:13 God, in the process of confirming His promises to Abraham through the cutting of a covenant, informed Abraham that while his descendants would surely receive the land of Canaan as their possession, they would be delayed in taking possession of it because they would first be strangers in a foreign land where they would be enslaved and oppressed for 400 years. The fulfillment of this prophecy is recorded in Exodus 1:8-14. The promise of judgment and deliverance

Although God would permit the enslavement and oppression of Abraham's descendants, He promised Abraham that He will judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward, in the fourth generation, they will come out of that land with many possessions and return to the land of Canaan (Genesis 15:14, Genesis 15:16). The fulfillment of the promised judgment upon the oppressors of Abraham's descendants is recorded in Exodus 7:14-25; Exodus 8:1-32; Exodus 9:1-35; Exodus 10:1-29; Exodus 11:1-8; Exodus 12:29-30; Exodus 14:23-31. The fulfillment of God's promise of the release of Abraham's descendants is recorded in Exodus 12:31-34; Exodus 12:40-41, Exodus 12:51, and the fulfillment of God's promise that Abraham's descendants would leave the land of their enslavement with many possession is recorded in Exodus 12:35-36. The significance of these recorded fulfillments of God's promises is to show that God has begun to fulfill His promises to Abraham, and if he has already fulfilled these promises will He not also fulfill the others as well, in particular the promise of the land of Canaan? Thus, these beginning fulfillments create an expectant hope that fulfillment of God's word of promise concerning the land will follow as well. The revelation of God The revelation of the person of God is paramount throughout the book. He is the One who controls history (Exodus 1:1-22); He revealed Himself in a name which, though not new, takes on new meaning (Exodus 3:14); He is the originator of the covenant and, with it, the covenant-relationship (Exodus 19:1-5); He is the redeemer of His people (Exodus 6:6; Exodus 15:13); He is judge of His people (Exodus 4:14; Exodus 20:5; Exodus 32:27-28) and of His foes (chapters 7-12); and He is the transcendent One who, though existing outside of the Creation because He brought it into being by the power of His word (Genesis 1:1-31), nevertheless dwells (tabernacles) among His elect people (Exodus 29:45-46; Exodus 40:34). The revelation of God through His names

One of the characteristics of the biblical revelation is that it reveals God by His names. Sometimes a name is revealed which is derived from a root term from which a sense of the name's meaning may be determined. The name of God revealed in Genesis 17:1 (and noted in Exodus 6:3) is such an example. There God revealed Himself as El Shaddai (commonly translated as "God Almighty"), a name that is derived from a Hebrew term that means "mountain." Thus El Shaddai portrays God as the "God of the mountain," or "the overpowering One, standing on a mountain." The name by which God reveals Himself to Moses and to all of Israel in the Book of Exodus is YHWH, pronounced Yahweh, (Exodus 3:14-15). This name was applied to God in the Book of Genesis but without explanation. The understanding of the four letters written in the Hebrew text has been the subject of much debate. This controversy, however, seems to be over the meaning of the name as determined from etymological implications, that is, based on the implications of meaning from the Hebrew verb "to be," the stem from which the name is derived. Some take it with a present active

sense and understand it to mean "I am" referring to God as the active, self-existent One. Others take it with a future sense and understand it to mean "I will be what I will be." But more important than a meaning derived from its etymological roots are the implications of meaning derived from the context in which the name is revealed. In the context of the Book of Exodus, God, first of all, identifies Himself as Yahweh "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." In this there is continuity with God's relationship with Israel's patriarchs and with the covenant promises that He made to them. But the Book of Exodus goes beyond this implication of meaning which was made known through the events in Genesis, to incorporate new traits. That this is so is seen from God's own declaration to Moses, ". . . I am Yahweh, and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as El Shaddai (God Almighty), but by My name, Yahweh, I did not make Myself known to them" (Exodus 6:2-3). Thus, although the patriarchs knew the name Yahweh and referred to God by it, they nevertheless did not know its full significance. The Book of Exodus makes that significance known through God's actions with, and on behalf of, Israel. In His relationship with Israel, Yahweh is His memorial-name to all generations (Exodus 3:15). In the context of the Book of Exodus, the name Yahweh takes on implications of meaning which include redeemer (Israel's go'el, kinsman-redeemer, Exodus 3:7-8; Exodus 6:2-7), suzerain-king covenant-maker and participant (Exodus 19:1-6), and the God who dwells (tabernacles) among His people (Exodus 29:45-46; Exodus 40:34). The revelation of God through His nature The Bible also reveals God through His nature. In the Book of Exodus God is revealed as compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness and truth, keeping lovingkindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; yet as punishing the guilty, and visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generation (Exodus 34:6-7) The revelation of God through His acts The Book of Exodus reveals God through His acts as a covenant-maker and keeper, as the sovereign over individuals, nations, and nature, as executing judgment upon the wicked, as a kinsman-redeemer, as a warrior, and as personal, coming to dwell in the midst of His people. Exodus reveals God who acts to execute judgment upon Egypt for the evil it committed in afflicting His chosen people with hard labor and bondage, and for its worshiping false gods. Exodus further reveals God who acts to deliver His chosen people from Egypt, and to bring them into covenant-relationship with Himself. The Book of Exodus reveal God who carries out His actions, first, on the basis of the promises He made to Abraham, and then, on the basis of the Law He stipulated as part of the covenant He made with His chosen people. The revelation of Yahweh as the sovereign God: The Book of Exodus reveal God who though outside of the Creation nevertheless is involved in and with the Creation. In the beginning of the Book of Exodus God's action is revealed as irrupting¹ from outside of history to take affect on behalf of His elect people by calling Moses, effecting judgment upon Egypt, and by redeeming/delivering Israel. With the cutting of the covenant at Mount Sinai, God is revealed as acting sovereignly in history as He localizes His presence on earth in the midst of Israel, first in the pillar of cloud, and then in the Tabernacle. The revelation of Yahweh as the God of judgment: When Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh, their goal was to secure the release of the Israelites from Egypt. God had heard the cries of His elect people and was going to deliver them from the land of their enslavement. Since Pharaoh would not listen to Moses (Exodus 5:2), God performed signs and wonders to convince him to let Israel go. These miracles are called "mighty acts of judgment" in Exodus 6:6 and Exodus 7:4 because Egypt deserved to be punished for she was unprovoked in mistreating the sons of Israel. God had blessed Egypt through Joseph, but later pharaohs took advantage of

the sons of Israel without just cause and reduced them to slaves (see, Wolf 1991:132).

Yahweh's judgments on the Egyptian people demonstrate His sovereignty over not only Israel but also over other nations as well. To Israel, this was a demonstration that the One calling them to Himself as their God was not "a local deity" but the one true God who rules over all mankind and over all nature. The judgments that Yahweh effected on Egypt may be understood as judgment upon their gods and goddesses² as well to reveal their impotence and to show that the God of Israel is the one true God. The following is a summary of the three cycles of judgments and the one culminating judgment (see Hannah 1985:120):

There is an increasing level of intensity in punishment in progressing through the three cycles of judgment, culminating in the most devastating of all, the death of the firstborn. In effecting judgment upon Egypt Yahweh demonstrated His power over all of nature, culminating in His parting of the Red Sea to provide a safe passage for Israel and a place of death and destruction for Pharaoh's army. The revelation of Yahweh as the God of redemption: The Book of Exodus reveals Yahweh as the God of redemption, the kinsman-redeemer who exercised His powers to perform mighty acts of judgment upon Egypt to redeem His people from their bondage in Egypt. It is Yahweh who hears the cries of Abraham's descendants and takes action to redeem them from bondage, first in calling Moses, then in effecting judgment on Egypt, and lastly in delivering Israel by means of the Passover and the waters of the Red Sea. In all this, Yahweh redeemed Israel, an act that goes far beyond physical deliverance to the very act of spiritual redemption (as discussed below), in order to separate a people to Himself and bring them into covenant-relationship with Himself that He might be their God and they His people. The revelation of Yahweh as the God of the covenant: The Book of Exodus also reveals Yahweh as the covenant making and covenant keeping God. It was Yahweh's proposal to Israel to enter into covenant-relationship, and it was Yahweh who stipulated the covenant requirements and conditions. Further, after Israel had violated the most fundamental stipulation of the covenant, Yahweh demonstrated His faithfulness to the covenant by responding to the intercession of Moses and continuing with His people (chapters 32-34).

Redemption The Book of Exodus presents the mighty acts of God by which He effects the redemption of Israel from bondage in Egypt. While the first nine judgments on Egypt "softened Pharaoh's and Egypt's hardened heart" toward letting Israel go, it was the last judgment, the judgment on the firstborn that broke their stubborn resistance to Yahweh's command. In effect, this judgment brought destruction to Egypt's firstborn, while God's provision of the Passover brought deliverance/redemption to Israel's firstborn, and to the nation, as God mediated the judgment pronounced against Israel's firstborn upon the Passover lamb. There is no question that through the death of Egypt's firstborn and the redeeming of Israel's firstborn through the Passover, God effected Israel's physical redemption from Egypt. The question is, did He also effect their spiritual redemption?

It is the contention of this analysis that the Passover redemption effected by Yahweh was efficacious not only for Israel's redemption from physical bondage, but also from sin, and that the Passover redemption provided by Yahweh was a type of the true redemption that He would one day effect through Christ for redeeming all mankind from sin. The basis upon which this conclusion is founded rests upon the supposition that the nature of God's purpose in delivering Israel from

Egypt mandated the nature of the redemption that He effected through the Passover. The nature of Yahweh's purpose in redeeming Israel from Egypt is seen to be in making Israel: His own possession among all the peoples of the earth (Exodus 19:5); a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:6 a); a holy nation (separated to Himself, Exodus 19:6 b); and a people among whom He would dwell (Exodus 29:45-46)

All these factors imply that the nature, or type of meaning, of the Exodus redemption must necessarily be redeemed from sin.

Although the Passover passage does not explicitly state that redemption from sin is being effected, it becomes clear that the type of meaning expressed in the text has this as a necessary implication. In particular, it is found in the implications of three fundamental redemptive concepts that are later developed in Scripture but used in Exodus to convey the Passover stipulations; they are, (1) lamb as a substitute sacrifice, (2) blood as an atonement for sin, and (3) faith as a necessary response. The demonstration that the type of meaning for the Passover event is redemption from sin is found in a correspondence between these redemptive concepts and the essential meaning of atonement for sin as found in the Book of Leviticus which dictates the need for a substitute sacrifice (Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-13), the application of the blood which was given by Yahweh to effect atonement (Lev The covenant

There are three factors necessary for the formation of a nation: a common people, a common homeland, and a common government or constitution holding the people together. Exodus 1:1-22; Exodus 2:1-25; Exodus 3:1-22; Exodus 4:1-31; Exodus 5:1-23; Exodus 6:1-30; Exodus 7:1-25; Exodus 8:1-32; Exodus 9:1-35; Exodus 10:1-29; Exodus 11:1-10; Exodus 12:1-51; Exodus 13:1-22; Exodus 14:1-31; Exodus 15:1-27; Exodus 16:1-36; Exodus 17:1-16; Exodus 18:1-27 records the creation of the people, the Book of Joshua records the acquisition of the land, and Exodus 19:1-25 through the Book of Leviticus presents the details of the constitution adopted and entered into at Sinai. This constitution is a covenant binding the people of Israel to Yahweh as their Suzerain King, and binding the tribes of Israel to one another as co-vassals of the King. In effect, when the process is complete—acquisition of a people, constituting of a people, and acquisition of the land—a theocratic state will have been created with all Israelites equal under Yahweh their God (see Johnson 1987).

There are two aspects to the covenant ratified at Sinai; its form and its function which is defined by its stipulations. The form of the covenant is discussed in the Introduction to the Pentateuch where the covenant-treaty presented by Moses was shown to be structured similar to the Hittite suzerainty-vassal treaty form characteristic of that age. The second aspect of the covenant is its function which is discussed here.

Basic function of the covenant The basis for the covenant-relationship proposed by Yahweh and accepted by Israel's Exodus generation (and later renewed by the Conquest generation, Deuteronomy 27:1-26) is founded in the concept of a suzerainty-vassal relationship. Yahweh is proposing to enter into a relationship with Israel whereby Israel promises obedience to Yahweh as their King and He in turn promises to treat them benevolently as His own possession among all the peoples of the earth (Exodus 19:1-5). But there is another dimension to the covenant proposal that has no relationship to the suzerainty-vassal treaty agreements of that day. The relationship God proposed to Israel made them to be His own possession (literally, a special treasure), and a

kingdom of priests and a holy nation (19:6). The kingdom relationship God was proposing to Israel was one in which the subjects of the kingdom were all priests with immediate access to Him, and one in which the nation of Israelites were to be a holy nation. While the concept of "holy" includes the idea of being separated, (and indeed, Israel was to be separated from all other nations and devoted only to Yahweh), that separateness was to be defined (as the Book of Leviticus does) in terms that reveal the holiness of God in His separation from all that is evil, profane, and defiling. It is in this sense that Israel was called to be holy, as it says in Leviticus 19:1, "You shall be holy, for I Yahweh your God am holy." The requirement for Israel to be a holy nation separated to Yahweh is basic to the whole covenant-relationship and a recurring theme in the Book of Exodus (and more so in the Book of Leviticus). The reason Yahweh separated Israel from Egypt and redeemed them was to take them to be His people—they would be His people and He would be their God (Exodus 6:7-8). It is for this reason that He separated them and brought them to Sinai where He would enter into covenant relationship with them (Exodus 19:4). That separation is a basic issue in the Book of Exodus is seen in the demands Yahweh made to Pharaoh that he let His people go that they may serve Him (cf. Exodus 4:23; Exodus 7:16; Exodus 8:1, Exodus 8:20; Exodus 9:1, Exodus 9:13); in the Egyptian's recognition that the sons of Israel were being separated from Egypt to serve their God (see, for example, Exodus 10:7-8, Exodus 10:11, Exodus 10:24); in Pharaoh's exclamation that he made a mistake in letting Israel go from serving Egypt (Exodus 14:5); and in Israel's willingness to go back and serve the Egyptians when their lives were being threatened at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:12). This is also seen in Yahweh's distinction between Israel and Egypt in bringing judgment upon the land and the people. Israel was protected, while Egypt was judged (see, for example, Exodus 8:22-23; Exodus 9:4, Exodus 9:26; Exodus 10:23; Exodus 11:7). Nowhere is there any clearer evidence of this than in the judgment on the first-born where only Israel was given the opportunity to be protected from the destroyer by exercising faith in the blood of the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:1-51).

The covenant stipulations The stipulations of the covenant take the form of Ten (somewhat general) Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) that form a foundational framework within which the covenant relationships are to be worked out, and a set of specific commands that deal with practical situations in the course of daily living (chapters 21-23). The expression of covenant-relationship through worship The covenant-relationship is characterized by obedience and benevolence; Israel promises obedience to Yahweh, and Yahweh promises to be benevolent to Israel. But there is another dimension to the covenant-relationship that finds its expression in worship. Israel is commanded to worship Yahweh and Him alone by having no other gods before Him to worship and serve (Exodus 20:3-5). In order that worship of Yahweh may be expressed properly, and not according to pagan practices, God institutes a system of worship that is centered in the Tabernacle, the place where Yahweh localizes His presence on earth (Exodus 25:8; chapters 25-27; 30-31; 35-40), that is administered by a priest-hood invested in Aaron and his descendants (chapters 28-29), and incorporates the weekly observance of the Sabbath (Exodus 31:12-17) and the annual observances of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Harvest, and the Feast of In-gathering (Exodus 23:10-19), as well as the yearly observance of the Passover (Exodus 12:1-51).

Literary characteristics The literary characteristics of Exodus are considered in terms of its literary structure. The literary structure of the Book of Exodus has been shown in the Introduction to the Pentateuch to be somewhat dependent upon the form of a suzerainty-vassal treaty. While it is important to recognize the components of this treaty in the text of Exodus in order to understand the theological message that

Moses is developing, the form of the treaty does not dictate the structure of the message. To see this, it is helpful to have in mind an overview of the book. In the Book of Exodus, Moses instructs the sons of Israel as to their national origins by narrating the formative events in the beginnings of their national history, namely, their redemption from bondage in Egypt to a people free to serve Yahweh, and their covenant-relationship with Yahweh which is the constitutive basis for their national political and religious origins, and by stipulating the terms of the covenant-relationship in the bilateral form of a suzerainty-vassal treaty, and in legislative language which details the social and religious responsibilities of the people within that covenant-relationship. Further, Moses specifies the plan and construction of the Tabernacle which is to be the seat of Yahweh's enthronement among His covenant people and the place where they are to present themselves before Him in worship. From this perspective it can be observed that a more complete development of the book is structured around:

Israel's deliverance from Egypt as a redeemed people separated to Yahweh (chapters 1-18); the constituting of Israel as a redeemed people to be a nation separated to Yahweh by covenant-relationship (chapters 19-24); and the enthronement of Yahweh as Israel's God-King dwelling in the Tabernacle among His redeemed and separated covenant people (chapters 25-40).

Synthesis of the text as a unified and coherent whole The analyses discussed above have been used, implicitly and explicitly, to obtain an understanding of Exodus as a unified and coherent whole. This understanding is expressed here in the form the statement of its message, its synthetic structure, and the synthesis of the text which follows from that message and structure.

Development and statement of the message The Book of Exodus fits logically and theologically between the Books of Genesis and Leviticus. The Book of Genesis provides the historical context and basis for Israel's Exodus from Egypt, while the Book of Leviticus completes the Sinai covenant stipulations introduced in the Book of Exodus, particularly with respect to the form and function of the Levitical system of worship that was to be carried out in the Tabernacle, and with respect to a more complete definition of the holiness to which Israel was called. The Book of Exodus recounts the story of God's work in separating Israel from bondage in Egypt and of His redeeming them to bring them into covenant-relationship with Himself. This act of God irrupts (to break or burst into) in history as Yahweh takes action to fulfill His promises to Abraham. The covenant-relationship, defined by the terms of the covenant treaty, is primarily a national relationship involving redemption which is both personal and national. The national dimension is not dependent upon individual appropriation, while the personal dimension is, of necessity, dependent upon such appropriation through faith in God's revelation of the Passover which takes on a more definitive meaning in the Book of Leviticus where the idea of atonement from sin is presented in terms of substitutionary sacrifice and blood used to effect atonement that bring spiritual meaning to the original Passover. By necessity, Yahweh's covenant-relationship with Israel demands Israel's redemption from sin, as well as from Egypt, in order that the holy God might dwell, or tabernacle, among His covenant people. The Book of Exodus reveals Yahweh who constitutes a people separated to Himself by redemption, by covenant treaty, and by His own enthronement in the midst of their camp as King. Further, the book reveals Yahweh administering His purpose through Moses according to His word of promise to Abraham, and then according to His word of Law introduced to Israel through Moses at Sinai. In this sense the Book of Exodus is transitional with

respect to the administration of God as it records the transition from promise to law. While God's word of promise to Abraham is ever and always the basis for God's working in and through Israel, His word of law becomes the immediate basis for blessing or cursing a particular generation as they respond to Him in obedience or disobedience to His law. It is not surprising that there is an element of obedience involved in receiving the blessings promised to Abraham, for God has declared that He chose Abraham in order that Abraham may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of Yahweh by doing righteousness and justice so that He, Yahweh, may fulfill all that He promised to Abraham (Genesis 18:19). While the fulfillment of God's word of promise to Abraham stands completely upon God's unilateral commitment to it, a response of faith, demonstrated in obedience to Yahweh, is required for the realization of the promised blessings. It is important to recognize that it is necessary for Israel to respond to God's word of Promise to Abraham with faith and that faith is measured in obedience to His commands. The message of the Book of Exodus may be determined on the basis of the previous considerations discussed up to this point. The analysis of the text of Exodus suggests that a possible subject for this book is the constituting of Israel as a nation separated to Yahweh. When viewed from this perspective, the text of Exodus may be understood as making the following theological judgment/evaluation about this subject:

■PRIVATE "TYPE=PICT;ALT=" This understanding of Exodus leads to the following synthetic structure and synthesis of its text as a unified and coherent whole.

Synthetic structure of the text The synthetic structure of Exodus is presented first in broad form and then in detail.

Broad synthetic structure I. The deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage as a redeemed people separated to Yahweh (chs. 1-18)

A. The separation of Israel from Egypt through Yahweh's revelation of Himself in character and in judgment against Egypt (chs. 1-11) 1. The afflictions of Israel under Egyptian bondage (ch. 1) 2. The preparation and call of Moses to administer Yahweh's deliverance of Israel (chs. 2-4) 3. The separation of Israel from Egypt through Yahweh's great judgments (chs. 5-11) B. The redemption of Israel from Egypt (chs. 12-18) 1. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage by blood through the Passover (12:1-13:16) 2. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian domination by water through the Red Sea (13:17-15:21)

3. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian dependency through Yahweh's provisions and testing in the wilderness (15:22-18:27)

II. The constituting of Israel as a redeemed people to be a nation separated to Yahweh by covenant-relationship (chs. 19-24) A. The proposal and acceptance of the covenant through the mediation of Moses (ch. 19) B. The legal stipulations of the covenant (chs. 20-23) C. The ratification of the covenant (ch. 24)

III. The enthronement of Yahweh in the Tabernacle as Israel's God-King dwelling (tabernacled) among His redeemed and separated covenant people (chs. 25-40) A. Specifications for the Tabernacle and Aaronic Priesthood (chs. 25-31) B. Israel's breaking of the covenant, and its renewal through the mediation of Moses (chs. 32-34) 1. The breaking of the covenant through Israel's sin of idolatry (chs. 32-33) 2. The renewal of the covenant through the mediation of Moses

(ch. 34) C. The construction and consecration of the Tabernacle and the Aaronic priesthood (35:1-40:33)

D. Yahweh's enthronement in the Tabernacle as Israel's God and King dwelling (tabernacling) in the midst of His covenant people (Exodus 40:34-38) Detailed synthetic structure I. The deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage as a redeemed people separated to Yahweh (1:1-18:27)

A. The separation of Israel from Egypt through Yahweh's revelation of Himself in character and in judgment against Egypt (1:1-11:10) 1. The afflictions of Israel under Egyptian bondage (Exodus 1:2-22) a. The cause of the afflictions: The great multiplication of the sons of Israel (Exodus 1:1-7) b. The nature of the afflictions: Forced hard labor which made their lives bitter (Exodus 1:8-14) c. The added degree of affliction: Pharaoh's command to the midwives to slay all newborn males (Exodus 1:15-22) 2. The preparation and call of Moses to administer Yahweh's deliverance of Israel (2:1-4:31) a. The preparation of Israel's deliverer (Exodus 2:1-22) (1) Moses' birth and early childhood (Exodus 2:1-10) (2) Moses' failed attempt to effect deliverance for two of his brethren (Exodus 2:11-15) (3) Moses' resettlement in Midian (Exodus 2:16-22) b. The preparation of Israel for deliverance: Israel's cry for help (Exodus 2:23-25) c. The separation of Moses to Yahweh to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage (3:1-4:31) (1) Yahweh's call of Moses to deliver Israel from Egypt (Exodus 3:1-10) (a) Yahweh's revelation of Himself to Moses (Exodus 3:1-6) (b) Yahweh's revelation of His plan of deliverance to Moses (Exodus 3:7-10) (2) Moses' objections to Yahweh's call (3:11-4:17) (a) Moses' first objection: "Who am I to go to Pharaoh?" (Exodus 3:11-12) (b) Moses' second objection: "What if they should ask what Your name is?" (Exodus 3:13-22) (c) Moses' third objection: "What if they will not believe me?" (Exodus 4:1-9) (d) Moses fourth objection: "I do not speak with eloquence." (Exodus 4:10-17) (3) Moses' submission to Yahweh's call (Exodus 4:18-26) (a) Moses' return to Egypt in response to Yahweh's call (Exodus 4:18-23) (b) Moses' circumcision of his sons in response to Yahweh's anger (Exodus 4:24-26) (4) Israel's acceptance of Moses as their deliverer (Exodus 4:27-31) 3. The separation of Israel from Egypt through Yahweh's great judgments (5:1-11:10) a. Moses' confronting of Pharaoh with the command of Yahweh to let Israel go (5:1-6:9) (1) Moses' presenting of Yahweh's command to Pharaoh (Exodus 5:1) (2) Pharaoh's rejection of Yahweh's command (Exodus 5:2-19) (a) Pharaoh's refusal to let Israel go (Exodus 5:2-3) (b) Pharaoh's increase of Israel's affliction (Exodus 5:4-19) (3) Israel's rejection of Moses (Exodus 5:20-21) (4) Moses' questioning of Yahweh's plan of deliverance (Exodus 5:22-23) (5) Yahweh's affirmation of His intentions to deliver Israel (Exodus 6:1-8) (6) Moses' unsuccessful attempt to reassure the sons of Israel (Exodus 6:9) b. Moses' confronting of Pharaoh with a sign to effect Israel's deliverance (6:10-7:13) (1) Yahweh's charge to Moses and Aaron to bring Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 6:10-13)

(2) The genealogy of Moses and Aaron identifying them as the ones Yahweh charged with the task of bringing Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 6:14-27)

