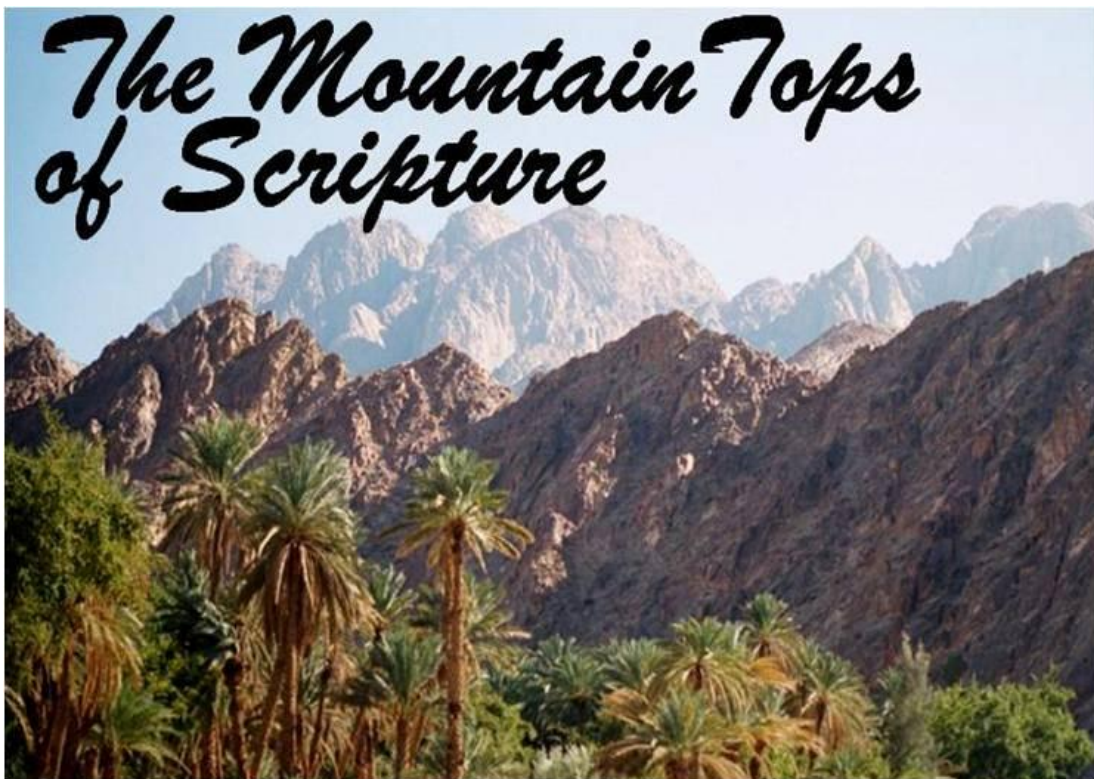


Basic Training Bible Ministries

The Mountaintops of Scripture

A Broad Sweep of the Plan of God



Northern Virginia

23–25 March 2012

The Mountaintops of Scripture

**An overview of Bible history with an emphasis on
the divine promise and fulfillment in Jesus Christ
and a dispensational walk through the Bible**

Introduction

The goals of this study are three-fold: first, to help the Bible student “think through” the Bible story along the lines of God’s promises and their fulfillment in the Person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. The second objective is for us to gain a sense of how to “rightly divide” the Word of God, according to its own inherent pattern. In so doing, we are able to see its unity and minimize supposed contradictions. Finally, this overall grasp of Scripture will enable us to “tell the story” to others, keeping the focus where it belongs—on Jesus Christ the Savior.

The Bible “Rightly Divided”

“Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Tim 2:15

It is fitting that this instruction comes in one of the “pastoral epistles.” In it, the Apostle Paul indicates that proper, diligent study is aimed at a method, and that method is to correctly divide the Bible into its proper divisions. The phrase “rightly dividing” comes from the compound verb *orthotomeo* in the Greek. The word *ortho* means “straight,” and *tomeo* means “to cut” in the infinitive. This word was used for a stone-mason cutting the stones so that they fit together, an apt picture of accurate Bible study.

When improper or inadequate methods of Bible study are used, the Bible never quite “fits together.” There are gaps, and what appear to be contradictions. The majority of these obstacles disappear with the proper approach to biblical interpretation. The only approach to Bible study that “rightly divides” God’s Word is the literal, or dispensational, method. The dispensational perspective recognizes that ...

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God [i.e., “God-breathed”] and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Tim 3:16

But while all Scripture is **for** the believer living in this present age, not all is written **to** us, in a direct sense. From Genesis to Revelation, there are valuable spiritual lessons for us to learn. However, the instructions given to believers in other ages, or dispensations, cannot be directly applied to those of us living in the present Church Age. Literal interpretation recognizes the spiritual value of past revelation, but does not discount the importance of progressive revelation. Consider three texts that follow:

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” Rom 15:4

“Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” 1Co 10:11

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son ...” Heb 1:1

From these passages we can gain some valuable principles of interpretation. First, the entire Bible is for our spiritual instruction and edification. Second, God’s plan is unfolding in different ages, and we find ourselves in the “ends of the ages.” Third, in God’s plan of unfolding revelation, the past message through the prophets is not as relevant to us today as His present revelation through Jesus Christ, the living Word.

The Dispensational Approach

We get our word “dispensation” from the Greek word *oikonomia* which is variously translated in our Bibles as “dispensation” or “stewardship” (Luk 16:2–4; 1Co 9:7; Eph 1:10, 3:2; Col 1:25). It is also the root for our word “economy.” A bit of etymology along with historical background helps clarify the meaning. The Greek word *oikos* means “house,” while *nomos* comes from the word for “law.” The “law of the household” referred to the will of the “householder,” which was administered by his “steward,” the most trusted servant. Thus Paul’s “stewardship” (1Co 4:1–2; Col 1:25) was to administer the “law of the household” (the Church) during the present “dispensation of the fullness of times” (Eph 1:10), “dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph 3:2).