(3) Yahweh's revelation of his intention to harden Pharaoh's heart and effect judgment upon Egypt (6:28-7:7) (4) Moses' confronting Pharaoh with a sign (Exodus 7:8-13) (a) Yahweh's instructions to Moses to confront Pharaoh with a sign (Exodus 7:8-9) (b) The duplication of the sign by the Egyptian magicians (Exodus 7:10-12) (c) Pharaoh's hardening of his heart (Exodus 7:13) c. Moses' confronting of Pharaoh with Yahweh's devastating plagues of judgment upon Egypt to effect Israel's deliverance (7:14-11:10) (1) The first plague: The Nile and all of Egypt's surface

water turned to blood (Exodus 7:14-25) (2) The second plague: Egypt overrun with frogs (Exodus 8:1-15) (3) The third plague: Egypt overtaken by gnats (Exodus 8:16-19) (4) The fourth plague: Egypt laid waste by swarms of insects (Exodus 8:20-32) (5) The fifth plague: deadly pestilence upon Egyptian livestock (Exodus 9:1-7) (6) The sixth plague: painful boils on man and beasts throughout Egypt (Exodus 9:8-12) (7) The seventh plague: destructive hailstorms on all the land of Egypt (Exodus 9:13-35) (8) The eighth plague: devastating locusts devouring the land of Egypt (Exodus 10:1-20) (9) The ninth plague: absolute darkness over the land of Egypt (Exodus 10:21-29) (10) The tenth plague: announcement of the death of the first-born of Egypt (Exodus 11:1-10) B. The redemption of Israel from Egypt (12:1-18:27) 1. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage by blood through the Passover (12:1-13:16) a. The redemption of Israel through the redeeming of the first-born by blood: The institution of the Passover (Exodus 12:1-28) (1) Instructions for the Passover (Exodus 12:1-13) (a) Instructions concerning the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:1-6) (b) Instructions concerning the application of the blood of the lamb (Exodus 12:7) (c) Instructions concerning the eating of the lamb (Exodus 12:8-11)

(d) The effectiveness of the blood in redeeming the first-born from Yahweh's judgment directed against them (Exodus 12:12-13) (2) Instructions for the Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:14-20) (3) Observance of the Passover and its institution as an ordinance to be celebrated every year (Exodus 12:21-28) b. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage as a result of obedience to the Passover (Exodus 12:29-51) (1) Yahweh's striking of all the first-born of Egypt with death (Exodus 12:29-30) (2) Pharaoh's submission to Yahweh's command to let Israel go (Exodus 12:32-34) (3) The fulfillment of Yahweh's promise to Abraham (Exodus 12:35-42) (a) Israel's plundering of the Egyptians (Exodus 12:35-36) (b) Israel's coming out of Egypt after 430 years of sojourning in the land (Exodus 12:37-41) (4) Additional instructions for observing the Passover (Exodus 12:42-49)

(a) Observance of the Passover by all the sons of Israel as a commemoration of the night Yahweh brought Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 12:42)

(b) Instructions for the celebration of the Passover by the true Israelite and by the foreigner living in the Land (Exodus 12:43-49)

(5) The obedience of Israel in observing the Passover and its result—deliverance from the land of Egypt (Exodus 12:50-51) c. Institution of the ordinance for the consecration of the first-born to Yahweh with provision for redeeming the first-born son (Exodus 13:1-16) (1) The command to sanctify the first-born to Yahweh (Exodus 13:1-2) (2) The command to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the Promised Land (Exodus 13:3-10)

(3) The command to consecrate the life of the first-born to Yahweh with redemption of the first-born son permitted through the substitution of the life of an animal (Exodus 13:11-16) 2. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian domination by water through the Red Sea (13:17-15:21) a. Yahweh's strategic leading of Israel (13:17-14:4) (1) Yahweh's leading of Israel through the wilderness to the Red Sea (Exodus 13:17-22) (2) Yahweh's leading of Israel to draw Pharaoh and his army to follow in pursuit (Exodus 14:1-4) (3) The pursuit of Pharaoh and his army (Exodus 14:6-9) b. Israel's redemption by water through the Red Sea (14:10-15:21) (1) Yahweh's deliverance of Israel through the water of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:10-22) (a) Israel's fear of Egypt and lack of faith in Yahweh (Exodus 14:10-14) (b) Israel's safe crossing through the parted waters

of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:15-22) (2) Yahweh's destruction of Pharaoh's army by the collapsing waters of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:23-31) (3) Israel's song of deliverance (Exodus 15:1-21)

3. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian dependency through Yahweh's provisions and testing in the wilderness (15:22-18:27) a. Yahweh's provision of sweet water (Exodus 15:22-27) (1) Israel's grumbling about bitter water (Exodus 15:22-24) (2) The miraculous provision of sweet water (Exodus 15:25-27) b. Yahweh's provision of manna and quail (Exodus 16:1-36) (1) Israel's grumbling about their lack of food (Exodus 16:1-3) (2) The miraculous provision of food (Exodus 16:4-21) (3) The institution of the Sabbath (Exodus 16:22-30) (4) Yahweh's commands that a jar of manna kept as a memorial (Exodus 16:31-36) c. Yahweh's provision of water (Exodus 17:1-7) (1) Israel's grumbling about their lack of water (Exodus 17:1-4) (2) The miraculous provision of water (Exodus 17:5-7) d. Yahweh's provision of victory over the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-16) (1) Amalek threatens Israel's security (Exodus 17:8-10) (2) The provision of victory (Exodus 17:11-13) (3) The memorial book (Exodus 17:14-16) e. Yahweh's provision of national leadership (Exodus 18:1-27) (1) The visit from Jethro (Exodus 18:1-12) (2) Jethro's counsel to Moses (Exodus 18:13-23) (3) Moses' choosing of leaders to judge under him (Exodus 18:24-27)

II. The constituting of Israel as a redeemed people to be a nation separated to Yahweh by covenant-relationship (19:1-24:18) A. The proposal and acceptance of the covenant through the mediation of Moses (Exodus 19:1-25) 1. Yahweh's proposal of the covenant (Exodus 19:1-6) 2. Israel's acceptance of the covenant (Exodus 19:7-9) 3. Yahweh's appearance before all Israel (Exodus 19:10-25) a. The consecration of the people in preparation for Yahweh's appearing (Exodus 19:10-15) b. Yahweh's appearance on Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:16-25) B. The legal stipulations of the covenant (20:1-23:33) 1. The Ten Commandments of the covenant (Exodus 20:1-17) a. Prologue (Exodus 20:1-2) b. Commandments pertaining to man's relationship with God (Exodus 20:3-11) (1) First commandment: Prohibition against idolatry (Exodus 20:3-6) (2) Second commandment: Prohibition against misuse of God's name (Exodus 20:7) (3) Third commandment: Command to keep the Sabbath holy (Exodus 20:8-11) c. Commandments pertaining to man's relationship with man (Exodus 20:12-17) (1) Fourth commandment: Command to honor parents (Exodus 20:12) (2) Fifth commandment: Prohibition against murder (Exodus 20:13) (3) Sixth commandment: Prohibition against adultery (Exodus 20:14) (4) Seventh commandment: Prohibition against stealing (Exodus 20:15) (5) Eighth commandment: Prohibition against giving false testimony (Exodus 20:16) (6) Ninth commandment: Prohibition against coveting a neighbor's possessions (Exodus 20:17 a) (7) Tenth commandment: Prohibition against coveting a neighbor's wife or servants (Exodus 20:17 b) 2. Stipulations for approaching Yahweh (Exodus 20:18-26) a. The fear of the people in reaction to their approaching Yahweh (Exodus 20:18-21) b. Yahweh's provision for an acceptable way of approaching Him (Exodus 20:22-26) (1) Prohibition of idolatry (Exodus 20:22-23) (2) Proper form of worship (Exodus 20:24-26) 3. The ordinances of the covenant (21:1-23:33) a. Laws concerning slaves (Exodus 21:1-11) b. Laws concerning personal injury (Exodus 21:12-36) c. Laws concerning theft (Exodus 22:1-4) d. Laws concerning property damage (Exodus 22:5-6) e. Laws concerning dishonesty (Exodus 22:7-15) f. Laws concerning immorality (16-17) g. Laws concerning societal and religious obligations (22:18-23:9) h. Laws concerning the Sabbath and national feasts (Exodus 23:10-19) i. Laws concerning taking possession of the Promised Land (Exodus 23:20-33) C. The ratification of the covenant through the mediation of Moses (Exodus 24:1-18) 1. Israel's ratification of the covenant (Exodus 24:1-8) a.

Israel's pledge to obey all the ordinances of the covenant as enumerated by Moses (Exodus 24:1-3) b. Israel's offering of sacrifices to Yahweh through the mediation of Moses (Exodus 24:4-6) c. Israel's pledge to obey all the ordinances of the covenant as read by Moses from the book of the covenant (Exodus 24:7) d. The binding of Israel's pledge through the sprinkling of the blood of the covenant (Exodus 24:8) 2. Yahweh's acceptance of Israel's commitment to the covenant (Exodus 24:9-18) a. Yahweh's acceptance manifested through His appearing on Mount Sinai to Moses and the elders of Israel (Exodus 24:9-11) b. Yahweh's acceptance manifested through His giving Moses a copy of the covenant law written on stone tablets (Exodus 24:12-18)

III. The enthronement of Yahweh in the Tabernacle as Israel's God-King dwelling (Tabernacling) among His redeemed and separated covenant people (25:1-40:38) A. Specifications for the Tabernacle and Aaronic Priesthood (25:1-31:18) 1. The collection of construction materials through freewill offerings (Exodus 25:1-9) 2. The specifications for the Tabernacle's furniture (Exodus 25:10-40) a. Specification of the ark and the mercy seat (Exodus 25:10-22) b. Specification of the table and its utensils (Exodus 25:23-30) c. Specification of the lampstand (Exodus 25:31-40) 3. The specifications for the Tabernacle's overall structure (Exodus 26:1-37) a. Specification of the curtains (Exodus 26:1-14) b. Specification of the boards (Exodus 26:15-30) c. Specification of the veils (Exodus 26:31-37) 4. The specifications for the bronze altar, court of the Tabernacle, and the oil for the lamps (Exodus 27:1-21) a. Specification of the bronze altar (Exodus 27:1-8) b. Specification of the court (Exodus 27:9-19) c. Specification of the oil (Exodus 27:20-21) 5. The specifications for the Aaronic priesthood (28:1-29:46) a. The appointment of Aaron and his sons to minister as priests, and the specifications for their garments (Exodus 28:1-43) (1) The appointment of Aaron and his sons to minister as priests before Yahweh (Exodus 28:1-5) (2) Instructions for making the priestly garments (Exodus 28:6-43) b. The ordination and consecration service for the installation of the Aaronic priesthood (Exodus 29:1-46) 6. The specification for the altar of incense and the laver (Exodus 30:1-38) a. Specification of the altar of incense (Exodus 30:1-10) b. The atonement money (Exodus 30:11-16) c. Specification of the laver (Exodus 30:17-21) d. Specification of the anointing oil (Exodus 30:22-33) e. Specification of the incense (Exodus 30:34-38) 7. The appointment of craftsman to oversee the building of the Tabernacle (Exodus 31:1-11) 8. The specification of the Sabbath observance: The sign of the covenant (Exodus 31:12-18) B. Israel's breaking of the covenant and its renewal through the mediation of Moses (32:1-34:35) 1. The breaking of the covenant through Israel's sin of idolatry (Exodus 32:1-10) a. Israel's sin of idolatry through worshiping the golden calf (Exodus 32:1-6) b. Yahweh's burning anger against Israel (Exodus 32:7-10) 2. The renewal of the covenant through the mediation of Moses (32:11-34:35) a. The mediation of Moses to appease the anger of Yahweh (Exodus 32:11-33) (1) Moses' intercession before Yahweh entreating Him to remember His covenant with Abraham (Exodus 32:11-14) (2) Moses' anger toward the people (Exodus 32:15-29) (3) Moses' intercession before Yahweh for mercy (Exodus 32:30-35) (a) Moses' acknowledgment of Israel's great sin (Exodus 32:30-31) (b) Moses' plea for forgiveness (Exodus 32:32) (c) Yahweh's judgment upon the people— punishment instead of destruction (Exodus 32:33-35) b. The mediation of Moses to turn Yahweh away from withdrawing His presence from Israel (Exodus 33:1-23) (1) The repentance of the people in response to Yahweh's pledge not to dwell in their midst (Exodus 33:1-11)

(2) Moses' intercession before Yahweh reminding Him that Israel is distinguished from the other nations because of His presence with His people (Exodus 33:12-16) (3) Yahweh's agreement to go with Israel and to reveal His glory to Moses (Exodus 33:17-23) c. The renewal of the covenant (Exodus 34:1-35) (1) The renewal of the covenant by Yahweh (Exodus 34:1-28) (a) Yahweh's revelation of Himself to Moses (Exodus 34:1-9) (b) Yahweh's pledge to renew the covenant (Exodus 34:10) (c) Yahweh's commandment to destroy the Canaanites and their instruments of idolatry (Exodus 34:11-17)

(d) Yahweh's commandment to observe the feasts, the dedication of the first-born, and the Sabbath, as instituted by Yahweh (Exodus 34:18-26) (e) Moses' writing down of the words of the covenant in accordance with Yahweh's command (Exodus 34:27-28) (2) The renewal of the covenant by Israel (Exodus 34:29-35) C. The building of the Tabernacle (35:1-40:33) 1. The preparations for building the Tabernacle (35:1-36:7) a. Moses' exhortation to the people to give freewill offerings to Yahweh for constructing the Tabernacle (Exodus 35:1-10) b. The outpouring of offerings by the people (Exodus 35:20-29) c. The appointment of the craftsman having the responsibility to construct the Tabernacle (35:30 -36:7) 2. The fabrication of the Tabernacle items (36:8-39:31) a. The fabrication of the curtains (Exodus 36:8-19) b. The fabrication of the boards (Exodus 36:20-34) c. The fabrication of the veil (Exodus 36:35-38) d. The fabrication of the ark with its mercy seat (Exodus 37:1-9) e. The fabrication of the table and its utensils (Exodus 37:10-16) f. The fabrication of the lampstand and its utensils (Exodus 37:17-24) g. The fabrication of the altar of incense, the anointing oil, and the incense (Exodus 37:25-29) h. The fabrication of the altar of burnt offering and its utensils (Exodus 38:1-7) i. The fabrication of the laver (Exodus 38:8) j. The fabrication of the court (Exodus 38:9-20) k. Summary of the material used to fabrication the components of the Tabernacle (Exodus 38:21-31) l. The fabrication of the priestly garments (Exodus 39:1-31) 3. The construction and consecration of the Tabernacle and the Aaronic priesthood (39:32-40:33) a. Moses' inspection all the Tabernacle items (Exodus 39:32-41) b. The erection and consecration of the Tabernacle, and the installation and consecration of the Aaronic priesthood (Exodus 40:1-33)

D. Yahweh's enthronement in the Tabernacle as Israel's God and King dwelling (tabernacling) in the midst of His covenant people (Exodus 40:34-38) Synthesis of the text

Based on the message statement and synthetic structure developed above a synthesis of the text of Exodus may be constructed as follows:

I. The deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt irrupts as Yahweh redeems the sons of Israel and separates them to Himself in fulfillment of His promise to Abraham. (1:1-18:27)

A. The separation of Israel from Egypt irrupts as Yahweh calls Moses to serve Him and reveals Himself in character and in judgment against Egypt. (1:1-11:10)

1. The multiplication of the sons of Israel into a great number brings about severe affliction as the Egyptians, fearing the potential for the Israelites to turn against them, make their lives bitter through hard forced labor. (Exodus 1:1-22)

2. The separation of Moses to Yahweh as Israel's deliverer irrupts as Yahweh remembers His covenant with Abraham and reveals His intention to deliver Israel from bondage in Egypt through Moses. (2:1-4:31) a. Moses' preparation as Israel's deliverer begins with his protection in birth and

early childhood, continues with his failed attempt to effect deliverance for two of his brethren, and culminates in his flight to, and resettlement in Midian as a lowly shepherd. (Exodus 2:1-22) b. Yahweh remembers His covenant with Abraham as Israel's cries for help cause Him to take notice of their bondage in Egypt. (Exodus 2:23-25) c. The separation of Moses to Yahweh, in spite of Moses' strong objections, irrupts as Yahweh reveals Himself to Moses and reveals His plan to send him back to Egypt to deliver His people from bondage. (3:1-4:31)

3. The separation of Israel from Egypt irrupts as Yahweh, in response to Pharaoh's defiance of His demand to let Israel go, reveals Himself in judgment against Egypt demonstrating His sovereignty over men, nations, nature and idols. (5:1-11:10) a. Moses' first attempt to obtain Israel's release ends in apparent failure as Pharaoh defiantly rejects Yahweh's demand and imposes harsher demands on Israel's labor causing both Moses and the sons of Israel to question Yahweh's intent, but Yahweh reassures His chosen deliverer that He will deliver Israel from their bondage and redeem them with great judgments and bring them into the land He promised to give Abraham, all in fulfillment of the covenant He made with Abraham. (5:1-6:9) b. Moses' second attempt to obtain Israel's release manifests Pharaoh's hardened heart, as the sign Moses performed is duplicated by Pharaoh's magicians leading him not to listen to Moses. (6:10-7:13) c. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart toward acknowledging the God of Israel's authority over him, moves Yahweh to execute judgment upon Egypt and its gods through a series of plagues, culminating in a judgment of death against the first-born of Egypt, which destroys Egypt and breaks the resolve of Pharaoh's hardened heart not to let Israel go. (7:14-11:10)

B. Yahweh's deliverance of Israel through the blood of the Passover lamb, the waters of the Red Sea, and His provisions for them and testing of them in the wilderness, separates them from Egyptian bondage to Himself as He leads them to Mount Sinai. (12:1-18:27)

1. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage irrupts as Yahweh executes judgment on the first-born of every man and animal in the land of the Egyptians, while the first-born of Israel is redeemed from death through the blood of a lamb slain in obedience to Yahweh's command to observe the Passover. (12:1-13:16) a. The institution of the Passover reveals Yahweh's plan to effect Israel's redemption from Egyptian bondage by redeeming Israel's first-born through the application of the blood of an unblemished lamb to be sacrificed and then eaten in haste in anticipation of being suddenly thrust out of Egypt in response to His judgment of death against all the first-born of Egypt. (Exodus 12:1-28) b. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage occurs, exactly 430 years after the sons of Israel went into Egypt, as Yahweh strikes all the first-born of Egypt with death, while the first-born of Israel are delivered through the obedient application of the blood of the Passover lamb. (Exodus 12:29-51) c. The ordinance for the consecration of the first-born to Yahweh, with provision for redeeming the first-born son, is instituted as a means for Israel to remember from one generation to another that Yahweh redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt with a mighty hand as He killed every first-born in the land of Egypt except the first-born of Israel who were redeemed through the blood of the Passover lamb. (Exodus 13:1-16)

2. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian domination irrupts as Yahweh separates Israel from the pursuing Egyptian army through the waters of the Red Sea which serve as a means of deliverance for Israel but death for the Egyptians. (13:17-15:21) a. Yahweh's strategic leading of Israel through

the wilderness to the shores of the Red Sea leaves them vulnerable to Pharaoh's pursuing army. (13:17-14:9) b. Israel's fear and grumbling turns to great joy as Yahweh redeems His people from Egyptian domination through the waters of the Red Sea by parting the waters for Israel's safe passage, and then by allowing the waters to return to their normal position thereby drowning the pursuing Egyptian army. (14:10-15:21)

3. The redemption of Israel from Egyptian dependency irrupts as Yahweh's testing of Israel in the wilderness demonstrates, in spite of their grumbling, His power to provide food, water, protection, and leadership, while His introducing them to the concept of the Sabbath day further separates them from their lifestyle in Egypt and prepares them for living a life separated to Him in covenant-relationship. (15:22-18:27)

II. The constituting of Israel as a redeemed people to be a nation separated to Yahweh irrupts as Yahweh proposes a bilateral (Suzerainty-Vassal) covenant-relationship and Israel accepts by pledging themselves to obey all that He commands and by ratifying that pledge through the blood of the covenant. (19:1-24:18)

A. The constituting of Israel as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation separated to Yahweh and living under His rule irrupts as Yahweh, from atop Mount Sinai and through the mediation of Moses, proposes a covenant-relationship to His redeemed people which they accept. (Exodus 19:1-25)

B. The covenant law binding Israel to Yahweh specifies foundational commandments and legal stipulations which define their covenant responsibilities to Yahweh and to each other. (20:1-23:33)

1. The covenant law binding Israel to Yahweh specifies ten commandments which define the fundamental nature of Israel's relationship with Yahweh and with each other as they live within the community of the redeemed. (Exodus 20:1-26)

2. The covenant law binding Israel to Yahweh specifies legal stipulations of the covenant which regulate the social and religious behavior of the redeemed people. (21:1-23:33)

C. The formal acceptance of the covenant by Israel binds the redeemed people in covenant-relationship to Yahweh and Him to them in a suzerainty-vassal relationship. (Exodus 24:1-18)

1. The ratification of the covenant is formalized as the people twice pledge themselves to obeying all the words of Yahweh written in the book of the covenant, and as Moses sprinkles them with the blood of the covenant. (Exodus 24:1-8)

2. Yahweh's acceptance of Israel's ratification of the covenant is manifested through His appearing on Mount Sinai to Moses and the elders of Israel, and through His giving Moses a copy of the covenant law written on stone tablets. (Exodus 24:9-18)

III. The enthronement of Yahweh as Israel's God and King (Suzerain) irrupts as Yahweh, in spite of Israel's rebellion and breaking of the covenant through idolatry, comes to dwell (tabernacle) among His people and the glory of His presence fills the Tabernacle. (25:1-40:38)

A. The specification of the plans for the Tabernacle provides Israel with the details of its material, of the form and function of its component parts, of the Aaronic priesthood which is to minister before Yahweh in it, the designation of those who will have responsibility for building it, and the details for observing the Sabbath. (25:1-31:18)

B. The constitution of Israel as a redeemed people separated to Yahweh in covenant-relationship is threatened as the breaking of the covenant erupts with the people of Israel worshiping a golden calf, but Moses' mediation and the repentance of the people lead to a renewal of the covenant and restoration of the relationship. (32:1-34:35)

1. The breaking of the covenant erupts through Israel's sin of idolatry, as their profane worship of a golden calf causes Yahweh to burn with anger and seek to destroy them. (Exodus 32:1-10)

2. The persistent mediation of Moses on behalf of the people of Israel appeases the anger of Yahweh, while the repentance of the people leads them to renew the covenant under Moses' leadership. (32:11-34:35) a. The mediation of Moses appeases Yahweh's anger as Moses entreats Him to remember His covenant with Abraham and to have mercy on His people, yet the people would be punished for their sin. (Exodus 32:11-35) b. The mediation of Moses turns Yahweh away from withdrawing His presence from Israel as the people repent and Moses reminds Yahweh that Israel is distinguished from the other nations because of His presence with His people. (Exodus 33:1-23) c. The renewal of the covenant comes about through Moses' mediation as Yahweh pledges Himself to the covenant, and as the sons of Israel renew their pledge to obey all the stipulations of the covenant. (Exodus 34:1-35)

(1) The renewal of the covenant results through Moses' mediation as Yahweh first reveals Himself to Moses and then pledges Himself to the covenant, but not without warning Israel to make sure that they destroy the Canaanites and all their instruments of idolatry, lest they fall into the abominations of the people He is driving out before them, and to be sure to observe the festivals He instituted. (Exodus 34:1-28)

(2) The renewal of the covenant by Israel takes place as Moses, after returning from speaking with Yahweh, commands the sons of Israel to do everything that Yahweh had spoken about to him on Mount Sinai. (Exodus 34:29-35)

C. The construction of the Tabernacle in exact accordance with Yahweh's specifications, and its consecration and the consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood, completes the dwelling place for Yahweh to tabernacle among His people. (35:1-40:33)

D. Yahweh's enthronement in the Tabernacle as Israel's God and King dwelling (tabernacling) among His redeemed and separated people irrupts as the cloud of His presence covers the Tent of Meeting and His glory fills the Tabernacle. (Exodus 40:34-38) © The Biblical Studies Foundation (www.bible.org) Spring 2010

1The Book of Exodus begins with the irruption of God's action on the part of Israel [irruption is God coming in from outside of history into history to work, to act, to perform miracles]. But this changes by the end of the book. By the time that the book reaches its conclusion God has settled into history by dwelling in the Tabernacle. Now He is no longer working from outside of history, rather He is working in history as He relates to His covenant people, and indeed the rest of the world,

from inside the Tabernacle. This image of God working inside history remains the same until the Book of Ezekiel when Israel goes into captivity and the glory of Yahweh departs the Temple and returns to heaven. This situation remains until the coming of Christ, the Seed of the woman, when God again irrupts into history.

2Some gods and goddesses had more than one function or area of responsibility. Also, in ancient Egyptian religion many of the gods and goddesses who were worshiped in one city or location and/or at one period of time were believed to have assimilated the gods and goddesses of other areas and time periods. Their religion was thus often complex and at times even contradictory.

04 - Analysis And Synthesis Of Leviticus

Analysis And Synthesis Of Leviticus The analysis and synthesis approach to biblical studies applied here to Leviticus is a methodology developed by the author (DeCanio, 2007) in conjunction with his doctoral studies at the University of South Africa. An abbreviated version of this work entitled, *Biblical Hermeneutics and a Methodology for Studying the Bible*, will be posted as an article on bible.org. The bibliography for this study of Leviticus is presented at the end of the article, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Analysis Of The Context The aim of this analysis is to consider aspects of the context in which the book of Leviticus was written, such as its authorship, recipients, time period of historical events and composition, and its biblical context, which may be useful in understanding the book as a whole.

Authorship The Book of Leviticus, like all the other books of the Pentateuch, is anonymous, having no explicit indication of authorship. While the text makes it abundantly clear that the Law was given to Israel through Moses (see, for example, the many statements “Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, Leviticus 4:1; Leviticus 5:14; Leviticus 6:1, Leviticus 6:8; etc.), nowhere does it ever state that Moses wrote down what he heard. In view of Scriptural support for Mosaic authorship for whole of the Pentateuch (see the *Introduction to the Pentateuch* for a discussion of this issue), and in view of the intimately close association of Leviticus with the Book of Exodus where it explicitly states that Moses wrote down all that Yahweh said (Exodus 24:4), it is reasonable to assume Mosaic authorship of Leviticus.

Recipients The Book of Leviticus is specifically addressed to the sons of Israel (see, for example, Leviticus 1:2; Leviticus 4:2; Leviticus 7:23; and Leviticus 11:2), and Aaron and his descendants (see, for example, Leviticus 6:9; and Leviticus 8:2). In view of the fact that the covenant Israel entered into was not just for the Exodus generation, but for all succeeding generations, Moses’ wider audience must necessarily include later generations of Israelites as well.

Time Period Of Historical Events And Composition

Date Of Events

There are no chronological indicators in the Book of Leviticus and so the date of the events in this book must be determined from chronological data given in other books of the Pentateuch. The Book of Leviticus begins with “Then Yahweh called to Moses and spoke to him from within the tent of meeting, saying, . . . “(Leviticus 1:1). This statement shows strong continuity with the Book of Exodus with then connecting the instructions of Leviticus with the closing of Exodus (see, for example, Exodus 40:34-38). From this perspective, it is known from Exodus 40:17 that the Tabernacle was erected on the first day of the first month of the second year from the Exodus. Further, it is known from the Book of Numbers that Yahweh spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai from in the Tent of Meeting on the first day of the second month of the second year (Numbers 1:1). This would date the giving of the instructions recorded in Leviticus in the first

month of the second year from the Exodus, or in the Spring of the year 1445 B.C. (assuming a date of 1446 B.C. for the Exodus as argued for in the Introduction to the Pentateuch). Thus it would seem, that the giving of the Law recorded in the Book Leviticus occurred over a one month period of time.

Date Of Composition

Assuming Mosaic authorship, the Book of Leviticus would have to have been written sometime between the beginning of the second year from the Exodus and the end of the fortieth year when Moses died (Deuteronomy 34:5-7)—sometime between 1445 and 1406 B.C. More likely, Moses would have immediately written down the instructions from Yahweh as he had received them, even as he did for the instructions recorded in the Book of Exodus (Exodus 24:4). Assuming this to be the case, Leviticus could have been written as early as 1445 B.C.

Biblical Context The biblical context consists of three components; the historical element, the socio-cultural element, and the theological element. Before discussing these elements, it is important to consider the relationship with the Book of Exodus.

Relationship With The Book Of Exodus The close relationship between the books of Exodus and Leviticus is seen in terms of their historical and theological relationships.

Historical Relationship The Book of Leviticus is, from a historical perspective, a sequel to, or, more likely, a continuation of, the Book of Exodus (Lindsey 1985:163). This is evident in several ways. First, the Levitical sacrificial system was a divine revelation to Israel through Moses as a part of the covenant obligation given at Sinai. In this sense it completes the revelation given in Exodus which details the Tabernacle in terms of its component parts and its construction. Leviticus completes this revelation by informing Israel the function of the Tabernacle in their covenant-relationship with Yahweh. Further, the Book of Leviticus opens with Yahweh calling to Moses from within the now completed Tabernacle (1:1). Thus the laws of sacrifice, worship, and holiness contained in Leviticus follows the historical narrative concerning the construction of the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:1-40; Exodus 26:1-37; Exodus 27:1-21; Exodus 28:1-43; Exodus 29:1-46; Exodus 30:1-38; Exodus 31:1-18; Exodus 32:1-35; Exodus 33:1-23; Exodus 34:1-35; Exodus 35:1-35; Exodus 36:1-38; Exodus 37:1-29; Exodus 38:1-31; Exodus 39:1-43; Exodus 40:1-38), and the subsequent indwelling of Yahweh in the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-35). A consideration of Exodus 40:2; Exodus 40:17, and Numbers 1:1 and Numbers 10:11 indicates that the events of the Book of Leviticus took place over a period of one month, during which time Israel remained at Sinai. Therefore, historically, chronologically, and, as next discussed, theologically, Leviticus correctly follows Exodus and precedes Numbers.

Theological Relationship The Levitical sacrificial system was instituted by God for a people he had redeemed from Egypt at the time of the Passover and brought into covenant-relationship with himself at Sinai (Lindsey 1985:164). Thus to offer a sacrifice to Yahweh was not human effort seeking to obtain favor with a hostile God, but a response to Yahweh who had first given Himself to Israel in covenant-relationship. Rather the function of the Levitical sacrifices is to restore fellowship with Yahweh whenever sin or impurity, whether moral or ceremonial, disrupted this fellowship. The individual or the nation (whichever was the case) needed to renew covenant fellowship through sacrifice, the particular sacrifice depending on the exact circumstance of the

disruption.

Further, while Israel was called to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation to Yahweh (Exodus 19:6), the people needed to be instructed on how to achieve this lofty goal. The Book of Leviticus informs Israel in practical terms what it means for them to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Thus Leviticus provides the practical theology that is missing in the Book of Exodus. For all practical purposes there should be no division between the Books of Exodus and Leviticus; they form one book.

Historical Element The Book of Exodus ends with the erection of the Tabernacle which was constructed according to the pattern God gave to Moses. The question that now needed to be addressed was, "How was Israel to use the Tabernacle?" The instructions given to Moses during the one month and 20 days between the setting up of the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:17) and the departure of Israel from Sinai (Numbers 10:11) and recorded in the Book of Leviticus answers that question. Thus, both historically and theologically, the Book of Leviticus completes the Book of Exodus and forms a historical and theological bridge to the Book of Numbers, and beyond that to the Book of Deuteronomy, for the historical and theological presuppositions found in the last two books of the Pentateuch are rooted in the Books of Exodus and Leviticus.

Historically, it is significant to note that at the beginning of the Book of Leviticus Moses is outside the Tabernacle (Leviticus 1:1), while at the beginning of the book of Numbers he is inside the Tabernacle (Numbers 1:1). It is important to note here that the "tent of meeting" referred to in Exodus 33:7-11 is not the Tabernacle which was constructed later. Further, only Moses was inside the tent, for the presence of Yahweh, localized in the pillar of cloud, would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent. The Book of Exodus ends with Yahweh on the inside of the Tabernacle/tent of meeting and Moses outside not able to enter because the glory of Yahweh filled the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:35). The Book of Leviticus begins with Yahweh on the inside of the Tabernacle calling to Moses on the outside (Leviticus 1:1). One month later (see, for example, Exodus 40:2; Exodus 40:17 and Numbers 10:11 for chronological data) Moses was on the inside speaking with Yahweh (Numbers 1:1). This is representative of the historical fact that there is progression in relationship as a result of the Law given in Leviticus.

Socio-Cultural Element The socio-cultural aspect of the biblical context for Leviticus does not change from beginning to end as Israel is camped at Mount Sinai for the entire month that this book deals with chronologically. Thus, in effect, the socio-cultural context for Israel is the same as it was at the end of Exodus. However, it was now be recognized that the laws for worship and personal and national holiness revealed in Leviticus establishes a unique culture which serves to separate Israel to Yahweh to be for him a kingdom of priests and holy nation. From this point on, this is the dominant aspect Israel's socio-cultural context by which all the other writings in the Old Testament as well as the Gospels must be understood.

Theological Element The theological element for Leviticus looks back on Genesis and Exodus and subsumes all of their theological revelations as its context. However, major additions to this context must be made as Yahweh reveals Himself through the laws of what is acceptable for approaching him in the Tabernacle, and through the laws of personal and national holiness. These laws not only provide theological insight into the person and nature of God, but also establish the theological framework in terms of the Levitical sacrificial system and priesthood within which the

Tabernacle is to function. Thus they add significantly to the theological context within which the rest of the Old Testament, and the Gospels as well, must be understood.

Analysis Of The Text Broad Descriptive Overview

Chapter

Descriptive Summary

1

Instructions for the burnt offering

2

Instructions for the grain offering

3

Instructions for the peace offering

4

Instructions for the sin offering for priests

Instructions for the sin offering for the whole congregation

Instructions for the sin offering for a leader

Instructions for the sin offering for a member of the community

5

Instructions for the sin offering for an individual

Instructions for the trespass/Guilt offering

6

Instructions for the trespass/Guilt offering

The law for the burnt offering

The law for the grain offering

7

The law for the guilt offering

8

Consecration of priests

9

Inauguration of priesthood/priestly service

10

Failure of priests to obey the laws of offerings

11

Laws pertaining to clean and unclean food

12

Laws pertaining to the uncleanness of childbirth

13-14

Laws pertaining to skin diseases and mildew

15

Laws pertaining to bodily discharges

16

Laws pertaining to national cleansing on the Day of Atonement

17

Laws pertaining to the holiness of blood as the agent that effects atonement

18

Laws pertaining to the restriction of sexual relations

19

Laws pertaining to practical holiness before God and man

20

Laws pertaining to offenses which necessitate severe punishment

21

Laws pertaining to priestly holiness

22

Laws pertaining to sacrificial holiness

23

Laws pertaining to holy convocations/feasts

24

Laws pertaining to the holiness of the sanctuary and Yahweh's name

25

Laws pertaining to special observances

26

Laws pertaining to covenant blessings and curses

27

Laws pertaining to things consecrated/set apart to Yahweh

Major Theological Themes

According to Wenham (1992:16), the theology of Leviticus cannot be discussed apart from the other books of the Pentateuch. This is particularly so for those most closely related to it, namely, the books of Exodus and Numbers which come, respectively, before and after Leviticus both in canonical and chronological order. For instance, Wenham says, Exodus describes the cutting of the Sinai Covenant and the erection of the Tabernacle, both of which are fundamental to the theology of Leviticus. In addition, some of the theological presuppositions of Leviticus and Numbers stand out clearly.

Thus it is that within the context of a covenant-relationship between Yahweh and His redeemed people, and with Yahweh dwelling among His people in the Tabernacle, that the details of worship, the worshipper's approach to Yahweh, and the requirements of dwelling in the presence of the holy God are presented. From this perspective, the two most important themes in the Book of Leviticus are the demands of worship, involving the sacrificial offering system and the observance of the holy convocations administered by the Aaronic priesthood, and the demands of practical holiness.¹ Worship: The Sacrificial Offering System The language of worship pervades the book, with the various components of worship expressed in key terms: the term sacrifice occurs about 42 times, priest about 189 times, blood about 86 times, holy about 87 times, and atonement about 45 times. The very heart of the covenant-relationship—fellowship between Yahweh and His people—and the means of achieving it are spelled out in the opening statement of Leviticus where, with respect to the burnt offering, Yahweh says, "He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that he will be acceptable to Yahweh" (Leviticus 1:3). The fact that the covenant between Yahweh and Israel was modeled after those of the ancient Near East in both form and function allows one to understand the many cultic details recorded in the Pentateuch. In the case of the Book of Leviticus, the sacrificial offerings were designed to demonstrate the subservience of Israel to her Sovereign, to atone for her offenses against Him, and to reflect the harmoniousness and peaceableness of the relationship thus established or reestablished. In this regard, the burnt offering (Leviticus 1:1-17) and the grain offering (Leviticus 2:1-16) serve to identify the offerer as a servant (vassal) of the King (Suzerain), and as one who dared not come before his king empty-handed. The sin offering (Leviticus 4:1-35) and the trespass, or guilt, offering (Leviticus 5:1-19) serve to restore a relationship that had become disrupted because of the servant's disobedience. They were his recompense to an offended lord. The peace, or fellowship offerings (Leviticus 3:1-17) constituted an expression of thanksgiving by the vassal for a state of fellowship that currently existed. They were freewill, non-obligatory testimonies to a heart filled with thanksgiving and praise for the benevolence and goodness of Yahweh.

Important from the New Testament's perspective is the fact that it describes Christ's death in terms of Old Testament sacrifices. For example, 1 John 1:2 declares that Christ is "the atoning sacrifice for our sins," and Hebrews 9:22 states that "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." Further, significant sections of the Book of Hebrews draws upon the ceremonies and rituals of Leviticus to explain the work of Christ, including specific reference to the sin offering (see, Hebrews 13:11-12). The role of the priests in mediating these sacrificial offerings is also an integral part of the sacrificial system. The priest, though functioning as a mediator between the worshiper and Yahweh, was also a vassal and likewise subject to the same demands and even more so for he had to follow proper protocol in his ministry on behalf of the people. He carried out the prescribed ritual relative to the various offerings as a special servant of Yahweh, and as such he had special responsibilities as well as special privileges. As a special servant of Yahweh the priest enjoyed a portion of the tribute for himself (Leviticus 7:28-36). As a special servant of Yahweh, he was appointed and consecrated (Leviticus 8:1-36), instructed in the appropriate means of sacrificial intercession (Leviticus 9:1-24) and was held strictly accountable to the laws of the Levitical system (10:1-3). Though his office was privileged, his ministry required unique canons of integrity and conduct (10:8-15). The priest was to be a holy man serving a holy God on behalf of a holy people. The essence of the priestly ministry is articulated in Leviticus 10:10-11 : ". . . to make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean, and so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which Yahweh has spoken to them through Moses." The Concept Of Sacrifice

According to Harrison (1985:599), the general principle undergirding the concept of an offering appears to have been that of property (2 Samuel 24:24). However, whereas it was legitimate to sacrifice domesticated animals and birds, which were in a sense the property of man through his own enterprise, it was not permissible for wild animals to be sacrificed, since they were regarded as already belonging to God (see, for example, Psalms 50:10). The basic theme of property was more evident in the case of vegetable and grain offerings since they would have been produced as a result of human labor. The concept of sacrifice, or offering is clearly important to understanding the Levitical system of worship and sacrifice. One of the basic terms found in the Old Testament which expresses the concept of "offering" is the Hebrew term qorban which is derived from the verb meaning "to bring near." Qorban is a generic term for anything presented to God when one approaches (karav) His sanctuary. A qorban might consist of artifacts and vessels, votive objects, or sacrificial victims. When sacrifices were offered, the individual came to draw near to God, with the hope that the sacrifice would be accepted and that his sin would then be atoned for. Since it aroused the wrath of God, the sacrifice was presented to appease the wrath of a holy God. Thus the goal of the worshiper was to be reconciled with Yahweh through the offering of a sacrifice.

Sin must be judged, and God reckons that judgment on the sacrifice as a substitute for the sinner, and He accepts the death of the sacrifice as a ransom for sin. God introduced this idea of redemption in conjunction with the Exodus where the death of the Passover lamb served as a substitute to redeem the life of the first-born. Here in Leviticus, the concept of redemption from sin is made more clear through the blood sacrifice of the animal. The animal sacrifice serves as the type pointing to the anti-type, Christ, the ultimate and perfect sacrifice for sin. Isaiah 53:1-12 provides clear revelation that God poured out His wrath on this "sacrifice to come" because of the iniquity of His people. Thus the animal sacrifice typified the ultimate sacrifice that Christ would

make on the cross, and while it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, Christ, having offered Himself once as a sacrifice for sin, perfected for all time those who are sanctified (Hebrews 10:1-18). The Role Of The Worshiper With few exceptions (such as a sin offering for the whole congregation or the offering of small birds by a poor person), the ritual, as LaSor (1990:153) has observed, up to the point of placing the sacrifice on the altar, is the same for all offerings. The worshiper, he notes, was to present his offering personally at the altar or the door of the Tent of Meeting. In this context, the offering was to represent the worshiper's own life—an animal he had raised or grain he had grown—and was to be of superior value (generally a male animal without blemish,² or fine flour, or the best of first fruits). In all situations, the economic status of the worshiper was taken into consideration. In this exchange, the worshiper then placed his hands on the head of the sacrifice, likely indicating personal identification, a sign that the animal was dying in his place³ (Leviticus 1:4). Since the ritual of the Day of Atonement clearly stipulates that confession was to be made with the laying on of hands, it seems reasonable to conclude that this was a part of every ritual of sacrifice which involved the laying on of hands. In the cases of the sin and guilt sacrifices specific sins are mentioned, and it is reasonable to conclude here that the worshiper was required to confess the specific sin that he was aware of as he laid hands on the victim. It was then the responsibility of the offerer to slaughter the animal near the altar of burnt offering in the courtyard, and prepare the sacrifice by cutting it in pieces. The Role Of The Priest As the worshiper slaughtered the animal, the priest caught the blood in a basin, sprinkled some of the blood on the altar, and poured the rest around its base. Depending on the kind of sacrifice, the priest burned all or part of the animal, Yahweh's portion, on the altar of burnt offering. The fat, which was considered the best part, was always burned (Leviticus 3:16). Except for the burnt offering and certain parts of the sin offering, part of the animal could be eaten by the priest, the offerer, or both. The Significance Of The Blood

It is clear from the text of Leviticus that in all the laws of the offerings the blood of the sacrifice is emphasized. The physical significance of the blood is evident from the text; the shedding of the blood means the death of the victim—"the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11 a). The theological significance of the blood is explicitly stated in the text; the blood was given to make atonement—"I (Yahweh) have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement" (Leviticus 17:11 b). Since it is the blood of the sacrifice that effects atonement, the death of the animal becomes efficacious for the one offering the sacrifice. This transfer takes place as the one making the sacrifice identifies himself with the victim through the laying on of hands. Thus the death of the offering is understood as a substitute for the death of the worshiper—the penalty for sin is death, but the animal dies in the place of the sinner. The theological significance of the blood, then, is to effect atonement by substitution, a theological concept known as substitutionary atonement.

Significance Of Old Testament Sacrifice: The Concept Of Atonement

Lindsey (1985:164) has noted that under the Levitical law, sacrifice was given by God as the only sufficient means for the sons of Israel to approach Him and to remain in harmonious fellowship with Him.⁴ The effective means by which this was accomplished was through the principle of atonement through substitutionary sacrifice (see, for example, Leviticus 1:3-5; 4:4-5:13; Leviticus 5:14-18; Leviticus 16:5-27). The traditional view that the sacrifices only "covered" sin fails to do justice to the real forgiveness that was granted by God (see, for example, Leviticus 4:20, Leviticus

4:26, Leviticus 4:31, Leviticus 4:35; Leviticus 5:10, Leviticus 5:13, Leviticus 5:16, Leviticus 5:18; Leviticus 6:7).

Lindsey (1985:174) adds that the purpose of the sacrificial enactment, as defined in Leviticus, was to effect “atonement” on behalf of the person offering the sacrifice. The Hebrew verb *kipper*, translated into English as meaning “to atone,” has been related to the comparatively late Arabic word *kafara*, “to cover”; to the Akkadian term *kuppuru*, “to wipe away,” and to the Hebrew noun *kopher*, “ransom.” The latter term best suits the specific purpose of Israelite sacrifice theory as elaborated in Leviticus 17:11, which identified the life with the blood and laid down the principle that the blood “makes atonement by reason of the life.” The animal victim thus constituted a substitute for the human sinner, and the offering of its life in sacrifice effected a vicarious atonement for sin. The Hebrew sacrificial system must, however, always be envisaged against a background of the Covenant principle of divine grace. In this context the emphasis upon the categories of personal relationship with God can only be properly understood within the theological framework of a theory of substitution where the chosen victim dies in the place of the human sinner.

It is not easy to decide from the text if the sacrificial offering was meant to be a propitiation of divine anger as well as an expiation for human sin, for while there are undoubtedly some instances where the verb signifies “propitiation” (Exodus 32:30; Numbers 16:41 ff.), there are others where it simply means “to cleanse,” as, for example, with the furnishings of the Tabernacle (Exodus 29:37; Ezekiel 43:20). Yet it seems that where it is used to refer to atonement with respect to man, there is always in the background the fact of divine wrath. Thus, it would seem that of necessity the atonement effected through substitutionary sacrifice involves not only expiation of the sin, but also the propitiation of the divine Lawgiver in order that the relationship between God and man be restored. It would seem, therefore, that expiation had the effect of making propitiation—turning away divine wrath by a satisfactory, substitutionary sacrifice. This understanding seems valid in light of Paul’s declaration that man is justified by God’s grace through faith in the redemption which is in Christ, whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation (Romans 3:21-25).⁵ What is very clear from Leviticus is that man as a sinner incurs divine wrath, that God has provided the sacrificial system in order that human transgressors might return in penitence to fellowship with Him, and that God has graciously permitted the death of a sacrificial victim as a substitute for the death of the sinner.

Finally, it should be noted that the Hebrew sacrificial system was not by any means, Lindsey (1985:165) says, to be a complete and final scheme whereby all forms of sin could be removed. Much of the atonement procedure was concerned with sins accidentally committed, sins inadvertently committed, or sins of omission; there was no forgiveness for sins committed as a result of sheer human stubborn persistence in wrong doing (Numbers 15:30), which by definition placed a man outside the range of Covenant mercies (see, for example, Leviticus 20:1-27). In the main, it can be stated that for breaches of the Covenant agreement no form of sacrifice was of any avail. It is in the light of this latter consideration that the cultic denunciations of the prophets and their rejection of sacrifice need be interpreted (see, for example, Isaiah 1:11-14). Although the prophets sometimes gave the impression that sacrifices were useless, the purpose of such preaching was to shake the people out of their lethargy. Ritual for ritual sake was wrong (see, for example, 1 Samuel 15:22). What was required was for the worshiper to bring a sacrifice with a

repentant heart (Isaiah 1:16-18). The Sacrificial Offerings

Five offerings were included in the so-called Levitical law which Yahweh revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai. One of these, always referred to in the plural as the “peace offerings,” consisted of three somewhat different offerings; the thank offering, the votive offering, and the freewill offering. Hence, there were seven offerings in all. Since all but the “grain offering” involved the killing of an animal, these offerings are often referred to as (blood) “sacrifices.”⁶ The Burnt Offering The burnt offering—the concept coming from the Hebrew verb ‘olah meaning “that which goes up” (probably so called because the whole sacrifice “went up” in smoke to God)—was distinct in that it was totally consumed on the altar except for the hide or the crop of the bird (Lindsey 1985:173). This seems to be the oldest designated sacrifice (see, for example, Genesis 8:20) and the most frequent form of Israel’s sacrifices. Lindsey has noted that, like all the Levitical sacrifices, the underlying purpose of the burnt offering was to secure atonement for sins (Leviticus 1:4; see also, for example, Numbers 15:24-25), though its more immediate purpose was to express total dedication to Yahweh. The verbal picture of a “sweet aroma” ascending to God’s nostrils is figurative language describing God’s pleasure with the offering and His acceptance of the individual approaching Him (1:9). Although burnt offerings were prescribed for regular daily, weekly, and monthly occasions (see, for example, Exodus 29:38-42; Numbers 28:9-10, Numbers 28:11-15), and as part of the sacrifices offered on the occasion of annual festivals (see, for example, Leviticus 23:1-44), they could also be brought voluntarily by an individual (see, for example, Leviticus 14:19-20; Leviticus 15:14-15; Leviticus 22:17-20). The Grain Offering The grain offering—the minchah, which outside of the Levitical system could refer to any gift or offering; see, for example, Genesis 4:3-5; Judges 6:18; 1 Samuel 2:17; 1 Samuel 2:29; Malachi 2:13), was normally a coarsely ground grain, either wheat or barley, mixed with olive oil and topped with frankincense (Lindsey 1985:176). This offering was to be free of leaven and honey (Leviticus 2:11), but was to be salted like all offerings for the altar (2:13). While a grain offering could be offered by itself as a distinct sacrifice (e.g., Leviticus 2:14-16; Leviticus 6:14; Numbers 5:15), its more common use was as an accompaniment to either a burnt or a peace offering. In particular, it always accompanied peace offerings (Leviticus 7:12-14; see, for example, Numbers 15:4) and normally accompanied burnt offerings, especially the calendrical offerings (Numbers 28:1-31; Numbers 29:1-40). Behind the idea of the grain offering was the recognition that as grain was the primary food for maintaining life, so God was the true source of life and substance and therefore everything the worshiper had belonged to God. From this concept comes the idea that the grain offering was the worshiper’s dedication offering, dedicating everything he had to Yahweh from whom it all had come. The Peace Offerings The peace offerings—generally described in Leviticus collectively by the Hebrew term shelamim—a derivative of the term shalom meaning “completeness,” “soundness,” “welfare,” “peace”—always appears in the plural and has been traditionally translated “peace offerings.” These offerings are further quantified in Leviticus by the Hebrew term zevah which in English means a “sacrifice.” Zevah is the common and most ancient sacrifice whose essential rite was eating the flesh of the victim at a feast in which the god of the clan shared by receiving the blood and fat pieces. Thus, zevah, the general name for all sacrifices which are eaten at feasts, qualifies the peace offerings as including a communal meal as part of the rite.

Since the Hebrew concept of peace includes health, prosperity, and peace with God, some translate it as a sacrifice of “well-being,” while others understand it as a “fellowship” offering because of its distinctive feature of the communal meal after the sacrifice. The peace offering parallels the burnt offering in form but, apparently, not in function as no mention is made of the peace offering effecting atonement, although this might be implied in the normal laying on of hands, the slaying of the animal, the manipulation of the blood, and the burning of the fat portions on the altar, which is virtually identical with the ritual of the sin offering which is the most explicit atoning sacrifice.

Lindsey (1985:178) observes that the proper classification of the peace offerings (and its sub-categories discussed below) is that of communal offering because of the communal meal which climaxed the sacrifice. The peace offering was a time of great rejoicing before Yahweh (Deuteronomy 12:12; Deuteronomy 12:18-19; Deuteronomy 27:7; 1 Kings 8:64-65). It was a time in which the worshipers, their families, and a Levite from their community (and also the poor during the Feast of Weeks, Deuteronomy 16:11) shared a major portion of the sacrificial meal together before Yahweh (Leviticus 7:11-36).

While the peace offering was primarily an optional sacrifice. It had its function in other aspects of the Levitical system (Lindsey 1985:178). For example, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) was the only annual festival for which peace offerings were prescribed (Leviticus 23:19-20). But this offering was also prescribed for certain special ceremonies of covenant initiation (Exodus 24:5) or renewal (Deuteronomy 27:7), consecration (see, for example, Exodus 29:19-34; Leviticus 8:22-32; Leviticus 9:8-21; 1 Kings 8:63) or de-consecration (fulfillment of a Nazarite vow, Numbers 6:14; Numbers 6:17), as well as for other occasions such as a successful military campaign (1 Samuel 11:15).

Three subcategories of the peace offering (Leviticus 7:11-16) suggest occasions or motivations for bringing this sacrifice (Lindsey 1985:178). One is a thanksgiving offering—in Hebrew, the *todah*, meaning “confession” or “acknowledgment”—was the most common type (Leviticus 7:12-15; Leviticus 22:9), almost synonymous with the peace offering itself (see, for example, 2 Chronicles 29:31; 2 Chronicles 33:16; Jeremiah 17:26). This offering was brought as an acknowledgment to other individuals of God’s deliverance or blessing bestowed in answer to prayer (see, for example, Psalms 56:12-13; Psalms 107:22; Psalms 116:17-19; Jeremiah 33:11). Another type is the votive (vow) offering—in Hebrew, the *neder*—was a ritual expression of a vow (Leviticus 7:16; see, for example, Leviticus 27:9-10), or the fulfillment of a vow (see, for example, Numbers 6:17-20). A third type is the freewill offering—in Hebrew, the *nedavah*—was brought to express devotion or thankfulness to God for some unexpected blessing (Leviticus 7:16; Leviticus 22:18-23). The Sin Offering

It is important to recognize, as Lindsey (1985:180) points out, that although the sin offering and the guilt offering, subsequently discussed, are distinguishable, they clearly have some definite similarities. This is especially the case with regards to their primary function as both can best be described as expiatory offerings. Not all sins could be atoned for by means of a sin offering. Only sins committed unintentionally (these could be sins of omission as well as sins of commission; see, for example, Numbers 15:22-23) could be atoned for with a sin offering. The sin offering, however, did not cover were sins committed with a defiant attitude (see, for example, Numbers

15:30 which literally means “with a high hand”)—that is, sin with a purpose of being disobedient to God. For such cases as these, no sin offering could be brought by an individual (Lindsey 1985:180). The only hope for cleansing from such sins lay in the Day of Atonement ritual which provided yearly cleansing from “all their sins” (Leviticus 16:20), “so that they will be clean from all [their] sins” (Leviticus 16:30). The sin offering, therefore, was applicable only for sin not done in a spirit of rebellion against Yahweh and His covenant stipulations, whether they were sins of ignorance (Leviticus 4:1-35), sins without conscious intent (Leviticus 5:1-19), or intentional but non-defiant sins (such as for manslaughter where the act is committed without premeditation). The Guilt Offering The guilt or trespass offering— (‘asham), observes Lindsey (1985:183), was required whenever someone committed a “violation”—an act of misappropriation or denial to another (whether God or man) of his rightful due (see, for example, Numbers 5:12; Numbers 5:19; Joshua 7:1; Joshua 22:20; 2 Chronicles 26:16; 2 Chronicles 26:18; 2 Chronicles 28:22-23). This offering covered violations such as defrauding someone, or trespassing upon another’s rights. When such acts came to light and were confessed, the wrong had to be made right with appropriate compensation. For example, if the violation could be assessed for monetary compensation, then the offender was required to bring the ram for the guilt offering as well as compensation in property or silver plus a 20 percent fine (Leviticus 5:16; Leviticus 6:5). The violations covered by the laws of the guilt offering, pertain, Lindsey (1985:183) writes, to intentional misappropriation of sacred property (Leviticus 5:14-16) and service (see, for example, Leviticus 14:12, Leviticus 14:24), suspected transgressions of divine commands (Leviticus 5:17-19), and the violation of the property rights of others (Leviticus 6:1-7; see also, for example, Leviticus 19:20-22; Numbers 5:6-10). The common denominator of the guilt offering, therefore, was an offense that caused damage or loss whether unintentional or deliberate, and either against God or man. The guilt offering, however, is also usually involved with ceremonial defilement and is associated with such ceremonies as the cleansing of a leper (Leviticus 14:1 ff.) or the purification of a women after childbirth (Leviticus 12:1 ff.). The Summary Of The Offering A tabular summary of the sacrificial offerings is presented below in Charts 1a and 1b in terms of their theological significance, nature, and disposition, and in terms of the actions of the worshiper and priest. (These charts are derived from Lindsey 1985:168-171; Harrison 1980:38; LaSor 1990:154-155; Hill & Walton 1991:125; and Archer 1985:250.) Chart 1a. Summary of Levitical Sacrifices Typological Significance Of The Sacrificial Offerings As has been previously noted, the animal sacrifice served as a type pointing to Christ, the antitype. The following summarizes the typological significance that some see in the various sacrificial offerings. A tabular summation of the typological relationship of the sacrifices is presented in Chart 2.

Chart 2. Typological relationship of the Levitical sacrifices to Christ The Passover The Passover (pesah) was the first of three annual pilgrimage festivals and was celebrated on the 14th of Nisan (post-Exilic; formerly Abib, Exodus 13:4), thereafter continuing as the Feast of Unleavened Bread from the 15th to the 21st. Nisan marked the beginning of the religious or sacred new year (Exodus 12:2). The Hebrew term pesah is from a root meaning “to pass (or spring) over,” and signifies the passing over (sparing) of the house of Israel when the firstborn of Egypt were slain (Exodus 12:1-51). The Passover itself refers only to the paschal supper on the evening of the 14th, whereas the following period, 15th to the 21st, is called the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:1-51; Exodus 13:1-10; Leviticus 23:5-8; Numbers 28:16-25; Deuteronomy 16:1-8).

Institution And Celebration The purpose for its institution was to commemorate the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage and the sparing of Israel's firstborn when God smote the firstborn of Egypt. In observance of the first Passover, on the 10th of Nisan the head of each family sets apart a lamb without blemish. On the evening of the 14th the lamb was slain and some of its blood sprinkled on the door posts and lintel of the house in which they ate the Passover as a seal against the coming judgment upon Egypt. The lamb was then roasted whole and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Any portion remaining was to be burned the next morning. Each was to eat in haste with loins girded, shoes on the feet, and staff in hand.

Later Observance

After the establishment of the priesthood and Tabernacle, the celebration of the Passover differed in some particulars from the Egyptian Passover. These distinctions were:

- (a) the Passover lamb was to be slain at the sanctuary rather than at home (Deuteronomy 16:5-6);
- (b) the blood was sprinkled upon the altar instead of the door posts;
- (c) besides the family sacrifice for the Passover meal, there were public and national sacrifices offered each of the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Numbers 28:16-24);
- (d) the meaning of the Passover was recited at the feast each year (Exodus 12:1-51; Exodus 24:1-18; Exodus 25:1-40; Exodus 26:1-37; Exodus 27:1-21);
- (e) the singing of the Hallel (Psalms 113:1-9; Psalms 114:1-8; Psalms 115:1-18; Psalms 116:1-19; Psalms 117:1-2; Psalms 118:1-29) during the meal was later instituted;

(f) a second Passover on the 14th day of the second month was to be kept by those who were ceremonially unclean or away on a journey at the time of its regular celebration on the 14th of Nisan (Numbers 9:9-12). The Passover was one of the three feasts in which all males were required to come to the sanctuary. They were not to appear empty-handed, but were to bring offerings as the Lord had prospered them (Exodus 23:14-17; Deuteronomy 16:16-17). It was unlawful to eat leavened food after midday of the 14th, and all labor, with few exceptions, ceased. After appropriate blessings a first cup of wine was served, followed by the eating of a portion of the bitter herbs. Before the lamb and the unleavened bread were eaten, a second cup of wine was provided at which time the son, in compliance with Exodus 12:26, asked the father the meaning and significance of the Passover feast. An account of the Egyptian bondage and deliverance was recited in reply. The first portion of the Hallel (Psalms 113:1-9; Psalms 114:1-8) was then sung and the paschal supper eaten, followed by the third and fourth cups of wine and the second part of the Hallel (Psalms 115:1-18; Psalms 116:1-19; Psalms 117:1-2; Psalms 118:1-29). The Feast Of Unleavened Bread

Both the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which immediately followed, commemorated the Exodus, the former in remembrance of God's "passing over" the Israelites when He slew the firstborn of Egypt, and the latter, to keep alive the memory of their afflictions and God's bringing them out in haste from Egypt ("bread of affliction" Deuteronomy 16:3). The first and last days of this feast were Sabbaths in which no servile work could be done, except the necessary preparation of food. The Passover season marked the beginning of the grain harvest in Palestine. The Feast Of First Fruits On the second day of Unleavened Bread (16th Nisan), a sheaf

of the first fruits of the barley harvest was to be presented as a wave offering (Leviticus 23:9-11). The ceremony came to be called “the omer ceremony” from the Hebrew for sheaf, omer. The Feast Of Weeks (Pentecost) The Feast of Weeks was to be observed fifty days (seven weeks) after the Passover (Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 23:15-22; Deuteronomy 16:9-10) and for this reason came to be known in New Testament times as “Pentecost” (see, for example, Acts 2:1). It is also called the “Feast of Harvest” (Exodus 23:16) and the “Day of First-fruits” (Numbers 28:26). The Feast of Weeks was a one-day festival in which all males were to appear at the sanctuary, and a Sabbath in which all servile labor was suspended. The central feature of the day was the offering of two loaves of bread for the people from the first fruits of the wheat harvest (Leviticus 23:17). As the omerceremony signified the harvest season had begun, the presentation of the two loaves indicated its close. It was a day of thanksgiving in which freewill offerings were made (Deuteronomy 16:10-12). The festival day signified the dedication of the harvest to God as the provider of all blessings. Although it was a day of “sacred assembly” (Leviticus 23:21) in which there were an assortment of blood sacrifices, the Feast of Weeks was also a time to “rejoice before Yahweh” and to share with family members and with the poor the abundant provisions of food (Deuteronomy 16:10-12) that Yahweh had provided. The Old Testament does not specifically give any historical significance for the day, the Feast of Weeks being the only one of the three great agricultural feasts which does not commemorate some event in Jewish history. Later tradition, on the basis of Exodus 19:1, taught that the giving of the law at Sinai was fifty days after the Exodus and Passover, and as a result shabu’ot has also become known as the Torah festival. The Book of Ruth, which describes the harvest season, is read at the observance of the Feast of Weeks. The significance of this day for the New Testament is set forth in Acts 2:1-47, when on the day of Pentecost the Church had its beginning with the pouring out of the Spirit on the believers gathered in Jerusalem.

The Feast Of Trumpets The new moon of the seventh month (1st of Tishri) constituted the beginning of the civil new year and was designated as ro’sh hashshana, “the first of the year,” or yom teru’a, “day of sounding” (the trumpet). The blowing of the shofar, or ram’s horn, occupied a significant place on several other occasions, such as the monthly new moon and the Year of Jubilee, but especially so at the beginning of the new year, hence its name—Feast of Trumpets. The Hebrew calendar actually began with the moon of Nisan in the spring at the beginning of the month (Exodus 12:2), but since the end of the seventh month, Tishri, usually marked the beginning of the rainy season in Palestine when the year’s work of plowing and planting began, Tishri was constituted as the beginning of the economic and civil year. Business transactions, sabbatical years and jubilee years were all determined from the first of the seventh month. The day was observed as a sabbatical feast day with special sacrifices, and looked forward to the solemn Day of Atonement ten days later.

The Day Of Atonement The annual Day of Atonement (yom hakkippurim) is set forth in Leviticus 16:1-34; Leviticus 23:27-32 as the supreme act of national atonement for sin. It took place on the 10th day of the seventh month, Tishri, and fasting was commanded from the evening of the 9th day until the evening of the 10th day, in keeping with the unusual sanctity of the day. On this day an atonement was effected for the people, the priesthood, and for the sanctuary itself because it “dwelled with them in the midst of their uncleanness” (Leviticus 16:16). This ritual was divided into two acts, one performed on behalf of the priesthood, and one on behalf of the nation Israel. The high priest, who had moved a week previous to this day from his own dwelling to the sanctuary, arose on the Day of Atonement, and having bathed and laid aside his regular high priestly attire, dressed himself in holy white linen

garments, and brought forward a young bullock for a sin offering for himself and for his house. The other priests who on other occasions served in the sanctuary on this day took their place with the sinful congregation for whom atonement was to be made (Leviticus 16:17). The high priest slew the sin offering for himself and entered the holy of holies with a censor of incense, so that a cloud of incense might fill the room and cover the ark in order that he would not die. Then he returned with the blood of the sin offering and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat on the east, and seven times before the mercy seat for the symbolic cleansing of the holy of holies which was defiled by its presence among the sinful people. Having made atonement for himself, he returned to the court of the sanctuary. The high priest next presented the two goats, which had been secured as the sin offering for the people, to the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle and cast lots over them; one lot marked to Yahweh, and the other for the scapegoat. The goat upon which the lot had fallen for Yahweh was slain, and the high priest repeated the ritual of sprinkling the blood as before. In addition, he cleansed the holy place by a seven-fold sprinkling, and lastly, cleansed the altar of burnt offering. The high priest then took the live goat, the scapegoat, which had been left standing at the altar, and, laying hands upon it, confessed over it all the sins of the people. After that, the scapegoat was sent into an uninhabited wilderness bearing the iniquity of the nation of Israel, thus symbolizing the removal of Israel's sins.

The Feast of Tabernacles (hag hassukkot), the third of the pilgrimage feasts, was celebrated for seven days from the 15th to 21st day of Tishri, the seventh month. It was followed by an eighth day of holy convocation with appropriate sacrifices (Leviticus 23:33 ff.; Numbers 29:12-38; Deuteronomy 16:13-15). It was also called "the Feast of Ingathering" (Exodus 23:16) for the autumn harvest of the fruits and olives, with the ingathering of the threshing floor and the wine press, which occurred at this time (Leviticus 23:39; Deuteronomy 16:13). It was the outstanding feast of rejoicing in the year, in which the Israelites, during the seven day period, lived in booths or huts made of boughs in commemoration of their wilderness wanderings when their fathers dwelt in temporary shelters. The whole family was to recall the hardships of the past and to give thanks for the abundance of Canaan, the land in which their joy could "be complete" (Deuteronomy 16:25). According to Numbers 29:12-34, a large number of burnt offerings and one sin offering were sacrificed each day. Sacrifices were more numerous during this feast than at any other, consisting of the offering of 189 animals for the seven day period. When the feast coincided with a sabbatical year, the law was read publicly to the entire congregation at the sanctuary (Deuteronomy 31:10-13). As Josephus and the Talmud indicate, new ceremonies were gradually added to the festival, chief of which was the simhat bet hasho'ebah, "the festival of the drawing of water." In this ceremony a golden pitcher was filled from the pool of Siloam and returned to the priest at the Temple amid the joyful shouts of the celebrants, after which the water was poured into a basin at the altar (see, for example, John 7:37-38). At night the streets and temple court were illuminated by innumerable torches carried by the singing, dancing pilgrims. The booths were dismantled on the last day, and the eighth day which followed was observed as a sabbath day of holy convocation. The feast is mentioned by Zechariah as a joyous celebration in the Millennium (Zechariah 14:16). On the twenty-second of the month a holy convocation brought to an end not only the Feast of Tabernacles but the whole cycle of feasts starting with the Passover. God had blessed His people both materially and spiritually, and they were never to forget all of His benefits (see, for example, Deuteronomy 8:10-14).

A Summary Of Israel's Festivals A tabular summary of the festivals (derived in part from Hill & Walton 1991:127; and Johnson 1987:12) is presented below in Chart 4 in terms of their

occasion, theological significance, and correlation with Israel's calendar.

Chart 4. Summary of Israel's Festivals Special Observances In addition to the holy convocations Israel was to observe two other periodical festivals, the Sabbatical Year, and the Year of Jubilee

Sabbatical Year The shenat shabbaton, "year of rest" or sabbatical year, like the weekly sabbath, was designed by God with a benevolent purpose in view. Every seventh year the land was to lie fallow, the uncultivated increase to be left to the poor Israelite. Further, as noted in Deuteronomy 15:1, all debts were to be canceled in the sabbatical year.

According to 2 Chronicles 36:21, observance of the sabbatical year had been neglected for about 500 years. As a consequence the captivity of Judah in Babylon was decreed to be seventy years long allowing the land to enjoy its neglected Sabbaths—"for as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years". After the period of captivity, the people under Nehemiah bound themselves to the faithful observance of the seventh year, covenanting that "we would forego the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt" (Nehemiah 10:31).

Year Of Jubilee

Seven sabbatical cycles of years (i.e., 49 years) terminated in the Year of Jubilee. The fiftieth year is called "the year of liberty" (deror) in Ezekiel 46:17 (see, for example, Jeremiah 34:8; Jeremiah 34:15; Jeremiah 34:17) on the basis of Leviticus 25:10—"and you shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land . . . it shall be a jubilee unto you."

According to Leviticus 25:9, the Year of Jubilee was announced by the sounding of rams' horns throughout the land on the tenth day of the seventh month, which was also the great Day of Atonement. The Year of Jubilee was not, as some have thought, the forty-ninth year, and thus simplify a seventh sabbatical year, but was, as Leviticus 25:10 states, the fiftieth year, thus providing two successive sabbatical years in which land would have rest. Certain regulations were issued to take effect during the Year of Jubilee. They are:

(a) Rest for the land (Leviticus 25:11-12). As in the preceding sabbatical year, the land was to remain uncultivated and the people were to eat of the natural increase. To compensate for this, God promised: "I will command my blessings upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years" (Leviticus 25:21).

(b) Hereditary lands and property were to be restored to the original family without compensation in the Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:24-34). In this manner all land and its improvements would eventually be restored to the original holders to whom God had given it, for He said, "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is mine" (Leviticus 25:23).

(c) Freedom of bond-servants was to be effected in the Year of Jubilee. Every Israelite who had, because of poverty, subjected himself to bondage was to be set free (Leviticus 25:29 ff.).

Holiness The whole of the Book of Leviticus is dominated by the outworking, or actualization, of Exodus 19:6—"and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Thus, central to an understanding of Leviticus is an understanding of what it means to be holy. The Biblical Concept Of Holiness

Basic Meaning The Hebrew term most commonly used in Leviticus to express the concept of holiness is *qados* (see Wenham 1992:18-25 for an informative discussion on holiness). Originally this term simply meant “separation”, “set apart,” specifically for religious purposes. In this sense, anything could be set apart for religious or cultic purposes—a piece of ground, a building, or furniture could be “holy.” Certain persons were “holy”—set apart for religious purposes—whether priests in the service of Yahweh or the temple prostitutes of the Canaanite Baal cult. In contrast to what is “holy” there is the profane, or “common.” Something is considered profane if it has a common use in the sense that it is not set apart for religious use. Profanity, then, is the taking of a holy thing (such as the name the Lord) and using it in a profane, or common, way.

Biblical Meaning The biblical concept of holiness, says LaSor (1990:152), is not limited to separation as repeated use is made of the words “Yahweh is holy” or “I (i.e., Yahweh) am holy.” According to the basic sense of holy as noted above, this would mean that Yahweh is set apart. The question, however, is, what is He set apart from? The answer seems to be that God is set apart from sin, impurity, and sinful humanity. From the text of Genesis 1:1-31 & Genesis 2:1-25 it would seem that in part God created man in his likeness and image in order that man might have a personal relationship with God and enjoy fellowship with him. However sin broke that relationship and fellowship, and Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden (Genesis 3:1-24). In the aftermath of the Fall, man was barred from the presence of God because of sin. It is not difficult to see from this that Yahweh’s moral excellence became part of the biblical concept of His holiness, and thus Biblical holiness came to have the derived meaning of moral excellence. **The Laws Of Practical Holiness** As discussed above, the underlying basis for Israel’s need to be holy is found in the inherent nature of God as a holy being, that is, as a being of moral perfection. Fundamentally, therefore, those whom He calls to serve Him must be holy because He is holy (Leviticus 19:2). It is important here to recognize that Israel was not commanded to be holy as Yahweh is holy, but to be holy because He is holy. Thus, while God is the standard of holiness by which all others are measured, Israel was not called to walk in absolute holiness; the mere finiteness of the laws of holiness gives witness to that.

While individual Israelites could approach Yahweh on the basis of the merits of the sacrifices (Leviticus 1:1-17; Leviticus 2:1-16; Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-19; Leviticus 6:1-30; Leviticus 7:1-38), and the nation as a whole could be cleansed by means of the corporate act of repentance and forgiveness expressed in the ritual of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1-34), the people called to be a holy nation had to maintain that state in conduct as well as in decree. To effect this continual state of purity in covenant-relationship, the sons of Israel were to live out every day within the framework of a code of personal and national holiness—the so-called “Holiness Code” of Leviticus 17:1-16; Leviticus 18:1-30; Leviticus 19:1-37; Leviticus 20:1-27; Leviticus 21:1-24; Leviticus 22:1-33; Leviticus 23:1-44; Leviticus 24:1-23; Leviticus 25:1-55; Leviticus 26:1-46. The call to holiness involved regulations concerning the sanctity of the Tabernacle and blood (Leviticus 17:1-16), the prohibition of incest (Leviticus 18:1-18) and other sexual perversions (18:19-23), the keeping of the Ten Commandments (Leviticus 19:1-18) and related laws (19:19-20:27), and the proper behavior of the priests in private and public life (Leviticus 21:1-24; Leviticus 22:1-33). The people of Israel, as a holy nation, also had to understand that holiness required strict adherence to the holy convocations appointed by Yahweh (Leviticus 23:1-44; Leviticus 24:1-23; Leviticus 25:1-55), and to all the laws of the covenant

(Leviticus 26:1-46), as well as faithfulness in keeping vows of consecration to Yahweh (Leviticus 27:1-34).

Literary Characteristics

Literary Form The Book of Leviticus records the laws and instructions having to do with the worship of Yahweh—its sacrifices, priesthood, laws rendering a person unclean and so disqualifying him from worship, and various special times and seasons of worship—in covenant-relationship (Lindsey 1985:164). Furthermore, because Yahweh who is holy is now dwelling among his covenant people, Leviticus necessarily contains many regulations pertaining to daily living and practical holiness, both moral and ceremonial. For the most part then, the literary genre of Leviticus is legal literature. This includes both apodictic law (laws expressing necessary conduct: “You shall/shall not . . .” e.g., Leviticus 26:1-2) and casuistic laws (laws expressing case decisions: “If [such and such is done] . . . then [such and such will result] . . .” e.g., 4:3).

Although the primary language of the Book of Leviticus is legal, all the laws are set within a narrative framework. This is seen in the fact that at the beginning of nearly every chapter, and often several times within a chapter, the text says, “Yahweh spoke to Moses.” Thus it would seem that the more basic genre of the Book of Leviticus is narrative, and that it is not a stand-alone legal document. Rather, the legal stipulations recorded in it were given in the context of historical circumstances which form the framework for the giving of the Levitical law.

Literary Structure

Under the Sinai Covenant Israel had been called to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6). The first ten chapters of Leviticus focus almost exclusively on Israel’s priestly responsibilities as laws pertaining to the offering of sacrifices are prescribed for both the lay person and the priesthood. Primarily, these laws are prescribed so that the worshiper may be acceptable when he approaches Yahweh (Leviticus 1:3).

Different kinds of sacrifices are explained in chapters 1-7 which are presumed in the rituals described in the chapters that follow. The instructions that follow here deal with guidelines for bringing “an offering” to Yahweh at the Tabernacle. The instructions do not introduce the practice of offerings but provide regulations for them in light of the newly established worship of God at the Tabernacle. The narrative assumes that several types of offerings were already known and practiced by the Israelites (Exodus 18:12). Moreover, according to the earlier narratives in the Pentateuch, the earliest patriarchs had already made various kinds of offerings (see, for example, Genesis 4:3-4; Genesis 8:20; Genesis 46:1). Thus these chapters in Leviticus present regulations which Moses had given for the existing practices of sacrifices and offerings among the Israelites. Furthermore, in order to offer sacrifice a priesthood is necessary. Therefore the installation of the Aaronic priesthood, involving the ordination of Aaron and his sons, is described in chapters 8-10.

While the first ten chapters of Leviticus focus on Israel’s priestly responsibilities, the remaining chapters focus on the demand for personal and national holiness: “You must be holy, for I, Yahweh your God, am holy” (Leviticus 19:2). This and similar formulas are used repeatedly throughout chapters 18-27 to emphasize that Israel has been redeemed to be God’s holy people. Here, the demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh are stated in specific terms, as laws are presented for Israel to remain ceremonially and morally pure, to become cleansed from

defilement through a national day of atonement, and to worship Yahweh through observing holy convocations and special seasons. This establishes a broad natural structural division of the text of Leviticus: chapters 1-10 a kingdom of priests chapters 11-27 a holy nation Relationship Between Legal And Narrative Sections The Book of Leviticus is composed largely of ritual ordinances specified in legal terms, with some, but not much, interspersing of narrative. Indeed, at first glance Leviticus appears to be an endless list of rules and regulations put together in rather haphazard fashion, but a closer examination reveals a greater coherence. The Book of Leviticus may seem a confused and disorderly collection of unrelated materials, but the work can only be understood as part of a much larger whole, namely, as a part of the Pentateuch, as part of the great narrative history of Israel's journey from Egypt to the Land of Promise. Although the narrative material in Leviticus is not extensive, what is presented in chapters 8-10 and in Leviticus 24:10-16 is important to the overall structure of the book, and to the Pentateuch as a whole. The kernel of Leviticus is chapters 8-10 which are in narrative form and which continue the narrative of the Tabernacle recorded at the end of the Book of Exodus. One would expect the narrative account of the building of the Tabernacle (Exodus 35:1-35; Exodus 36:1-38; Exodus 37:1-29; Exodus 38:1-31; Exodus 39:1-43; Exodus 40:1-38) to be followed by the narrative account of its dedication (Leviticus 8:1-36). Yet in between these two narrative accounts stands Leviticus 1:1-17; Leviticus 2:1-16; Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-19; Leviticus 6:1-30; Leviticus 7:1-38 which presents the laws pertaining to sacrifices, and which seems an insertion because it breaks the continuity in the narrative about the Tabernacle. But the insertion of Leviticus 1:1-17; Leviticus 2:1-16; Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 5:1-19; Leviticus 6:1-30; Leviticus 7:1-38 makes sense from a structural perspective because the dedicatory and inaugural sacrifices that follow (Leviticus 8:14-29; Leviticus 9:1-21) cannot be understood without it.

Thus, the laws about sacrifices are given in chapters 1-7 to provide a framework within which the various offerings presented at the ordination of Aaron and his sons may be understood. Furthermore, the death of Aaron's two eldest sons in chapter 10 must be seen from the perspective of this framework since the root cause of their deaths was a clear violation of the laws presented in chapters 1-7.

Likewise, the narrative section in chapter 24 about the death of the blasphemer, who profaned the name of the Lord (Leviticus 24:11), must be understood from the perspective of the intervening chapters which present the regulations dealing with Israel's need to make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the clean and the unclean (Leviticus 10:10).

Synthesis Of The Text As A Unified And Coherent Whole The analyses discussed above have been used, implicitly and explicitly, to obtain an understanding of Leviticus as a unified and coherent whole. This understanding is expressed here in the form the statement of its message, its synthetic structure, and the synthesis of the text which follows from that message and structure.

Development And Statement Of The Message The message of the Book of Leviticus is developed in direct relationship to the major goal of the Mosaic Covenant as expressed in Exodus 19:5-6;

Now then if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (Exodus 19:5-6)

While the Book of Exodus records the redemption of the sons of Israel out of bondage in Egypt and their entering into covenant-relationship with Yahweh at Sinai, the Book of Leviticus records what is required of Israel to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation to Yahweh. Indeed, the whole of Leviticus is dominated by the actualization of the goal stated in Exodus 19:5-6. This is seen first of all in Leviticus 1:3 where in conjunction with the laws pertaining to the burnt offering, Yahweh informs Israel that such an offering is required in approaching Him in order that they may be accepted before Him. The implication is clear; no man can approach God as he is, rather atonement for sin must first be made. In calling Israel to Himself, Yahweh gave His covenant people the right to approach Him as priests making sacrifice to atone for their sin that they might draw near to Him. While the administration of the sacrificial offering system is under the Aaronic priesthood, the individual worshiper is not passive in the ritual, but actively participates as chapters 1-7 clearly show.

Approach to Yahweh is only one aspect of the covenant-relationship instituted at Sinai; the other aspect involves Yahweh's dwelling among His people. This dimension of the covenant-relationship requires Israel to be holy for Yahweh is holy. In this regard chapters 11-27 are seen to be dominated by Yahweh's command to Israel to be holy: For I am Yahweh your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm the earth. For I am Yahweh who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy. (Leviticus 11:44-45) This command is repeated in Leviticus 19:2 and again in Leviticus 20:7 and Leviticus 20:26. Further, such passages as Leviticus 15:31; Leviticus 18:1-5; Leviticus 20:22-25 make it clear that Israel is to separate itself from whatever is unclean, profane, and immoral, while such passages as Leviticus 18:21; Leviticus 19:12; Leviticus 20:3; Leviticus 21:6; and Leviticus 22:2 demonstrate that the sons of Israel are not to profane the name or sanctuary of Yahweh through their actions. The emphasis of the Book of Leviticus upon sacrificial offerings and the separation from all that is unclean and evil demonstrates the need for holiness in approaching Yahweh and for holiness in living in the presence of Yahweh. In this regard, Leviticus says that defilement must be dealt with in order to approach God and that holiness must be manifested in daily living in order to dwell in the presence of God. The message of the Book of Leviticus may be determined on the basis of the previous considerations discussed up to this point. The analysis of the text of Leviticus suggests that a possible subject for this book is the obligation for Israel to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. When viewed from this perspective, the text of Leviticus may be understood as making the following theological judgment/evaluation about this subject:

■PRIVATE "TYPE=PICT;ALT=" This understanding of Leviticus leads to the following synthetic structure and synthesis of its text as a unified and coherent whole Synthetic Structure Of The Text Broad Synthetic Structure I. The demands of worship necessary for approaching Yahweh as a kingdom of priests (chs. 1-10)

A. The demands of worship expressed through the laws of the sacrificial offering system for worshiper and priest (chs. 1-7)

B. The demands of worship expressed through the laws for consecrating and instituting priestly service through the Aaronic priesthood (chs. 8-10)

II. The demands of personal and national holiness necessary for living as a holy nation in the presence of Yahweh Who is holy (chs. 11-27)

A. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of body cleanliness as pertaining to food, childbirth, leprosy, and bodily discharges (chs. 11-15)

B. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of national cleansing on the Day of Atonement, and through the laws maintaining the sanctity of blood which is given to make atonement for sin (chs. 16-17) C. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws for people generally and for priests specifically (18-22)

D. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of the annual feasts, Sabbatical year, and the Year of Jubilee (chs. 23-25)

E. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of covenant blessings and curses which are the consequences of living or not living in holiness (ch. 26) F. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws pertaining to things consecrated to Yahweh (ch. 27) Detailed Synthetic Structure I. The demands of worship necessary for approaching Yahweh as a kingdom of priests (chs. 1-10)

A. The demands of worship expressed through the laws of the sacrificial offering system for worshiper and priest (chs. 1-7) 1. Laws regulating the burnt offering (Leviticus 1:1-17) 2. Laws regulating the grain offering (Leviticus 2:1-16) 3. Laws regulating the peace offering (Leviticus 3:11-17) 4. Laws regulating the sin offering (4:1-5:13) a. The scope of applicability: unintentional sins only (Leviticus 4:1-2) b. Laws regulating the sin offering for the sins of a priest (Leviticus 4:3-12) c. Laws regulating the sin offering for the sins of the nation (Leviticus 4:13-21) d. Laws regulating the sin offering for the sins of a leader (Leviticus 4:22-26) e. Laws regulating the sin offering for sins of a common person (Leviticus 4:27-35) f. Sins for which a person will be accounted guilty (Leviticus 5:1-4) g. Atonement as the basis for cleansing from sin (Leviticus 5:5-6) h. The sin offerings of the poor. (Leviticus 5:7-13) 5. Laws regulating the guilt (reparation) offering (5:14-6:7) 6. Laws pertaining to the priestly administration of the disposition of the sacrificial offerings (6:8-7:38) a. The law of the burnt offering (Leviticus 6:8-13) b. The law of the grain offering (Leviticus 6:14-23) c. The law of the sin offering (Leviticus 6:24-30) d. The law of the guilt offering (Leviticus 7:1-10) e. The law of the peace offering (Leviticus 7:11-38)

B. The demands of worship expressed through the laws for consecrating and instituting priestly service through the Aaronic priesthood (chs. 8-10) 1. The ordination of the Aaronic priesthood through the action of Moses (Leviticus 8:1-36) a. Moses' assembling of the congregation at the doorway of the tent of meeting (Leviticus 8:1-5) b. Moses' dressing of Aaron and his sons in their priestly garments (Leviticus 8:6-9) c. Moses' consecration of the Tabernacle and Aaron and his sons with anointing oil (Leviticus 8:10-13) d. Moses' sacrificing of offerings to Yahweh to make atonement for Aaron and his sons (Leviticus 8:14-29) e. Summary of the consecration ceremony (Leviticus 8:30-36) 2. The inauguration of the Aaronic priesthood through the action of Moses (Leviticus 9:1-24) a. Moses' instructions to Aaron and his sons concerning the commencement of their priestly duties (Leviticus 9:1-7) b. The inauguration of priestly duties in the Tabernacle (Leviticus 9:8-21) c. Yahweh's acceptance of the sacrificial offerings by fire (Leviticus 9:22-24)

3. The failure of the Aaronic priesthood to obey the laws of the sacrificial offering system in approach to Yahweh (Leviticus 10:1-20)

II. The demands of personal and national holiness necessary for living as a holy nation in the presence of Yahweh Who is holy (chs. 11-27)

A. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of body cleanliness as pertaining to food, childbirth, leprosy, and bodily discharges (chs. 11-15) 1. The laws of purity pertaining to clean and unclean food (Leviticus 11:1-47) 2. The laws of purity pertaining to the uncleanness of childbirth (Leviticus 12:1-8) 3. The laws of purity pertaining to skin diseases and mildew (13:1-14:53) a. The laws of uncleanness due to skin diseases and mildew (Leviticus 13:1-59) b. The laws of cleansing necessitated by skin diseases and mildew (Leviticus 14:1-57) c. The purpose for the laws pertaining to uncleanness due to skin diseases and mildew: to teach the people when they are unclean and when they are clean (Leviticus 14:54-57) 4. The laws of purity pertaining to bodily discharges (Leviticus 15:1-33)

B. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of national cleansing on the Day of Atonement, and through the laws maintaining the sanctity of blood which is given to make atonement for sin (chs. 16-17)

1. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of cleansing for national defilement on the Day of Atonement (ch. 16) a. Laws for the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1-28) b. Institution of the Day of Atonement as a permanent statute (Leviticus 16:29-34)

2. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of priority of the Tabernacle as the one and only place of sacrifice, and of the sanctity of the blood (ch. 17) 3. Laws pertaining to animals which die other than by slaughtering (Leviticus 17:15-16) C. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws for people generally and for priests specifically (18-22)

1. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws for people generally as relating to sexual relationships, love of neighbor, heinous offenses such as sacrificing children, cursing parents, and having sexual intercourse with animals (chs. 18-20) a. Laws pertaining to the restriction of sexual relations (Leviticus 18:1-30) b. Laws pertaining to practical holiness before God and man (Leviticus 19:1-37) c. Laws pertaining to offenses which necessitate severe punishment—sins for which no atonement can be made (Leviticus 20:1-27) 2. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws pertaining to priestly and sacrificial holiness (chs. 21-22) a. Laws pertaining to priestly holiness (Leviticus 21:1-24) b. Laws pertaining to sacrificial holiness (Leviticus 22:1-34) c. The purpose for the laws pertaining to priestly and sacrificial holiness: that the holy name of Yahweh would not be profaned (Leviticus 22:31-34)

D. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of the annual feasts, Sabbatical year, and the Year of Jubilee (chs. 23-25) 1. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of the annual feasts (ch. 23) a. Laws pertaining to the weekly convocation, the Sabbath (Leviticus 23:1-3) b. Laws pertaining to annual convocations (Leviticus 23:4-44)

2. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws pertaining to the holiness of Yahweh's sanctuary and name (ch. 24) 3. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of the Sabbatical year and Year of Jubilee (ch. 25)

E. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws of covenant blessings and curses which are the consequences of living or not living in holiness (ch. 26) 1. The blessings for obedience (Leviticus 16:1-13) 2. The curses for disobedience (Leviticus 26:14-39) 3. The promise of restoration in response to repentance (Leviticus 26:40-46) F. The demands of holiness expressed through the laws pertaining to things consecrated to Yahweh (ch. 27) 1. Laws pertaining to things which may be consecrated to Yahweh yet redeemed (Leviticus 27:1-25) 2. Laws pertaining to things excluded from consecration (Leviticus 27:26-34) Synthesis Of The Text

Based on the message statement and synthetic structure developed above the synthesis of the text of Leviticus may be constructed as:

I. The demands of worship necessary for serving Yahweh as a kingdom of priests are satisfied in the sacrificial offering system administered under the Aaronic priesthood. (chs. 1-10)

A. The sacrificial offerings establish a means of approach to Yahweh which permit the worshiper to express devotion of self and possessions to Yahweh, to express thanksgiving for blessings, and to obtain forgiveness for specific unintentional sin. (chs. 1-7)

1. The sacrifice of the burnt offering renders the worshiper's approach to Yahweh acceptable through the substitutionary death of the sacrifice which effects atonement for sin in general and signifies the worshiper's act of total dedication to Yahweh. (Leviticus 1:1-17)

2. The sacrifice of the grain offering, consisting of salted unleavened cakes or grains, renders the worshiper's thanksgiving to Yahweh acceptable through the total consumption of the offering which signifies the worshiper's dedication of everyday life to God in recognition of His covenant mercies. (Leviticus 2:1-16)

3. The sacrifice of the peace offering renders the worshiper's approach to Yahweh for communion and fellowship acceptable through the death of the sacrificial offering. (Leviticus 3:1-17)

4. The sacrifice of the sin offering, offered for specific sins committed unintentionally, effects atonement and forgiveness through the substitutionary death of the sacrifice. (4:1-5:13)

5. The sacrifice of the guilt offering, for specific sins for which payment of restitution to the wronged party is required, effects atonement and forgiveness through the substitutionary death of the sacrifice. (5:14-6:7)

6. The disposition of the sacrifices between Yahweh, the priests, and the offerer are regulated for each sacrifice and to be administered by the Aaronic priesthood. (6:8-7:38)

B. The ordination and inauguration of the Aaronic priesthood establish the acceptable approach to Yahweh, yet that approach is approved only as long as the laws of the sacrificial offering system are precisely obeyed. (chs. 8-10)

1. The ordination of the Aaronic priesthood prepares both priests and sanctuary for the inauguration of sacrificial offerings as Moses consecrates the Tabernacle and Aaron and his sons, and offers sacrifices to atone for the sins of the priests. (Leviticus 8:1-36)

2. The inauguration of the Aaronic priesthood through the action of Moses demonstrates the acceptability of approaching Yahweh through the sacrificial offering system as Yahweh manifests

His approval of Aaron's sacrifice by consuming it with fire coming out from His presence. (Leviticus 9:1-24)

3. The failure of the Aaronic priesthood to obey the laws of the sacrificial offering system in approaching Yahweh demonstrates the necessity of not violating Yahweh's holiness, as fire which had previously manifested Yahweh's approval is now used in righteous indignation to execute judgment, yet atonement for sin is still available when the laws of sacrifice are precisely followed. (Leviticus 10:1-20)

II. The demands of personal and national holiness necessary for living as a holy nation in the presence of Yahweh are satisfied in the laws of separation from the clean and profane, the laws of national cleansing from defilement, and the laws of morality, all of which establish unique cultural patterns in Israel. (chs. 11-27)⁹

A. The demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh establish cultural patterns, based on the laws of purity, which effect a separation of the unclean from the clean. (chs. 11-15)

1. The laws of purity establish cultural patterns which demand that Israel make a distinction between clean and unclean food and separate itself from the unclean, for Israel is to be holy because Yahweh is holy. (Leviticus 11:1-47)

2. The laws of purity establish a cultural pattern which demands that all women giving birth are to be considered unclean until the days of their purification are passed and sacrifice has been offered to make atonement for their cleansing. (Leviticus 12:1-8)

3. The laws of purity establish cultural patterns which demand that all manner of skin diseases and corruption due to mildew be diagnosed and that separation from the unclean occur unless and until cleansing has been obtained. (13:1-14:57)

4. The laws of purity establish cultural patterns which demand that all individuals with bodily discharges be declared unclean unless and until cleansing occurs, in order that Yahweh's tabernacle would not be defiled. (Leviticus 15:1-33)

B. The demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh establish cultural patterns which effect national cleansing on the Day of Atonement, and which recognize the sacredness of the blood which has been given to make atonement for sin. (ch. 16-17)

1. The laws of personal and national holiness satisfy the demand for holiness required to live in the presence of Yahweh by establishing cultural patterns which effect national cleansing from defilement through the ministry of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:1-34) a. The restriction of the high priest from entering the holy place except on the Day of Atonement under penalty of death attests to the holiness of Yahweh who dwells in a cloud over the mercy seat. (Leviticus 16:1-4) b. The high priest effects national cleansing for Israel on the Day of Atonement by making atonement for himself, the holy place, and all the people through the sacrifice of the sin offerings and the sprinkling of its blood on the mercy seat before Yahweh. (Leviticus 16:5-28)

(1) Atonement for the defilement of Israel as a nation requires that the high priest first make atonement for himself and his household through the sacrifice of his sin offering whose blood he

must sprinkle on the mercy seat seven times. (Leviticus 16:5-14)

(2) Atonement for the defilement of Israel as a nation requires that the high priest make atonement for the holy place, the tent of meeting, and the altar through the sacrifice of the people's sin offering whose blood he must sprinkle on the mercy seat seven times, and then on the horns of the altar. (Leviticus 16:15-19)

(3) Atonement for the defilement of Israel as a nation requires that the high priest sacrifice the goat for the sin offering, and then transfer Israel's sins to the scapegoat by laying his hands on the head of the goat and confessing the sins of the nation over it and then releasing it in the wilderness. (Leviticus 16:20-28) c. The institution of the Day of Atonement as a permanent statute to be observed yearly enables the high priest to make atonement for all the sins of the sons of Israel once every year. (Leviticus 16:29-34)

2. The laws of personal and national holiness satisfy the demand for holiness required to live in the presence of Yahweh by establishing cultural patterns which recognize the Tabernacle as the one and only place that sacrifice to Yahweh is to be made, and recognize the sacredness of the blood which has been given to make atonement for sin. (Leviticus 17:1-16)

C. The demands of holiness for people generally and for priests specifically are expressed through the laws which establish cultural patterns for living that are unique for Israel. (chs.18-22)

1. The laws of personal and national holiness satisfy the demand for holiness required to live in the presence of Yahweh by establishing cultural patterns which demand personal holiness through obedience to laws which restrict sexual relations, require the practical outworking of love for God and man, and which require severe punishment for grievous offenses for which no atonement can be made. (chs. 18-20) a. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands the sanctity of marriage, and purity in sexual relations which are prohibited between blood and legal relatives, between men, and between man and beast. (Leviticus 18:1-30) b. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands a life that manifests the practical outworking of love for God and love for man. (Leviticus 19:1-37) c. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh requires that severe punishment be executed upon any who sacrifice their children, turn to mediums, are disrespectful to parents, or commit adultery. (Leviticus 20:1-27)

2. The laws of personal and national holiness satisfy the demand for holiness required to live in the presence of Yahweh by establishing cultural patterns of worship which require holiness of the priests in carrying out their duties in the Tabernacle. (chs. 21-22) a. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands that priests not defile themselves in any way nor have any physical defect, for Yahweh who sanctifies them is holy. (Leviticus 21:1-24) b. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands that the priests treat everything dedicated to Yahweh as holy so as not to profane the name of Yahweh by touching the holy offerings while unclean or by accepting imperfect offerings. (Leviticus 22:1-30) c. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands that the priests keep the laws pertaining to priestly and sacrificial holiness so that the holy name of Yahweh would not be profaned, for He is to be sanctified among His people. (Leviticus 22:31-34)

D. The demands of holiness for the nation are expressed through the laws of the annual feasts, Sabbatical year, and the Year of Jubilee (chs. 23-25)

1. The demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh establish cultural patterns of worship which observe the holy convocations appointed by Yahweh. (ch. 23) a. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands obedience to the laws of the Sabbath. (Leviticus 23:1-3) b. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands obedience to the laws of the annual convocations which include the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of First Fruits, the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. (Leviticus 23:4-44)

2. The demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh establish culture patterns that recognize the holiness of Yahweh's sanctuary and name. (ch. 24) a. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands treating the oil used to light the lamp before Yahweh and the twelve cakes set before Him as holy. (Leviticus 24:1-9) b. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands holding fast to the sanctity of His name, while those who blaspheme His name are to be put to death. (Leviticus 24:10-23)

3. The demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh establish culture patterns that abide by the laws pertaining to the Sabbatical year and the Year of Jubilee. (ch. 25)

E. The demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh establish cultural patterns that take into consideration covenant blessings and curses, and the promise of restoration in response to repentance. (ch. 26)

1. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh demands obedience to all the commands of the Law which is rewarded with great blessings as Yahweh promises to bless His people and dwell among them. (Leviticus 26:1-13)

2. Not living in holiness before Yahweh incurs His wrath manifested in increasing degrees of punishment (the curses) which culminate in the destruction of the nation and the expulsion of the survivors out of the Land and into exile among the nations, yet restoration to the Land and to living in Yahweh's presence experiencing covenantal blessings is promised in response to repentance. (Leviticus 26:14-46)

F. The demands of holiness for living in the presence of Yahweh establish cultural patterns that recognize the sacredness of all things consecrated to Yahweh. (ch. 27)

1. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh expresses itself in consecrating family, animals, houses, and fields to Yahweh by special vow, while mercy and grace permits them to be redeemed even though they are accounted by Yahweh as being holy and belonging to Him. (Leviticus 27:1-25)

2. Living in holiness in the presence of Yahweh does not express itself in the consecration of first-born clean animals, things devoted to destruction, and things that are part of the tithe, for all such things belong to Yahweh by law. (Leviticus 27:26-34) © The Biblical Studies Foundation (www.bible.org) Spring 2010

1 It is clear from the text that the primary function of the Levitical worship system, including the Aaronic Priesthood, is to effect atonement for sin through the offering of sacrifices. For a discussion on the theological aspects of atonement see, Davidson 1904:306-338. For a discussion on the priesthood, the temple, and the sacrifices, see de Vaux 1965 Vol. 2. And see Kurtz 1863,

for a discussion of sacrifice in worship.

2Peter referred to Christ as “a lamb without blemish or defect,” the sinless Son of God (1 Peter 1:19; 1 Peter 1:22; see, for example, Hebrews 9:14).

3The substitutionary nature of sacrifice was most clearly seen in the offering of Isaac (Genesis 22:13).

4Here, Lindsey (1985:164) states, it is important to recognize the distinction between two relationships which an Israelite had/could have with God: (1) a corporate relationship with God as a member of the theocratic nation (see, for example, Exodus 19:1-25; Exodus 20:1-26); and (2) a personal relationship with God based on individual regeneration and justification by faith (as in the case of Abraham, Genesis 15:6). While ideally these two relationships should have been coextensive, nevertheless it appears that throughout Israel’s history there was only a remnant of true believers, and that a large number of the people were merely going through the form of worshipping Yahweh without genuine faith in Him.

5Although the Greek text could support the idea of “place of propitiation” (that is the mercy seat as in Hebrews 9:5) instead of “propitiation,” support for the stated view still stands since Christ is the substitute sacrifice which effects reconciliation.

6 Much has been written on the Levitical system of sacrifices. Of these, Milgrom (1991:131-489) has an extensive commentary on the sacrifices/sacrificial system. See also, Harrison 1980:39-88.

7 What follows in this section summarizes Lindsey (1985:164-166) in his discussion of the significance of Old Testament sacrifices.

8This discussion is excerpted from, *The Eschatological Significance of Israel's Annual Feasts*, Hulbert, Terry C., Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1965.

9Leviticus presents the requirements for approaching Yahweh and for living with Him dwelling in the midst of His people Israel, and, in so doing, it establishes a culture that manifests Yahweh’s holiness, a culture that is unique to Israel.

05 - Analysis And Synthesis Of Numbers

Analysis And Synthesis Of Numbers The analysis and synthesis approach to biblical studies applied here to Numbers is a methodology developed by the author (DeCanio, 2007) in conjunction with his doctoral studies at the University of South Africa. An abbreviated version of this work entitled, *Biblical Hermeneutics and a Methodology for Studying the Bible*, will be posted as an article on bible.org. The bibliography for this study of Numbers is presented at the end of the article, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Analysis Of The Context

Authorship The Book of Numbers is traditionally ascribed to Moses though little in the book explicitly confirms it (see, for example, however, Numbers 33:2; Numbers 36:13). Nevertheless, Mosaic authorship is assumed. Support for this assumption is presented in the *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Recipients The original recipients of the book were the sons of Israel who made up the next generation from the Exodus. These were the people of the “Conquest” generation, who were awaiting the command of God to cross the River Jordan and enter the land of Canaan to take possession of it. While the book, for the most part, describes the affairs of the people of the Exodus generation, its teachings are directed toward their children who are about to inherit the land promised to Abraham.

Time Period Of Historical Events And Composition

Date Of Events The events recorded in the Book of Numbers covers a span of 38 years, from the first day of the first month of the second year of the Exodus (see, for example Numbers 1:1; Numbers 7:1; Exodus 40:2, Exodus 40:17) until the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year (Deuteronomy 1:3). The whole of the wilderness years experience is usually designated as “forty years” (see, for example Numbers 14:33). Assuming that the Exodus occurred in 1446 B.C. (see *Introduction to the Pentateuch* for a discussion of the dating of the Exodus), then the events described in Numbers would have spanned a time period of approximately from 1445 to 1406 B.C.

Date Of Composition

If Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, as this analysis assumes, then it is likely that the writing of the accounts recorded in this book took place over a 38 year period of time during which Israel journeyed from the Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea, and then wandered in the wilderness, coming at last to the Plains of Moab. This suggests that the Book of Numbers could not have been completed any later than about 1406 B.C., the year that Israel was encamped on the Plains of Moab and poised to enter the Land of Promise (36:13) and the same year that Moses died (Deuteronomy 34:1-5).

Biblical Context The biblical context consists of three components; the historical element, the socio-cultural element, and the theological element.

Historical Element The historical context of the Book of Numbers is a part of the larger historical context for the Pentateuch. Although it follows Leviticus both chronologically and canonically its historical context is more immediate with the end of Exodus and the beginning of Deuteronomy. The Book of Exodus records Israel's deliverance from bondage in Egypt to its entrance into covenant-relationship with Yahweh at Sinai. The Book of Leviticus, which further defines the covenant stipulations, does not advance the historical narrative. This narrative is picked up again in the Book of Numbers where it is recorded that Moses was commanded to order the tribes of Israel, primarily from a military perspective, in preparation for the march to Kadesh-Barnea and entrance into the Land of Promise. Israel's defiant refusal to enter and take possession of the land of Canaan led to their wandering in the wilderness for some 38 years as the Exodus generation died off. With the passing of that generation, God began to prepare the new generation for entering the land of Canaan to possess it by conquest.

Socio-Cultural Element The socio-cultural context of Numbers begins where Exodus and Leviticus end—Israel is encamped at Sinai. However, by the start of chapter 20, Israel has moved on to the region of Kadesh. From that point on the nation wanders in the wilderness for the next thirty-eight plus years, eventually ending up on the Plains of Moab across the Jordan opposite Jericho. Throughout these thirty-eight years, the people live a nomadic lifestyle as they move from place to place. Although their covenant-relationship with Yahweh has been disturbed, it has not been terminated. As a result, Israelite society is yet bound by the stipulations of the Mosaic Covenant. As significant and complex is this socio-cultural context, it has little affect on understanding the theological message of Numbers, other than that it is part of the contextual framework within which that message is developed.

Theological Element The theological element for Exodus looks back on Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus and subsumes all of their theological revelations as its context. A major addition to this context must be made as in the Book of Numbers Yahweh makes it clear that in spite of Israel's continuing rebellion against Him with the result that the covenant-relationship is disrupted, He will not terminate the covenant He made with them at Sinai. The basis for Yahweh's faithfulness to this conditional covenant is founded on the unconditional covenant He made with Abraham. This is significant because it demonstrates that God will fulfill all the promises He made with Abraham independent of Israel's faithfulness to Him. Just what this means in practice becomes evident in Deuteronomy and the rest of the Old Testament.

Analysis Of The Text Broad Descriptive Overview

Chapter

Descriptive Summary

1

census of Exodus generation;

2

positioning of tribes and armies around the Tabernacle in camp and on the march;

4-Mar

appointment, census, and positioning of Levites;

5

separation of unclean and defiling things from the camp

6

Law of the Nazirite vow

7

offerings of the tribal leaders at dedication of Tabernacle;

8

consecration/separation of the Levites for Tabernacle service;

9

first observation of annual Passover festival;

Yahweh's presence through the cloud by day and fire by night;

10

silver trumpets for sounding assembly;

start of the march to Kadesh-Barnea; murmuring/complaining/grumbling on the way to Kadesh-Barnea about lack of meat;

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12

murmuring of Miriam and Aaron about Moses on the way to Kadesh-Barnea;

13-14

refusal of Exodus generation at Kadesh-Barnea to enter the Land in response to report of the spies;

15

miscellaneous laws concerning offerings;

16

rebellion of Korah and other Levites;

17

validation of Aaronic priesthood;

18

duties and support of the Levites;

19

red heifer sacrifice for purification from defilement;

20

arrival at Wilderness of Zin/Kadesh-Barnea (38 years later);

Israel's grumbling, complaining about lack of water;

Yahweh's provision of water from the rock;

sin of Moses;

defiance of Edom to Israel's request for passage;

death of Aaron;

21

defeat of Arad

Israel's grumbling about lack of food and water;

journey to Moab;

defeat of Sihon and Og;

22

summoning of Balaam by Balak to curse Israel on Plains of Moab

23

Balaam's blessing of Israel

24

Balaam's blessing of Israel;

Balaam's prophecies over Israel;

25

Israel's worship of Baal;

Yahweh's judgment of a plague;

26

census of new generation;

27

laws of inheritance as pertaining to daughters

appointment of Joshua

28-29

reminder to keep the feasts after Moses dies

order of the festivals

30

laws for vows

31

defeat of the Midianites settling of Transjordan by tribes of Gad & Reuben & 1/2 tribe of Manasseh;

33

review of Israel's journey from Egypt to Moab

instructions for possessing the Land

34

instructions on the boundaries and allotment of the Land

35

cities for Levites

cities of refuge

36

inheritance rights of women

Major Theological Theme: Israel's Continual Rebellion Against Yahweh

According to Allen (1990:662), the Book of Numbers contains much material that is similar to the Books of Exodus and Leviticus in terms of legislation for the people and particularly material dealing with the rights and regulations of the Levites and the priests. However, the dramatic narrative is what gives the book its distinctive and this is what is significant for determining the message of Numbers. It is through the narrative sections of the book that Moses records Israel's continual murmuring and rebellion against Yahweh over the forty year period. Though judgment was effected, yet grace was shown but Israel continued to rebel. Those whom God had redeemed from slavery in Egypt and to whom He had displayed grace at Mount Sinai responded with indifference, ingratitude, and repeated acts of rebellion. The Exodus generation was ultimately forbidden to enter the Land of Promise, and was made to live out their lives in the wilderness because they defiantly refused to obey Yahweh and enter the Land of Promise to take possession of it. That privilege was given to their children who would enjoy the blessings of Yahweh in the land promised to Abraham.

Although the second generation had seen the rebellion of the Exodus generation and experienced the judgment of wilderness wandering for forty years, they did not fully learn from this for on the eve of their entering the Land of Promise, while en route to the Plains of Moab, and even while encamped on the Plains, they too rebelled against Yahweh. Yet through all of these years of rebellion God gave assurance that the covenant, though disrupted, had not failed.

Literary Characteristics

Some biblical scholars contend that the Book of Numbers is not easy to analyze, or to outline because the contents of the material appear varied and the arrangement of the material seems to lack a literary sense of unity and coherence that is characteristic of a "book" (Allen 1990:670). However, when the Book of Numbers is viewed from the broad sense of Israel's rebellions and God's assurances that the covenant, though interrupted, has not failed, a pattern of material organization emerges that displays coherence.

Literally, and theologically as well, the Book of Numbers is structured around the organizational ordering of the Exodus generation for their march to, and conquest of, the Land of Promise, and the reordering of the second generation as they are poised, in the failure of the first generation, to enter the Land and take possession of it. In between these two major events stand the whole of Israel's forty year history of rebellion and God's acts of grace and mercy as He patiently waits for the dying off of the Exodus generation. In a broad sense, the whole of the book can be characterized by periods of rebellion followed by assurance from Yahweh that the covenant has not failed. This characterization is seen broadly in the arrangement of material in the form of the following alternating pattern which reflects the oscillation between rebellion and assurance:

Israel's rebellion (chs. 11-14) · en route from Sinai to the Land of Promise (chs. 11-12) · at Kadesh-Barnea (chs. 13-14) Yahweh's assurance that the covenant, though disrupted, has not failed (ch. 15) Israel's rebellion during the years of wandering in the wilderness (chs. 16-17) Yahweh's assurance that the covenant has not failed (chs. 18-19) Israel's rebellion en route from Kadesh-Barnea to the Plains of Moab (chs. 20-21) Yahweh's assurance that the covenant has not failed (chs. 22-24) Israel's rebellion on the Plains of Moab (ch. 25) Yahweh's assurance that the covenant has not failed (chs. 26-36)

While such an understanding seems to reflect the development of the text which expresses the author's intended meaning, there are other portions of the text, particularly having to do with the ordering of the people and laws specifically related to Israel's living in the Land, which do not exactly fit an alternating pattern of rebellion followed by assurance. This suggests that the book of Numbers is more complex than might be indicated by the events of census and ordering of the people.

Synthesis Of The Text As A Unified And Coherent Whole The analyses discussed above have been used, implicitly and explicitly, to obtain an initial exegesis of the text and from that an understanding of Numbers as a unified and coherent whole. This understanding is expressed in the form the statement of its message, its synthetic structure, and the synthesis of the text which follows from that message and structure.

Development And Statement Of The Message The message of the Book of Numbers is controlled by the consequences of Israel's climactic rebellion against Yahweh in refusing to enter the Land.

After realizing that they had sinned greatly by defiantly refusing to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise, the sons of Israel decided that they would now go up to “the place which Yahweh has promised” (Numbers 14:40). But it was too late; judgment had been passed. That generation—the Exodus generation which had experienced Yahweh’s faithfulness and mighty power to redeem, provide and protect for the past two years (Numbers 14:22 a) continually rebelled against Him (Numbers 14:22 b)—would not enter into the land Yahweh promised to the Patriarchs (Numbers 14:23). Rather the men of that generation would die in the wilderness (Numbers 14:29) and their sons would suffer for forty years (Numbers 14:33 a)—one year for each day they had spied out the land (Numbers 14:34)—until they all lay dead in the wilderness (Numbers 14:33 b).

Moses, in response to their decision to now go up and take the land of Canaan, warns them that they are going to transgress Yahweh’s revealed will for them and they therefore will not succeed (Numbers 14:41). And then comes the most devastating revelation as Moses further warns them not to go up lest their enemies strike them down because Yahweh is not among you . . . and Yahweh will not be with you (Numbers 14:42-43). This declaration by Moses reveals that Israel’s walk in covenant-relationship has been disrupted. The covenant, however, is still in effect, a fact that is evidenced by the instructions Yahweh gave for the sons of Israel to follow “when you enter the land where you are to live, which I am giving to you” (Numbers 15:2). Whether these instructions were given chronologically before or after Israel’s act of defiant disobedience is immaterial from the perspective of the author’s development of his message. Coming on the heels of Israel’s fateful act of disobedience and his declaration that Yahweh is not with them, these instructions bring assurance that Yahweh has not abandoned Israel as a nation, but only that generation, and that He will remain faithful to the promises He gave to the Patriarchs. Thus, while Israel’s walk in covenant-relationship has been disrupted for the Exodus generation, it will be renewed with the new, or next generation, for the covenant is still in effect. The message of the Book of Numbers may be determined on the basis of the analyses and previous consideration. From this comes the suggestion that a possible subject for Numbers is “Israel’s walk in covenant-relationship.” When viewed from this perspective, the text of Numbers may be understood as making the following theological judgment/evaluation about this subject:

■PRIVATE "TYPE=PICT;ALT=" This understanding of Numbers, together with the considerations discussed above, leads to the following synthetic structure and synthesis of its text as a unified and coherent whole.

Synthetic Structure Of The Text The synthetic structure of Numbers is presented first in broad form to gain an overview perspective of the text, and then in detailed form which expresses more completely how all the portions of the text relate together in a unified and coherent manner.

Broad Synthetic Structure

I. The ordering of Israel’s walk in covenant-relationship in preparation for journeying to, and taking possession of, the Land of Promise (1:1-10:10) A. The organization of Israel for military service and for service in the Tabernacle (1:1-4:49) B. The sanctification of Israel to Yahweh (5:1-10:10)

II. The disruptions to Israel’s walk in covenant-relationship and Yahweh’s assurances that the covenant has not failed (10:11-25:18) A. The Exodus generation’s rebellion en route to the Land of

Promise (10:11-12:16)

B. The Exodus generation's rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea: Israel's defiant disobedience to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise (13:1-14:45)

C. Yahweh's assurance that a new generation will enter and possess the Land of Promise: Laws to be obeyed after entering the Land (Numbers 15:1-41) D. The Exodus generation's rebellion during the years of wandering in the wilderness (16:1-19:22) E. The new generation's rebellion en route from Kadesh to the Plains of Moab (20:1-21:35)

Yahweh's assurance of Israel's covenant-relationship in spite of the new generation's rebellion on the Plains of Moab at the instigation of Balaam (22:1-25:18)

III. The renewing of Israel's walk in covenant-relationship through Yahweh's ordering of the new generation to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise (26:1-36:13) A. The organization of the new generation (26:1-27:23)

B. The renewal of the regulations of sacrifices to be offered at the appointed times and festivals, and of the regulations of vows (28:1-30:16) C. The beginning of the Conquest and division of the land east of the Jordan (31:1-32:42) D. Instructions for the conquest and division of Canaan, the Land of Promise west of the Jordan (33:1-36:13) Detailed Synthetic Structure

I. The ordering of Israel's walk in covenant-relationship in preparation for journeying to, and taking possession of, the Land of Promise (1:1-10:10) A. The organization of Israel for military service and for service in the Tabernacle (1:1-4:49) 1. The organization of the tribes into armies for war and service groups for the Tabernacle (1:1-2:34) a. Census of the Israel's fighting men according to their tribal armies (Numbers 1:1-46) b. Appointment of the Levites to serve in the Tabernacle (Numbers 1:47-54) c. Arrangement of the tribes/tribal armies about the Tent of Meeting in camp and on the march (Numbers 2:1-34) 2. The organization of the Levites for serving Yahweh in the Tabernacle (3:1-4:49) a. The census of the Levites (Numbers 3:1-39) b. The substitution of the Levites for the first-born of Israel (Numbers 3:40-51) c. The details of the ministry of the Levites in the Tent of Meeting (Numbers 4:1-49) B. The sanctification of Israel to Yahweh (5:1-10:10) 1. Sanctification through separation from defiling things (Numbers 5:1-31) a. Sanctification through separation from unclean people (Numbers 5:1-4) b. Sanctification through obedience to the law of restitution for personal wrongs committed (Numbers 5:5-10) c. Sanctification through obedience to the law of jealousy in the marriage relationship (Numbers 5:11-31) 2. Sanctification through separation by means of the Nazarite vow (Numbers 6:1-21) 3. Sanctification through the Aaronic blessing (Numbers 6:22-27) 4. Sanctification through worship (7:1-9:14) a. Sanctification through the offerings of the tribal princes set apart for use in the service of the Tent of Meeting (Numbers 7:1-89) b. Sanctification through the setting apart of the Levites for service in the Tent of Meeting (Numbers 8:1-26) c. Sanctification through the annual celebration of the Passover (Numbers 9:1-14) 5. Sanctification through divine guidance (9:15-10:10) a. Sanctification through guidance coming from the movement of the cloud over the Tabernacle (Numbers 9:15-3) b. Sanctification through guidance coming from the blowing of the silver trumpets (Numbers 10:1-10)

II. The disruptions to Israel's walk in covenant-relationship and Yahweh's assurances that the covenant has not failed (10:11-25:18) A. The Exodus generation's rebellion en route to the Land of Promise (10:11-12:16) 1. The departure from Sinai in accordance with the prescribed order of

march (Numbers 10:11-36) 2. The rebellion of the people against Yahweh (Numbers 11:1-35) a. The complaining of the people about the circumstances of journeying through the wilderness (Numbers 11:1-3) b. The complaint of the people about the lack of meat to eat and Yahweh's response (Numbers 11:4-35) 3. The rebellion against Moses, Yahweh's appointed leader (Numbers 12:1-16) a. The murmuring of Miriam and Aaron against Moses (Numbers 12:1-3) b. The judgment of Yahweh against Miriam (Numbers 12:4-16)

B. The Exodus generation's rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea: Israel's defiant disobedience to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise (13:1-14:45) 1. The spying out of the land of Canaan (Numbers 13:1-33) a. The reconnaissance of the Land for 40 days (Numbers 13:1-24) b. The bad report of the spies (Numbers 13:25-33) 2. The rebellion of the people against Yahweh's command to enter the Land (Numbers 14:1-45) a. The refusal of the people to enter the Land, choosing instead to return to Egypt (Numbers 14:1-4) b. The exhortation of Joshua and Caleb for the people not to rebel but obey Yahweh (Numbers 14:5-9) c. Yahweh's anger toward the people (Numbers 14:10-12) d. Moses' intercession for the people (Numbers 14:13-19) e. Yahweh's judgment against the people (Numbers 14:20-39) f. The futile invasion attempt at Hormah (Numbers 14:40-45)

C. Yahweh's assurance that a new generation will enter and possess the Land of Promise: Laws to be obeyed after entering the Land (Numbers 15:1-41) 1. Laws concerning the inclusion of grain and libation offerings with burnt offerings (Numbers 15:1-16) 2. Law of the cake offering (Numbers 15:17-22) 3. Laws concerning offerings for unintentional sin (Numbers 15:23-29) 4. Laws concerning defiant sin: no offering for such sin (Numbers 15:30-36) 5. Laws concerning the garment tassel (Numbers 15:37-41) D. The Exodus generation's rebellion during the years of wandering in the wilderness (16:1-19:22) 1. The rebellion against the leadership of Moses and the Aaronic priesthood (Numbers 16:1-50) a. The rebellion of Korah and Yahweh's response (Numbers 16:1-40) b. The rebellion of the people against Moses and Aaron and Yahweh's response (Numbers 16:41-50) 2. The vindication of the priority of the Aaronic priesthood (17:1-18:32) a. Validation of the divine calling of the Aaronic priesthood (Numbers 17:1-13) b. Affirmation of the priority of the Aaronic priesthood over the Levites (Numbers 18:1-32)

3. Affirmation of the priority of the Aaronic priesthood as seen in its responsibility to perform the rite of the red heifer sacrifice whose ashes are needed for purification after coming in contact with the dead (Numbers 19:1-22) E. The new generation's rebellion en route from Kadesh to the Plains of Moab (20:1-21:35) 1. The rebellion of Moses and Aaron against Yahweh (Numbers 20:1-13) a. The contention of the people with Moses because of a lack of water (Numbers 20:1-5) b. Yahweh's provision of water from the rock (Numbers 20:6-8) c. The sin of Moses: striking the rock with Aaron's rod instead of speaking to it (Numbers 20:9-11) d. Yahweh's judgment on Moses and Aaron: no entry into the Land of Promise (Numbers 20:12-13) 2. The refusal of Edom to allow Israel to pass through its territory (Numbers 20:14-22) 3. Fulfillment of Yahweh's judgment against Aaron through his death (Numbers 20:23-29) a. Yahweh's decree of Aaron's death (Numbers 20:23-24) b. Transfer of the high priesthood to Aaron's son Eleazar (Numbers 20:25-27) c. The death of Aaron (Numbers 20:28-29) 4. Israel's victory over Arad (Numbers 21:1-3) 5. Israel's complaining over the lack of food and water (Numbers 21:4-9) a. The complaint of the people (Numbers 21:4-5) b. Yahweh's judgment of serpents (Numbers 21:6) c. The intercession of Moses—the bronze serpent (Numbers 21:7-9) 6. Israel's victory over Sihon and Og (Numbers

21:10-35) a. The journey around Edom to the Plains of Moab (Numbers 21:10-20) b. Israel's victories along the way (Numbers 21:21-35)

F. Yahweh's assurance of Israel's covenant-relationship in spite of the new generation's rebellion on the Plains of Moab at the instigation of Balaam (22:1-25:18)

1. Balaam's failure to turn Yahweh against Israel and curse the people because of Yahweh's word of promise to Abraham (22:1-24:25) a. The summoning of Balaam by Balak king of Moab to curse Israel (Numbers 22:1-41) b. Balaam's oracles of blessing on Israel as decreed by Yahweh (23:1-24:25)

(1) Balaam's first oracle: The blessing of Israel is irrevocable for she is set apart and cursing her is ineffective (Numbers 23:1-12)

(2) Balaam's second oracle: The source of Israel's blessing is her unique relationship with Yahweh (Numbers 23:13-26) (3) Balaam's third oracle: Israel's blessing is absolute which allows no compromise or change (23:27-24:13)

(4) Balaam's fourth oracle: A prophecy of things to come; Israel's ultimate blessing centers in deliverance from all her enemies through her Deliver (Numbers 24:14-25)

2. Balaam's success in turning the new generation against Yahweh through fornication with Baal of Peor (Numbers 25:1-9) a. Israel's fornication with the women of Moab and their worship of Baal of Peor (Numbers 25:1-3) b. Yahweh's judgment on Israel through the execution of the leaders of the people in rebellion (Numbers 25:4-9)

3. Yahweh's assurance of Israel's covenant-relationship through His perpetual covenant of priesthood with Phinehas and his descendants (Numbers 25:10-13) a. The defending of Yahweh's honor by Phinehas through his killing of an Israelite defiantly fornicating himself with a Moabite woman, thereby making atonement for the sons of Israel and stopping the plague (Numbers 25:6-9) b. Yahweh's covenant of peace with Phinehas promising him a perpetual priesthood (Numbers 25:10-13) 4. The aftermath of the rebellion: Israel charged with the task of striking down Moab (Numbers 25:14-18)

III. The renewing of Israel's walk in covenant-relationship through Yahweh's ordering of the new generation to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise (26:1-36:13) A. The organization of the new generation (26:1-27:23) 1. Census of the new generation (Numbers 26:1-51) 2. Instructions for dividing the Land of Promise (26:52-27:11) 3. The appointment of Joshua as Israel's new leader succeeding Moses (Numbers 27:12-23)

B. The renewal of the regulations of sacrifices to be offered at the appointed times and festivals, and of the regulations of vows (28:1-30:16) 1. The regulations of sacrifices (28:1-29:40) a. The command to sacrifice the offerings to Yahweh at their appointed time (Numbers 28:1-2) b. The regulations of the daily offering (Numbers 28:3-8) The regulations of the weekly offering (Numbers 28:9-10) d. The regulations of the monthly offering (Numbers 28:11-15) e. The regulations of the yearly offerings (28:16-29:38) (1) The regulations of the Passover (Numbers 28:16) (2) The regulations of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Numbers 28:17-25) (3) The regulations of the Feasts of Weeks (Pentecost) and First Fruits (Numbers 28:26-31) (4) The regulations of the Feast of Trumpets (Numbers 29:1-6) (5) The regulations of the Day of Atonement (Numbers 29:7-11) (6)

The regulations of the Feast of Tabernacles (Numbers 20:12-38) f. Reiteration of the command (Numbers 29:39-40) 2. The regulations of vows (Numbers 30:1-16) C. The beginning of the Conquest and division of the land east of the Jordan (31:1-32:41) 1. The victory over Midian (Numbers 31:1-54)

2. The division of the land east of the Jordan: settlement of two and one-half tribes in the Trans-Jordan (Numbers 32:1-42) a. The circumstances leading to the decision to settle the land east of the Jordan (Numbers 32:1-19) b. The decision of Moses (Numbers 32:20-33) c. The territories taken by Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh (Numbers 32:34-42) D. Instructions for the conquest and division of Canaan, the Land of Promise, west of the Jordan (33:1-36:13)

1. Review of the journeys of the Exodus generation along with instructions to the new generation for conquering the land of Canaan (Numbers 33:1-56) a. Review of the journeys (Numbers 33:1-49) (1) The journey from Egypt to Sinai (Numbers 33:1-15) (2) The journey from Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea (Numbers 33:16-17) (3) The wilderness wanderings (Numbers 33:18-36) (4) The journey from Kadesh-Barnea to Moab (Numbers 33:37-49) b. Instructions for conquering Canaan (Numbers 33:50-56)

(1) The command to drive out all the inhabitants of the land and destroy their instruments of idolatry (Numbers 33:50-52) (2) The command to take possession of the land as an inheritance from Yahweh (Numbers 33:53-54) (3) A warning about the consequences of not driving out the inhabitants of the land (Numbers 33:55-56) 2. Instructions for dividing the Land west of the Jordan (Numbers 34:1-29) a. The boundaries of the Land of Promise (Numbers 34:1-15) (1) The southern boundary (Numbers 34:1-5) (2) The western boundary (Numbers 34:6) (3) The northern boundary (Numbers 34:7-9) (4) The eastern boundary (Numbers 34:10-15) b. Designation of officials to apportion the Land (Numbers 34:16-29) 3. Instruction for the designation of special cities (Numbers 35:1-34) a. The designation of cities for the Levites (Numbers 35:1-8) b. The designation of cities of refuge (Numbers 35:9-34) 4. Instructions concerning the inheritance of women (Numbers 36:1-13) Synthesis Of The Book

Based on the message statement and synthetic structure developed above the synthesis of the text of Numbers may be constructed as:

I. Israel's walk in covenant-relationship is ordered by Yahweh in preparation for her journey to, and conquest of, the Land of Promise. (1:1-10:10)

A. The organization of Israel for military service and for service in the Tabernacle begins with a census of Israel's men capable of going to war, but with the exclusion of the Levites who are appointed for serving Yahweh in the Tabernacle. (1:1-4:49)

1. The organization of the tribes into armies for conducting war, and into service groups for conducting the work of the Tabernacle begins with a census of all the men of Israel capable of going to war with the exclusion of the Levites who are appointed by Yahweh to serve Him in the Tabernacle. (1:1-2:34)

2. The organization of the Levites for serving Yahweh in the Tabernacle recognizes the priority of the Aaronic priesthood to minister the holy things before Yahweh while assigning the work of supporting the priests to the sons of Levi—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, who are taken by Yahweh

as His first-born. (3:1-4:49)

B. The sanctification of Israel, important for maintaining her walk in covenant-relationship with Yahweh, requires separation from defiling things, permits periodic consecration to Yahweh through the Nazarite vow, provides for special blessing through the Aaronic benediction, is enhanced through the offerings of Israel's princes for use in the Tabernacle, and is protected by divine guidance through the cloud of Yahweh's Presence and through the blowing of the silver trumpets. (5:1-10:10)

II. Israel's walk in covenant-relationship is disrupted as a result of her continual rebellion and defiant disobedience to Yahweh's command to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise, yet a new generation is assured that the covenant has not failed and that it will enter the Land. (10:11- 25:18)

A. Israel's rebellious and unbelieving attitude toward Yahweh manifests itself en route from Sinai to the Land of Promise as the sons of Israel first complain about the lack of meat to eat, and then entertain questions casting doubt on Yahweh's appointed leader, as Miriam and Aaron challenge whether Yahweh has spoken only through Moses. (10:11-12:16)

B. The climax of Israel's rebelliousness occurs as the sons of Israel defiantly refuse to obey Yahweh's command to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise, and incurs the wrath of God which denies the Exodus generation any part in the promised inheritance and condemns them to wandering in the wilderness for 40 years until they all die. (13:1-14:45)

1. The reconnaissance of the spies confirms that the land of Canaan is a land flowing with milk and honey, yet because of fear that its inhabitants are too mighty, ten of them return a bad report recommending that Israel not try to take the land. (Numbers 13:1-33)

2. Israel's unbelief and rebelliousness reaches a climax as the people of the Exodus generation choose to believe the bad report of the spies instead of heeding the exhortation of Caleb and Joshua to trust in Yahweh for victory, and manifests itself in defiant disobedience to Yahweh as they refuse to enter the land, a defiance that incurs the wrath of God which condemns them to having no part in the promised inheritance and to a life of wandering in the wilderness for 40 years until they all die. (Numbers 14:1-45)

C. Although the Exodus generation has been denied any part in the inheritance of the Land of Promise, assurance is given, through Yahweh's instructions concerning laws that are to be kept when Israel enters the land Yahweh is giving them, that a new generation will be receive the promised inheritance. (Numbers 15:1-41)

D. Israel's rebelliousness continues to manifest itself during the years of wandering in the wilderness, as Korah leads a group to rebel against the exclusive leadership of Moses and the Aaronic priesthood, but Yahweh vindicates His appointed leaders by putting down the rebellion through Moses and validating the priority of the Aaronic priesthood. (16:1-19:22)

1. Rebellion against the exclusive leadership of Moses and the Aaronic priesthood is instigated by Korah, a Levite, but Yahweh vindicates His leaders by miraculously destroying Korah and all who joined with him, yet the people murmur against Moses and Aaron, blaming them for their death, an act which causes Yahweh to respond with a severe plague that is halted by Moses and Aaron as

they make intercession for the people and atonement for their sin. (Numbers 16:1-50)

Vindication of the Aaronic priesthood is made as Aaron's divine calling is validated through the miraculous budding of his staff, and the priority of his priesthood over the Levites is affirmed through their differing responsibilities and remuneration privileges established by Yahweh. (17:1-18:32)

3. The priority of the Aaronic priesthood is affirmed as it alone is given the responsibility to perform the rite of the red heifer sacrifice (Numbers 19:1-22)

E. Israel's rebelliousness continues while en route from Kadesh to the Plains of Moab as even Moses and Aaron rebel against Yahweh by striking the rock instead of speaking to it for its emission of water, and as even the new generation complains over the lack of food and water, causing Yahweh to discipline them with fiery serpents, yet in spite of this Yahweh blesses them with victory over those opposing their way to the Land of Promise. (20:1-21:35)

F. Israel's covenant-relationship, though put to the test through forty years of rebellion, is nevertheless assured as Balak's failure to turn Yahweh against His people demonstrates His faithfulness to His word of election and promise to Abraham, yet Israel continues to turn against Him as the new generation rebels by worshipping Baal of Peor, the god of Moab. (22:1-25:18)

1. Balak's failure to have Balaam curse Israel demonstrates Yahweh's faithfulness to His word of election and promise to Abraham, thus assuring Israel of their covenant-relationship. (22:1-24:25)

a. The summoning of Balaam by Balak, the king of Moab, to curse Israel, though against the will of God, is, nevertheless, permitted so that Yahweh may demonstrate His faithfulness to Israel by blessing them through the mouth of Balaam instead of cursing them. (Numbers 22:1-41) b. Though he seeks to curse Israel on behalf of Balak, Balaam can only issue forth with blessing as Yahweh, in faithfulness to His word of election and promise to Abraham, causes blessing to flow from his mouth. (23:1-24:25)

2. Balaam's failure to turn Yahweh against Israel leads him to turn Israel against Yahweh as the new generation rebels by falling prey to the seductions of Moabite women who lead them to fornicate themselves physically with Moabite women and spiritually with Baal of Peor, but the zeal of Phinehas, the son of Aaron, rises up in righteous indignation for Yahweh and executes judgment on a defiant Israelite thereby making atonement for the sons of Israel and halting the plague Yahweh had brought on His people. (Numbers 25:1-9) The continuance of Israel's covenant-relationship is assured as Yahweh promises a perpetual covenant of priesthood with Phinehas and his descendants (Numbers 25:10-13) In the aftermath of the rebellion Israel is charged with the task of striking down Moab (Numbers 25:14-18)

III. The renewal of Israel's walk in covenant-relationship comes about as Moses organizes and instructs the new generation in preparation to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise. (26:1-36:13)

A. The organization of the new generation involves preparing a new army by first taking a census of all men able to go to war, giving instructions for dividing up the land among the tribes, and by commissioning Joshua as Yahweh's chosen leader to succeed Moses who is not permitted to enter the Land of Promise. (26:1-27:23)

B. The renewal of the regulations of sacrifices to be offered at the appointed times and festivals, and of the regulations of personal vows reminds the new generation of the covenant commitments that Israel is responsible to keep. (28:1-30:16)

C. Israel's entrance into the inheritance promised to Abraham begins as the sons of Israel are victorious over the Midianites and divide up all the land taken east of Jordan between the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. (31:1-32:42)

D. The final word of instruction to the new generation first reviews Israel's long journey from Egypt to the Land of Promise, then lays before the people Yahweh's command to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan and destroy all their instruments of idolatry and Yahweh's strong warning of the consequences for not doing this, and then gives guide lines for dividing up the land, whose boundaries are clearly delineated, and the designation of special cities for the Levites and for refuge. (33:1-36:13)

06 - Analysis and Synthesis of the Book of Deuteronomy

Analysis and Synthesis of the Book of Deuteronomy The analysis and synthesis approach to biblical studies applied here to Deuteronomy is a methodology developed by the author (DeCanio, 2007) in conjunction with his doctoral studies at the University of South Africa. An abbreviated version of this work entitled, *Biblical Hermeneutics and a Methodology for Studying the Bible*, will be posted as an article on bible.org. The bibliography for this study of Deuteronomy is presented at the end of the article, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*.

Analysis of the context

Authorship

Arguments supporting Mosaic authorship are presented in the *Introduction to the Pentateuch*. In addition to the many statements in the rest of Scripture which support Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, there are statements made within the Book of Deuteronomy which indicate that Moses was the author of the words written here at Yahweh's direction (see, for example, Deuteronomy 1:6, Deuteronomy 1:9; Deuteronomy 5:1; Deuteronomy 27:1, Deuteronomy 27:9; Deuteronomy 31:1, Deuteronomy 31:30; Deuteronomy 33:1, etc.). Of particular importance is Deuteronomy 31:9, Deuteronomy 31:24 which refer explicitly to Moses' writing—"And Moses wrote this law, and gave it to the priests the sons of Levi . . . When Moses had finished writing the words of the law in a book, . . ." Thus, although the work is essentially anonymous, when all the evidence is objectively considered, Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy is hard to deny.

Recipients

It is clear from the text of Deuteronomy that Moses is addressing the second generation from the Exodus; those who, in obedience to, and trust in, Yahweh, will enter the land of Canaan and take possession of it by conquest. Thus, it would seem that Moses' original recipients of Deuteronomy was the generation of the Conquest. Furthermore, since Deuteronomy deals with the renewal of the covenant by the second generation, a written record of the covenant stipulations would be necessary for that generation as well as for succeeding generations.

Time period of historical events and composition

Date of events

Events recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy occurred while Israel was encamped on the Plains of Moab and poised to cross the River Jordan in order to enter and take possession of the Land of Promise. These events took place over about a two month period of time (see, for example, Deuteronomy 1:3; Deuteronomy 34:5, Deuteronomy 34:8; Joshua 4:19; and see *Introduction to the Pentateuch* for a discussion of the chronology of the Pentateuch in general), ending with the death of Moses and a 30 day period of mourning for him. Assuming a date for the Exodus of 1446 B.C. (see *Introduction to the Pentateuch* for arguments supporting this date), that would place the events of Deuteronomy in the year 1406 B.C.

Date of composition

Dating of the composition of the Book of Deuteronomy has been disputed by critical scholars who assert that Moses did not write the book. Instead, they attribute Deuteronomy to other writers who lived at a later date—either to Samuel in the eleventh century B.C. or religious leaders during the seventh century B.C., and even possibly to the postexilic period by the so-called "Deuteronomist."

However, in addition to the evidence already presented for Mosaic authorship, support also comes from the similarities between the structure of Deuteronomy and the Middle Eastern suzerainty treaties. It has been suggested by some (Craigie 1983:25) that Deuteronomy is a covenant renewal document which in its total structure exhibits the classical legal form of the suzerainty treaties of the Mosaic age. The contention is that when one recognizes that a biblical document reflects the historical and cultural context of a specific period, it is reasonable to date it where it will not be out of harmony with the age in which it is purported to have been written. It is reasonable, therefore, to assign a date of composition to the Book of Deuteronomy to the time period just prior to Israel's crossing of the Jordan. Since Moses died before Israel crossed the Jordan, the composition of Deuteronomy could not have taken place any later than 1406 B.C.

Biblical context The biblical context consists of three components; the historical element, the socio-cultural element, and the theological element.

Historical element The events which form the historical context for Deuteronomy take place on the Plains of Moab which is situated on the East Bank of the Jordan opposite the Canaanite city of Jericho. The Exodus generation had finally died off and Moses had led the new generation from wandering in the wilderness to the Plains of Moab. Encamped there, they were waiting for the word from Yahweh to cross the Jordan and enter the Land of Promise. But before that could take place certain other events must happen. The covenant, which had been broken by the Exodus generation, must first be renewed by the new generation. Thus Moses leads the sons of Israel through a covenant renewal ceremony which is not fully realized until Israel crosses the Jordan and declares the covenant curses from atop Mount Ebal (chs. 27-30). Secondly, since God did not permit Moses to enter the Land of Promise with Israel, his death must take place (Deuteronomy 34:1-7) along with the orderly transfer of leadership from Moses to Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:1-8, Deuteronomy 31:14-21; Deuteronomy 34:9), Yahweh's appointed replacement for Moses. All of this takes place over the course of one month, after which all Israel mourns the death of Moses for 30 days (Deuteronomy 34:8).

Socio-cultural element The socio-cultural context in which the events of Deuteronomy are played out has not changed significantly from that of Numbers. In the former book, the Israelites were living a nomadic life for some 38 years while wandering about in the wilderness. Although the covenant-relationship between Yahweh and Israel had been disrupted as a result of Israel's refusal to obey Yahweh's command to enter the land promised to Abraham and take possession of it, the Mosaic Covenant had not been terminated. A fact that is well documented by Moses in Numbers. Israelite society, therefore, is yet bound by the stipulations of the Mosaic Covenant. As significant and complex is the socio-cultural context established by this covenant, it has little effect on understanding the theological message developed by Moses in Deuteronomy.

Theological element The theological context for Deuteronomy looks back on the previous four books of the Pentateuch and subsumes all of their theological revelations as foundational to its framework. Most significant of this now extensive context is the covenant Yahweh has entered into with the nation as whole at Sinai, and which has been broken by the Exodus generation through their refusal to obey Yahweh and enter the Promised Land. Consequently, as the new generation is poised to enter and take possession of the land of Canaan, Israel's covenant-relationship with Yahweh is disrupted and must be restored through a renewal of the covenant. Yahweh's basis for not terminating the covenant and destroying Israel for their disobedience to the covenant stipulations is his unconditional covenant with Abraham. Yahweh's faithfulness to the conditional Mosaic Covenant is, as noted in Numbers, founded on the unconditional covenant He made with Abraham. This is significant because it demonstrates that God will fulfill all the promises He made with Abraham independent of Israel's faithfulness to Him. Thus the disruption of Israel's covenant-relationship with Yahweh sets the theological stage for Deuteronomy in that Israel cannot enter into the Land and take possession of it without Yahweh's blessings which are conditioned on the nation walking in covenant-relationship with him. Thus a major addition to the theological context of Deuteronomy is the concept of covenant renewal.

Analysis of the text Broad descriptive overview of the text

Chapter

Descriptive Summary

3-Jan

review of Israel's history from Mount Sinai to the Plains of Moab;

4

call to obedience;

10-May

review/reiteration and expansion of the Law;

11-Oct

call to commitment with promise of blessings and cursings;

12

laws concerning central sanctuary;

13

laws concerning false prophets and worship of other gods;

14

laws concerning clean and unclean food;

laws concerning tithes;

15

laws concerning Sabbatical year;

16

laws concerning festivals;

laws concerning judges;

17

laws concerning worship of the Lord;

laws concerning court cases;

laws concerning Kings;

18

laws concerning Levites;

laws concerning separation from practices of the people living in the Land;

laws concerning the Prophet like Moses;

19

laws concerning cities of refuge;

laws concerning witnesses;

20

laws concerning going to war;

21

laws concerning manslaughter;

laws concerning marriage and family;

22

laws concerning moral and ethical issues;

23

laws concerning the congregation;

laws concerning society;

24-25

laws concerning society;

26

laws concerning first fruits and tithes;

27

charge to keep all the commands;

curses to be recited from Mount Ebal after entering the Land;

28

promises of blessings for obedience;

promises of curses for disobedience;

29-30

renewal of the Covenant;

31

Moses' personal charge to Israel and to Joshua;

command for public reading of the Law every seven years during

Feast of Tabernacle;

32

Song of Moses;

33

Moses' blessings of the tribes of Israel;

34

death of Moses;

Major theological theme The literary shape of Deuteronomy, as discussed below, makes evident the theological emphasis of the Book of Deuteronomy. The Mosaic covenant, which Israel entered into with Yahweh at Mount Sinai, is reiterated, expounded on, and expanded by Moses as he leads the new generation in renewing the covenant prior to their entering the Land of Promise to possess it. The continual rebelling of the Exodus generation, culminating in their defiant refusal to obey Yahweh and enter the land of Canaan and take possession of it, led to their breaking of the covenant. Hence the necessity for renewing the covenant by the new generation.

What is significant in Deuteronomy, and different from the presentation of the covenant stipulations recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, is Moses' expounding of the Law and expansion of it, and his inclusion of promises of blessing for obedience to the Law and threats of curses for disobedience to the Law. Because of Israel's passed history of continual rebellion against Yahweh, and the severity of the curses promised for disobedience, Moses, again and again, exhorts the new generation to obey the covenant stipulations.

Significantly, the curses enumerated far outweigh the blessings. Further, there is a progression in the degree of severity of the curses, with the worst of all possible curses culminating in the violent expulsion of Israel out of the Land of their inheritance and into exile where they will once again serve their enemies under the yoke of oppression (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). In view in this worst case scenario are the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities (Deuteronomy 28:36), as well as a horrific description of the devastation that will result from the invading army God will send against His people in response to their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:45-68).

Yet Yahweh is ever faithful to His elect people whom He promised Abraham He would bless. Thus along with the threat of destruction of the nation due to disobedience to the Law of the Covenant, a promise is given for restoration in response to repentance. Even in the worst case with Israel expelled from the land and scattered among the nations in exile, if the remnant of Israel will return to Yahweh and obey Him with all their heart and with all their soul according to all that is written in the Law, then Yahweh will gather His people from the lands that He scattered them and have compassion on them and restore them to the Land of Promise and bless them abundantly (Deuteronomy 30:1-10).

Literary characteristics

Literarily, as Kalland (1992:3-4) has noted, the Book of Deuteronomy may be approached from several different directions:

1. as a "Book of the Law"
2. as a series of addresses—an exposition of the Law—given by Moses with materials that are repetitive of formerly given content in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, and with additions to it; The major divisions for such a structuring of Deuteronomy are:

Introduction (Deuteronomy 1:1-5) Moses' First Message (Deuteronomy 1:6-46; Deuteronomy 2:1-37; Deuteronomy 3:1-29; Deuteronomy 4:1-49)

Moses' Second Message (Deuteronomy 5:1-33; Deuteronomy 6:1-25; Deuteronomy 7:1-26; Deuteronomy 8:1-20; Deuteronomy 9:1-29; Deuteronomy 10:1-22; Deuteronomy 11:1-32; Deuteronomy 12:1-32; Deuteronomy 13:1-18; Deuteronomy 14:1-29; Deuteronomy 15:1-23; Deuteronomy 16:1-22; Deuteronomy 17:1-20; Deuteronomy 18:1-22; Deuteronomy 19:1-21; Deuteronomy 20:1-20; Deuteronomy 21:1-23; Deuteronomy 22:1-30; Deuteronomy 23:1-25; Deuteronomy 24:1-22; Deuteronomy 25:1-19; Deuteronomy 26:1-19) Moses' Third Message (Deuteronomy 27:1-26; Deuteronomy 28:1-68; Deuteronomy 29:1-29; Deuteronomy 30:1-20) Epilogue (Deuteronomy 31:1-30; Deuteronomy 32:1-52; Deuteronomy 33:1-29; Deuteronomy 34:1-12)

3. as a covenant-treaty in both form and content (see, for example, Deuteronomy 29:1; Deuteronomy 31:9-13, Deuteronomy 31:24-26), including the narratives of the adoption of that agreement and the exhortations to adopt the covenant-treaty and to adhere to its stipulations;
4. as a compendium of the directives of Yahweh given through Moses to prepare the second generation for the conquest, occupation, and settlement to the land of Canaan;

It becomes clear, however, from a comparison of suzerainty-vassal treaties of the second millennium B.C. with the form and content of Deuteronomy that the whole of this last book of the Pentateuch is in the covenant–treaty form of that age (see the Introduction to the Pentateuch for a discussion of this similarity). The procedure for the establishment and continuity of these treaties, as well as their literary structure, lends itself strikingly to the covenant which defines the relationship between Yahweh and His chosen people. The main components of the Near Eastern treaties of this era include:

1. preamble;
2. historical prologue;
3. stipulations, laws, and regulations;
4. arrangements for depositing treaty copies;
5. arrangements for the regular reading of the treaty before the people;
6. witnesses to the covenant agreement;
7. curses for violating the covenant stipulations, and blessings for obedience to them;

Collectively, the Deuteronomic address of Moses follow this order, although in addition to the historical prologue, historical allusions are intermixed along with exhortations to Israel to give heed to Yahweh their God and to obey the covenant–treaty stipulations, which Moses not only states but also expounds on. This structure, which does not strictly follow the development of the Deuteronomy text, is summarized as:

1. preamble—Deuteronomy 1:1-5;
2. historical prologue— Deuteronomy 1:6-46; Deuteronomy 2:1-37; Deuteronomy 3:1-29; Deuteronomy 4:1-43;
3. stipulations, laws, and regulations—Deuteronomy 4:44-49; Deuteronomy 5:1-33; Deuteronomy 6:1-25; Deuteronomy 7:1-26; Deuteronomy 8:1-20; Deuteronomy 9:1-29; Deuteronomy 10:1-22; Deuteronomy 11:1-32; Deuteronomy 12:1-32; Deuteronomy 13:1-18; Deuteronomy 14:1-29; Deuteronomy 15:1-23; Deuteronomy 16:1-22; Deuteronomy 17:1-20; Deuteronomy 18:1-22; Deuteronomy 19:1-21; Deuteronomy 20:1-20; Deuteronomy 21:1-23; Deuteronomy 22:1-30; Deuteronomy 23:1-25; Deuteronomy 24:1-22; Deuteronomy 25:1-19; Deuteronomy 26:1-15;
4. arrangements for depositing treaty copies— Deuteronomy 31:24-26;
5. arrangements for regular reading of the treaty—Deuteronomy 30:9-12;
6. witnesses of the covenant agreement—Deuteronomy 4:26; Deuteronomy 30:19; Deuteronomy 31:28;
7. curses and blessings—Deuteronomy 28:1-68;

Additionally, the Book of Deuteronomy calls for the renewal of the covenant, first entered into at Mount Sinai with the Exodus generation, as preparation for the new, or second, generation's entrance into Canaan—its conquest and occupation—and presents the way of life that the sons of

Israel were to follow in the Land of Promise. Further, Deuteronomy makes provision for the transition of the covenant mediatorship through the commissioning of Joshua to replace Moses at his death.

Unlike the Book of Exodus, which records the proposal, ratification, and foundational stipulations of the covenant, the Book of Deuteronomy is structured in the form of the suzerainty-vassal treaty. Thus, an appropriate outline of Deuteronomy, and one that correctly portrays the development of the message, has the following major divisions (a discussion of these divisions can be found in Craigie 1976:36-45):

1. preamble to the renewed covenant—Deuteronomy 1:1-5;
2. historical prologue to the renewed covenant—Deuteronomy 1:6-46; Deuteronomy 2:1-37; Deuteronomy 3:1-29; Deuteronomy 4:1-43;
3. stipulations and responsibilities of the renewed covenant—Deuteronomy 4:44-49; Deuteronomy 5:1-33; Deuteronomy 6:1-25; Deuteronomy 7:1-26; Deuteronomy 8:1-20; Deuteronomy 9:1-29; Deuteronomy 10:1-22; Deuteronomy 11:1-32; Deuteronomy 12:1-32; Deuteronomy 13:1-18; Deuteronomy 14:1-29; Deuteronomy 15:1-23; Deuteronomy 16:1-22; Deuteronomy 17:1-20; Deuteronomy 18:1-22; Deuteronomy 19:1-21; Deuteronomy 20:1-20; Deuteronomy 21:1-23; Deuteronomy 22:1-30; Deuteronomy 23:1-25; Deuteronomy 24:1-22; Deuteronomy 25:1-19; Deuteronomy 26:1-15;
4. renewal, ratification, and sanctions (blessings and curses) of the covenant—Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Deuteronomy 27:1-26; Deuteronomy 28:1-68; Deuteronomy 29:1-29; Deuteronomy 30:1-20;
5. provisions for the continuance of the covenant—Deuteronomy 31:1-30; Deuteronomy 32:1-52; Deuteronomy 33:1-29; Deuteronomy 34:1-12;

Synthesis of the text as a unified and coherent whole The analyses discussed above have been used, implicitly and explicitly, to obtain an understanding of Deuteronomy as a unified and coherent whole. This understanding is expressed here in the form of the statement of its message, its synthetic structure, and a synthesis of the text which follows from that message and structure.

Development and statement of the message The reiteration of the covenant stipulations recorded in Deuteronomy most likely were necessitated by the need to renew the covenant with the new generation after it had been effectively broken by the Exodus generation. Further, there was a need to expound the fundamental statutes and judgments previously given in order to better inform the new, and soon to be Conquest, generation on more of the specific stipulations brought into focus because Israel was about to transition from a nomadic way of living to a more sedentary lifestyle. And because of this, there was a need to expand these stipulations to take into account Israel's new community lifestyle. The message of Deuteronomy is focused on the book's strong emphasis of covenant renewal to which Moses led the new generation as they were poised on the Plains of Moab to enter the Land of Promise (see, for example, Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Deuteronomy 29:1; chs. 27-29). The issue of Deuteronomy seems not to be so much the need for covenant renewal as the Israelites were apparently willing to do that. Rather it seems to be the degree to which they were willing to commit themselves in obedience to Yahweh. The foundational

principle on which the whole of the covenant stood required Israel obey Yahweh wholeheartedly. Thus throughout this book Moses places a major stress on obedience to Yahweh and His commandments (see, Deuteronomy 4:5, Deuteronomy 4:13-14, Deuteronomy 4:40; Deuteronomy 5:1, Deuteronomy 5:29, Deuteronomy 5:32; Deuteronomy 6:1, Deuteronomy 6:24-25; Deuteronomy 7:11-12; Deuteronomy 8:1, Deuteronomy 8:6; Deuteronomy 11:1, Deuteronomy 11:8, Deuteronomy 11:13, Deuteronomy 11:22, Deuteronomy 11:26, Deuteronomy 11:32; Deuteronomy 12:1, Deuteronomy 12:32; Deuteronomy 13:4, Deuteronomy 13:18; Deuteronomy 15:5; Deuteronomy 17:19; Deuteronomy 19:9; Deuteronomy 26:16-17; Deuteronomy 27:2, Deuteronomy 27:10; Deuteronomy 28:1, Deuteronomy 28:13, Deuteronomy 28:15, Deuteronomy 28:45, Deuteronomy 28:56, Deuteronomy 28:62; Deuteronomy 29:9; Deuteronomy 30:8, Deuteronomy 30:10, Deuteronomy 30:15-17, Deuteronomy 30:20; Deuteronomy 31:12). The point that Moses is making is that what is required is absolute obedience. Nothing short of total commitment to Yahweh will do as Moses calls for the sons of Israel to love Yahweh with all their heart and soul (Deuteronomy 4:29; Deuteronomy 30:2, Deuteronomy 30:10) and to fear Him and obey all His commandments (see, Deuteronomy 4:10; Deuteronomy 14:23; Deuteronomy 17:19; Deuteronomy 31:12-13)

Another important factor that drives the development of the message of Deuteronomy is the fact that this is now Moses speaking. No longer does the text say "And Yahweh spoke to Moses" as it so often does in the Books of Exodus (see, for example, Exodus 5:1; Exodus 6:1; Exodus 7:1, Exodus 7:14; Exodus 8:1, Exodus 8:16, Exodus 8:20; etc.), Leviticus (Leviticus 1:1; Leviticus 4:1; Leviticus 5:14; Leviticus 6:1, Leviticus 6:8 etc.), and Numbers (Numbers 1:1; Numbers 2:1; Numbers 4:1, Numbers 4:21; Numbers 5:1, Numbers 5:11; Numbers 6:1; Numbers 8:1; etc.). Further, Moses is not just reiterating what Yahweh had revealed to him, but is expounding the word of God given to him. Here it is important to recognize that the word Moses is expounding is the Ten Commandments (ch. 5). The foundation of the covenant law is the Ten Commandments. That is what Yahweh gave to Moses on the top of Mount Sinai, what Yahweh told to the sons of Israel when He spoke to them from Mount Sinai, what Yahweh inscribed on tablets of stone and which was deposited in the Ark of the Covenant (Deuteronomy 4:10-13; Deuteronomy 9:10; Deuteronomy 10:1-5), and that is what Moses expounded before the sons of Israel (ch. 5) to give them covenant stipulations which were to be obeyed (chs. 6-7, and 12-26).

One other factor that is important for the message of the Book of Deuteronomy, and that differs from the covenant law presented in the Book of Exodus, is the strong emphasis placed on the covenant sanctions of blessings and curses (Deut chs. 27-29), particularly on the curses where there are approximately five times more verses dealing with curses than are dealing with blessings. The message of the Book of Deuteronomy may be determined on the basis of these considerations and the analyses discussed above. The analysis of the text of Deuteronomy suggests that a possible subject for this book is Yahweh's terms of covenant renewal. When viewed from this perspective, the text of Deuteronomy may be understood as making the following theological judgment/evaluation about this subject:

■PRIVATE "TYPE=PICT;ALT=" This understanding of Deuteronomy leads to the following synthetic structure and synthesis of its text as a unified and coherent whole.

Synthetic structure of the text Broad synthetic structure

I Identification of the covenant mediator, and the time and place of covenant renewal—preamble to the renewed covenant (Deuteronomy 1:1-5)

II Covenant history as a basis for covenant renewal in preparation for entering and possessing the Land—historical prologue to the renewed covenant (1:6–4:43) A. Covenant history from Mount Sinai to the Plains of Moab (1:6–3:29) 1. covenant history from Mount Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea (Deuteronomy 1:6-46) 2. covenant history from Kadesh-Barnea to the Plains of Moab (Deuteronomy 2:1-25) 3. covenant history of the conquest of the Transjordan (2:26–3:29)

B. Covenant history at Mount Sinai—review of Israel's entrance into covenant-relationship (Deuteronomy 4:1-40) C. Appointment of the cities of refuge in the Transjordan (Deuteronomy 4:41-43)

III Stipulations of the renewed covenant reiterated, expanded, expounded, and exhorted for living in the Land (4:44–26:15) A. Historical setting for the recapitulation and explication of the Law (Deuteronomy 4:44-49) B. Reiteration, explication, and exhortation of the Ten Commandments (5:1–11:32) 1. reiteration of the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:1-33) 2. explication exhortation of the First Commandment (Deuteronomy 6:1-25) 3. explication and exhortation of the Second Commandment (Deuteronomy 7:1-26) 4. exhortation to remember Yahweh's covenant faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness (8:1–10:10) 5. call to covenant faithfulness through obedience to the covenant stipulations (10:12–11:32) C. Specific covenant stipulations required for living in the Land (12:1–26:15) 1. stipulations pertaining to cultic and ceremonial order (12:1–16:17) 2. stipulations pertaining to civil order (16:18–20:20) 3. stipulations pertaining to social order (21:1–26:15) IV Renewal, ratification, and sanctions of the covenant (26:16–30:20) A. Declaration of covenant renewal (Deuteronomy 26:16-19) B. Ratification of the renewed covenant (27:1–30:20) 1. ratification ceremony to be observed upon entering the Land (Deuteronomy 27:1-26) 2. declaration of the renewed covenant sanctions (Deuteronomy 28:1-68) 3. oath of covenant renewal (29:1–30:20)

V Provision for the continuance of the covenant—transition of covenant mediator from Moses to Joshua (chs. 31–34) A. Final charges to Israel and the commissioning of Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:1-29) B Conclusion of Moses' mediatorial role (31:30–33:29) C Transfer of responsibility of covenant mediator from Moses to Joshua (ch. 34) Detailed Synthetic Structure

I Identification of the covenant mediator, and the time and place of covenant renewal—preamble to the renewed covenant (Deuteronomy 1:1-5) II Covenant history as a basis for covenant renewal—historical prologue to the renewed covenant (1:6–4:43) A. Covenant history from Mount Sinai to the Plains of Moab (1:6–3:29) 1. The covenant history from Mount Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea (Deuteronomy 1:6-446) a. departure from Sinai (Deuteronomy 1:6-8) b. appointment of leaders (Deuteronomy 1:9-18) c. rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea (Deuteronomy 1:19-46) 2. covenant history from Kadesh-Barnea to the Plains of Moab (Deuteronomy 2:1-25) a. wandering in the wilderness for 40 years (Deuteronomy 2:1-3) b. journey around Edom by way of the wilderness of Moab (Deuteronomy 2:4-25) 3. covenant history of the conquest of the Transjordan (2:26–3:29) a. defeat of Sihon and the Amorites (Deuteronomy 2:26-37) b. defeat of Og and the taking of the land of Gilead and Bashan (Deuteronomy 3:1-11) c. division of the Transjordan between Reuben, Gad, and half-tribe of Manasseh (Deuteronomy 3:12-20) d. Yahweh's refusal to permit Moses to enter the Land and His directive to replace Moses with Joshua (Deuteronomy 3:21-29)

B. Covenant history at Mount Sinai—review of Israel's entering into covenant-relationship (Deuteronomy 4:1-40) 1. call to obedience in keeping the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 4:1-8)

2. historical constituting of Israel under the covenant—call to remember the day Israel agreed to the covenant at Horeb/Mount Sinai (Deuteronomy 4:9-14) 3. warning to be careful to obey the first of the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 4:15-31) a. warning against idolatry which is a clear violation of the First Commandment (Deuteronomy 4:15-24) b. prophetic warning of Israel's falling away from Yahweh in the latter days for violating the First Commandment (Deuteronomy 4:25-31)

4. Israel's unique relationship with Yahweh as His chosen people to whom He revealed Himself and of whom He demands covenantal obedience (Deuteronomy 4:32-40) C. appointment of the cities of refuge in the Transjordan (Deuteronomy 4:41-43)

III Stipulations of the renewed covenant reiterated, expanded, expounded, and exhorted for living in the Land (4:44–26:15)

A. Historical setting for the reiteration and explication of the Law (Deuteronomy 4:44-49) B. Reiteration, explication, and exhortation of the Ten Commandments (5:1–11:32)

1. reiteration of the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:1-33) a. historical circumstances of the covenant agreement entered into at Sinai (Deuteronomy 5:1-5) b. reiteration of the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:6-21) c. appointment of Moses as covenant mediator (Deuteronomy 5:22-33) 2. explication and exhortation of the First Commandment (Deuteronomy 6:1-25) a. intent of the Ten Commandments—teach Israel to fear God, keep His commandments and so be blessed (Deuteronomy 6:1-3) b. greatest aspect of the commandment—love God wholeheartedly (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) c. provision for propagating obedience to the commandments from generation to generation (Deuteronomy 6:6-9) c. exhortation to remember in the time of prosperity that it was Yahweh who gave Israel all the good things of life (Deuteronomy 6:10-15) d. reason for Israel's need to obey the commandments—to fear Yahweh and so be blessed (Deuteronomy 6:16-25) 3. explication and exhortation of the Second Commandment (Deuteronomy 7:1-26) a. commandment to utterly destroy the Canaanites and their instruments of idolatry (Deuteronomy 7:1-5) b. reason for such a radical command—Israel was chosen to be a holy people separated to Yahweh their God for His own possession (Deuteronomy 7:6-11) c. result of obedience to the commandments—Yahweh will keep His covenant and bless Israel (Deuteronomy 7:12-16) d. exhortation not to fear the people of Canaan (Deuteronomy 7:17-24) e. exhortation to destroy all the idols of the Canaanites (Deuteronomy 7:25-26)

4. exhortation to remember Yahweh's covenant faithfulness in spite of Israel's unfaithfulness (8:1–10:11) a. exhortation to remember Yahweh's covenant faithfulness (8:1–9:6) (1) exhortation to remember it was Yahweh who provided for Israel for 40 years in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:1-6)

(2) exhortation to remember in time of prosperity it was Yahweh, who gave Israel the blessings of good land, and an abundance of water, food, houses, and herds (Deuteronomy 8:7-17) (3) exhortation to remember Yahweh who blesses Israel to confirm His covenant with the Patriarchs (Deuteronomy 8:18-20)

(4) exhortation to know it is Yahweh who is going before Israel to bring His people safely into the Land (Deuteronomy 9:1-6) b. exhortation to remember Israel's unfaithfulness to the covenant

(9:7–10:11)

(1) exhortation to remember Israel's unfaithfulness to the covenant at Horeb when they rebelled against Yahweh by worshiping the golden calf (Deuteronomy 9:7-21)

(2) exhortation to remember Israel's unfaithfulness to the covenant at Taberah and Kibroth Hattaavah where they provoked Yahweh to anger (Deuteronomy 9:22)

(3) exhortation to remember Israel's unfaithfulness to the covenant at Kadesh-Barnea where they rebelled against Yahweh by defiantly refusing to enter the Land (9:23–10:11) 5. call to covenant faithfulness through wholehearted obedience to the covenant stipulations (10:12–11:32) a. requirement of allegiance to Yahweh—to fear, love and obey Him—who chose Israel's forefathers and them as well, to set His affection on them to love them (Deuteronomy 10:12-22) b. call to love Yahweh and obey His commandments (Deuteronomy 11:1-32) C. Specific covenant stipulations required for living in the Land (12:1–26:15) 1. stipulations pertaining to cultic and ceremonial order (12:1–16:17) a. stipulations pertaining to the central sanctuary (Deuteronomy 12:1-28) b. stipulations pertaining to idolatry (12:29–13:18) c. stipulations pertaining to clean and unclean food (Deuteronomy 14:1-21) d stipulations pertaining to tithes (Deuteronomy 14:22-29) e. stipulations pertaining to the Sabbatical year (Deuteronomy 15:1-11) f. stipulations pertaining to the freeing of Hebrew slaves (Deuteronomy 15:12-18) g. stipulations pertaining to the consecration of first-born domestic animals (Deuteronomy 15:19-23) h. stipulations pertaining to the appointed feasts (Deuteronomy 16:1-17) 2. stipulations pertaining to civil order (16:18–20:20) a. stipulations pertaining to national leadership (16:18–18:22) (1) stipulations pertaining to judges (16:18–17:13) (2) stipulations pertaining to kings (Deuteronomy 17:14-20) (3) stipulations pertaining to priests and prophets (Deuteronomy 18:1-22) b. stipulations pertaining to cities of refuge (Deuteronomy 19:1-13) c. stipulations pertaining to boundary markers (Deuteronomy 19:14) d. stipulations pertaining to witnesses for criminal cases (Deuteronomy 19:15-21) e. stipulations pertaining to warfare and military service (Deuteronomy 20:1-20) 3. stipulations pertaining to social order (21:1–26:15) a. stipulations pertaining to manslaughter (Deuteronomy 21:1-9) b. stipulations pertaining to the family (Deuteronomy 21:10-23) c. stipulations pertaining to a countryman's property (Deuteronomy 22:1-4) d. stipulations pertaining to the confusion of the sexes, and to the mingling of seeds or of diverse animals (Deuteronomy 22:5-12) e. stipulations pertaining to marriage violations (Deuteronomy 22:13-30) f. stipulations pertaining to exclusion some from the assembly of Yahweh (Deuteronomy 23:1-14) g. stipulations pertaining to miscellaneous social issues (23:15–25:19) h. stipulations pertaining to the offering of first fruits and tithes to Yahweh (Deuteronomy 26:1-15) IV Renewal, ratification and sanctions of the covenant (26:16–30:20) A. Declaration of covenant renewal (Deuteronomy 26:16-19)

1. Israel's declaration of acceptance of Yahweh as their God and obedience to all His commandments (Deuteronomy 26:16-17)

2. Yahweh's declaration of acceptance of Israel as His people, a treasured possession which He shall set above all other nations (Deuteronomy 26:18-19) B. Ratification of the renewed covenant (27:1–30:20) 1. ratification ceremony to be observed upon entering the Land (Deuteronomy 27:1-26) a. Moses' charge to keep all the commandments of the covenant (Deuteronomy 27:1) b. Moses' charge to observe a ratification ceremony in the Land (Deuteronomy 27:2-26)

(1) Moses' charge to write out the all the words of the Law on stones and set them on Mount Ebal (Deuteronomy 27:2-8)

(2) Moses' declaration that Israel had "this day" renewed the covenant and become a people for Yahweh (Deuteronomy 27:9-10)

(3) Moses' charge for recitation of the covenant blessings on Mount Gerizim and covenant curses from Mount Ebal (Deuteronomy 27:11-26) 2. declaration of the renewed covenant sanctions (Deuteronomy 28:1-68) a. declaration of covenantal blessings which will result in response to obedience to the commandments (Deuteronomy 28:1-14) b. declaration of covenantal curses which will result in response to disobedience to the commandments (Deuteronomy 28:15-8) 3. oath of covenant renewal (29:1–30:20) a. Moses' call to Israel to take an oath of allegiance to Yahweh and His covenant (Deuteronomy 29:1-15) b. consequences of going back on the oath of covenant allegiance (Deuteronomy 29:16-29) c. promise of restoration to a state of blessing after repenting from going back on the oath of covenant allegiance (Deuteronomy 30:1-20)

V Provision for the continuance of the covenant—transition of covenant mediator from Moses to Joshua (31:1–34:12) A. Final charges to Israel and the commissioning of Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:1-30) 1. Moses' final charge (Deuteronomy 31:1-13) a. Moses' final charge to all Israel (Deuteronomy 31:1-6) b. Moses' final charge to Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:7-8) c. Moses' final charge to the priests to read the Law in the hearing of the people in every Sabbath year at the Feast of Booths (Deuteronomy 31:9-13) 2. Yahweh's commissioning of Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:14-23) a. Yahweh's command to Moses to bring Joshua before Him that He might commission him (Deuteronomy 31:14-15) b. Yahweh's revelation to Moses that Israel will forsake Him for other gods and break the covenant for which He will severely punish them (Deuteronomy 31:16-18) c. Yahweh's command to Moses to write a song and teach it to the sons of Israel that it might be a witness for Him against His people (Deuteronomy 31:19-22) d. commissioning of Joshua with the charge to be strong and courageous (Deuteronomy 31:23)

3. Moses' charge to the Levites to deposit the book of the Law in the Ark of the Covenant as a witness against Israel (Deuteronomy 31:24-29) B Conclusion of Moses' mediatorial role (31:30-33:29) 1. The Song of Moses: Israel's responsibilities to the covenant (31:30-32:47) 2. Yahweh's directives to Moses concerning his death (Deuteronomy 32:48-52) 3. Moses' final (prophetic) blessing upon Israel, tribe by tribe (Deuteronomy 33:1-29) C Transfer of responsibility of covenant mediator from Moses to Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:1-12) 1. death of Moses (Deuteronomy 34:1-8) 2. succession of Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:9) 3. priority of Moses as a prophet in Israel (Deuteronomy 34:10-12) Synthesis of the text

Based on the message statement and synthetic structure developed above the synthesis of the text of Deuteronomy may be constructed as:

I Yahweh's terms of covenant renewal are expressed through Moses, the mediator of the covenant, as he reiterates, expands, and expounds the Law to Israel on the Plains of Moab where the new generation is poised to enter and take possession of the Land. (Deuteronomy 1:1-5)

II Yahweh's terms of covenant renewal must be understood in the context of Israel's covenant history. (1:6–4:49)

A. Moses' review of Israel's covenant history from Mount Sinai to the Plains of Moab demonstrates Yahweh's faithfulness to the covenant in spite of Israel's repeated unfaithfulness to it. (1:6–3:29)

1. Moses' review of Israel's covenant history from Mount Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea demonstrates Yahweh's faithfulness to the covenant in spite of Israel's defiant refusal to enter and take possession of the Land, for although He executed judgment upon the Exodus generation He extended the promise of inheriting the Land to the next generation. (Deuteronomy 1:6-46)

2. Moses' review of Israel's covenant history from Kadesh-Barnea to the Transjordan demonstrates Yahweh's faithfulness to the covenant for although the Exodus generation was under condemnation, yet for the sake of the new generation He provided for all of Israel's needs for 40 years in the wilderness and brought His people safely to the Plains of Moab. (Deuteronomy 2:1-25)

3. Moses' review of Israel's covenant history in the region of the Transjordan demonstrates Yahweh's continued faithfulness to the covenant by showing that He gave Israel victory over Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and gave Israel all their land which was then apportioned to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh as an inheritance. (2:26–3:29)

B. Moses' review of Israel's entrance into covenant-relationship at Sinai provides the context for his call to obedience to the Ten Commandments and for his issuing a warning against idolatry which will cause Israel to be exiled from the Land, yet Yahweh's faithfulness to the covenant holds out a promise of restoration in response to a wholehearted return to Him. (Deuteronomy 4:1-40)

C. Moses' appointment of cities of refuge in the Transjordan extends the jurisdiction of the Law to the land east of the Jordan thus establishing that the sons of Israel living there are subject to the statutes and judgments of the covenant just as are the sons of Israel living in the land promised to Abraham. (Deuteronomy 4:41-43)

III Yahweh's terms of covenant renewal must be met in wholehearted obedience to the covenant stipulations which are reiterated, expanded, expounded, and exhorted on by Moses. (4:44–26:15)

A. Moses' reiteration and explication of the Law occurs on the east side of the Jordan in the region of the Transjordan where the new generation is poised to enter the Land. (Deuteronomy 4:44-49)

B. Moses' reiteration, explication, and exhortation of the Ten Commandments demands wholehearted obedience. (5:1–11:22)

1. Moses' reiteration of the covenant stipulations to the new generation begins with the Ten Commandments which were given directly by Yahweh at Sinai to the Exodus generation. (Deuteronomy 5:1-33)

2. Moses' explication of the First Commandment reveals that the greatest aspect of the foundational stipulation of the covenant is to love Yahweh wholeheartedly. (Deuteronomy 6:1-25)

3. Moses' explication and exhortation of the Second Commandment demands that Israel separate themselves from the people and gods of the nations they are displacing by utterly destroying them. (Deuteronomy 7:1-26)

4. Moses' exhortation to remember Yahweh's covenant faithfulness, in spite of Israel's continual rebellion against Him, serves as a warning to remember Yahweh in the time of prosperity because He is the one who is blessing them and therefore they ought not to forget Him or His commandments. (8:1–10:11) a. Moses exhortation to remember in the time of prosperity that it is not because Israel is righteous or mighty that they are prospering, serves to warn Israel they ought to remain faithful to Yahweh by obeying His commandments for it is because of His covenant faithfulness that they are blessed, just as they were blessed for 40 years in the wilderness. (8:1–9:6) b. Moses exhortation to remember Israel's history of continual rebellion against Yahweh, beginning at Horeb where they worshiped the golden calf, and then at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth Hattaavah where they provoked Yahweh to anger, and again at Kadesh-Barnea where they defiantly refused to enter the Land, confronts the new generation with Israel's propensity to rebel and therefore the need to obey His commandments wholeheartedly. (9:7-10:11)

5. Moses' call for wholehearted love for Yahweh and obedience to His commandments constitutes Israel's necessary response to Him because He is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great and mighty God to whom belongs the whole world yet He chose their fathers and them above all the people of the earth to set His affection on them to love them. (10:12–11:32)

C. Moses' exposition and expansion of the renewed terms of the covenant focuses on specific stipulations which demand wholehearted obedience for living in the Land in a state of blessing. (12:12–16:15)

1. Moses' exposition of the renewed terms of the covenant pertaining to cultic and ceremonial order demands wholehearted obedience on the part of the covenant community to specific stipulations concerned with such issues as the priority of the central sanctuary, idolatry, clean and unclean food, tithes, the Sabbatical year, and the keeping of the three appointed festivals. (12:1–16:17)

2. Moses' exposition of the renewed terms of the covenant pertaining to civil order in the covenant community demands wholehearted obedience on the part of the national leadership—judges, kings, priests, and prophets—to specific stipulations governing their leadership, and on the part of the people to specific statutes and judgments concerned with cities of refuge, boundary markers, witnesses, and warfare and military service. (16:18–20:20)

Moses' exposition of the renewed terms of the covenant pertaining to social order in the covenant community demands wholehearted obedience on the part of the people to specific stipulations concerned with such social issues as manslaughter, family relationships, property rights, confusion of the sexes, and the exclusion of those who are unclean from the assembly of Yahweh. (21:1–26:15)

IV Yahweh's terms of covenant renewal requires the new generation to ratify the covenant and take an oath of allegiance to Him and His covenant. (26:16–30:20)

A. The renewed terms of the covenant obliges Israel to ratify the covenant by declaring Yahweh to be their God whom they will obey, and for Yahweh to declare Israel to be His people whom He will set high above all other nations. (Deuteronomy 26:16-19)

B. The renewed terms of the covenant necessitates Israel conduct a ceremony declaring the covenant curses and blessings, and take an oath of allegiance to Yahweh and His commandments. (27:1–30:20)

1. Finalization of the ratification of covenant renewal requires Israel to conduct a ceremony from atop Mounts Gerizim and Ebal on the day they enter the Land, where they are to declare the commandments of Yahweh and denounce as cursed the one who breaks anyone of the Ten Commandments. (Deuteronomy 27:1-26)

2. The renewed terms of the covenant include the promise of great blessings in return for obedience to Yahweh's commandments, and sanctions involving cruel curses, the ultimate of which is destruction of the nation and exile from the Land, in response to defiant disobedience. (Deuteronomy 28:1-68)

3. The renewed terms of the covenant call for an oath of allegiance to Yahweh and His commandments, which if turned away from will eventually result in destruction of the nation and exile from the Land, yet a promise is offered for restoration to the Land and for spiritual renewal in response to wholehearted repentance and a return to Yahweh. (29:1–30:20) a. Moses' call to take an oath of allegiance to the covenant points to the historical witness as confirming Yahweh's oath to the covenant, and to the new generation as witnesses confirming Israel's oath, yet the extent of the oath of covenant allegiance extends to not just the present generation, but future generations as well. (Deuteronomy 29:1-15) b. The consequences to Israel for going back on the oath of covenant allegiance foresee the destruction of the nation and exile of the people from the Land as the full extent of the curses of the covenant falls upon people and land, for although chosen people are privileged to possess the revelation of God, they also have the responsibility of obedience to that revelation. (Deuteronomy 29:16-29) c. A promise of physical restoration to the Land and to a state of material blessing and spiritual renewal is offered in response to wholehearted repentance. (Deuteronomy 30:1-20)

(1) The promise of a gathering of the exiles and restoration from captivity to a state of blessing in the Land is offered in response to wholehearted repentance. (Deuteronomy 30:1-5)

(2) The promise of spiritual renewal through Yahweh's circumcising of the hearts of the sons of Israel, making it disposed to love Yahweh and obey Him, is offered in response to wholehearted repentance. (Deuteronomy 30:6-10)

(3) Moses' concluding charge to Israel to choose life and prosperity through obedience to the commandments of the covenant, rather than death and adversity through disobedience, places the burden of responsibility upon the sons of Israel for true covenant renewal. (Deuteronomy 30:11-20)

V. Yahweh's terms of covenant renewal, established through the mediatorial work of Moses, requires a continuity in covenant mediators which is provided through Yahweh's commissioning of Joshua to replace Moses. (31:1–34:12)

A. The transition of covenant mediator from Moses to Joshua entails Moses' final charges to Israel, to Joshua, and to the priests, and continues with Yahweh's commissioning of Joshua. (Deuteronomy 31:1-29)

B The conclusion to Moses' mediatorial work is marked by the Song of Moses, by Yahweh's directives concerning his imminent death, and by Moses' final blessing which he conferred on Israel tribe by tribe. (31:30–33:29)

C The completion of the transfer of covenant mediator from Moses to Joshua occurs as Moses dies and Joshua succeeds him, yet neither Joshua nor any mediator following him had the stature of Moses for no prophet has risen in Israel whom Yahweh knew face to face. (Deuteronomy 34:1-12)

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