That history is comprised of different “dispensations,” in which different “economies” or “household laws” apply, is evident to even a casual Bible student. The very distinction between the “Old Testament” and the “New Testament” is a dispensational distinction. Further, the author of Hebrews draws a distinction between Moses, as the steward of his “household,” and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the “*Son over His own house, whose house [the Church] we are*” (Heb 3:1–6). Because of progressive revelation, what God requires of His people in one administration differs from the requirements of a later dispensation. An animal sacrifice under the old dispensation is only a “shadow,” but now is fulfilled in the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Heb 10:1–10). It is essential to understand, however, that while the evidence of obedience may differ in every age, the root is always faith in the revealed Word and will of God.

The dispensational approach to Bible study is diametrically opposed to the allegorical approach so popular today. Whereas the allegorical approach finds its authority in the “*heathen theories of Plato*” (cf., *Basic Theology*, Ryrie, p. 111, quoting F.W. Farrar), the dispensational approach takes its method from Scripture itself, “*comparing spiritual things with spiritual*” (1Co 2:13). This approach recognizes that specific revelation is given to specific people in different ages, which is appropriate to their time. Some of the highlights of the dispensational approach can be found in Ryrie’s *Basic Theology*, pp. 110–115, as well as in Chafer’s *Systematic Theology*, Vol. VII, pp. 203–205. These basic principles of hermeneutics (the science of biblical interpretation) include:

1. Interpret grammatically

God designed language to communicate thought accurately. God chose to convey His message to man in written language, which is intended to be objectively understood. The allegorical method relies on subjectivity, thus sacrificing any hope of consistent

interpretation. In this method, every man interprets as is right in his own eyes. In short, the interpreter becomes the authority over the Scripture, rather than subject to it.

2. Interpret according to the context

Words gain their meaning from their use within a given context. When we speak of context, we first refer to the text itself. However, in a broader sense, context involves history, culture, and intended recipients of the message.

3. Let Scripture interpret Scripture

There are far too many examples of the Bible interpreting itself to list. Careful study provides us with sufficient examples to guide our study. To give one major example, the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets concerning Messiah's first coming were taken by Jesus and the apostles as having a literal fulfillment in the Person and work of our Lord. Thus it would follow that all prophecies that relate to His second coming would also be specific and literal in their fulfillment.

4. Interpret in light of progressive revelation

The quote from Heb 1:1 is a perfect example. As revelation of the message from Genesis to Revelation is given, it follows that the message becomes more complete and coherent as it unfolds. In other words, to use the author to the Hebrews, it is not possible that the "shadows" of coming things revealed in the Old Testament could convey the "*very image*" of the truths revealed in Christ Jesus (Heb 10:1). Neither does it make sense to cling to a covenant that is fading away, when we have been given a new covenant that is eternal (cf., Heb 8–9).

One final example is worth noting. In Act 1:6–8, the apostles ask the Lord if He is ready to "*restore the kingdom to Israel,*" and His response is "*It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.*" The phrase "*times and seasons*" refers to "dispensations" as they unfold. However, later the Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonian church, declares, "*But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night,*" then adds, "*But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief*" (1Th 5:1–2, 4). Obviously, the Thessalonian believers knew something that had not as yet been revealed to the apostles in Act 1. That further revelation came from the Apostle Paul, to whom God revealed the "*mystery*" of the Church Age (Eph 1:9–10, 3:1–12; Col 1:24–27). Once we have the understanding that the "*mystery*" of the Church Age was not understood until it was revealed to Paul, we can resolve many of the apparent contradictions in the early book of Acts, where Peter and others were still offering the "*kingdom*" to Jews and Jewish proselytes.

Tell the Story

My friend Gerry Bishop, old-time cowboy and all-around rodeo champion, often challenges people to witness with the words, "just tell the story." His point is that the work of an ambassador for Christ (2Co 5:18–21) is not to refute every argument, nor to convince the naysayer. Our commission is to tell the "good news" of God's plan for redemption through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit takes full responsibility to convict and convince (Joh 16:7–11). Far too many believers are afraid to be faithful witnesses for fear that they "do not know enough." I well

remember one woman, who had sat under excellent teaching for 25 years, telling me she did not witness because she did not know enough, and might make a mistake!

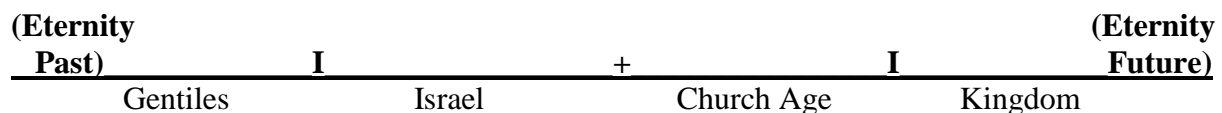
The goal of this study is to help the average believer gain a grasp of the unfolding story of redemption through the Bible. To do so, we will identify major “high-points” of the story, which we will call “mountaintops.” These will involve specific people, places, events, and sometimes actual mountains, in order to build an outline of Bible history. Each of these “signposts” will be seen in light of its historical and biblical context. These will also be placed into a dispensational framework, which not only is an aid to memory, but a guide to interpretation. It is my hope and prayer that the student will find this study to be useful, helpful, and edifying. By diligent personal study, the student will be able to fill out this skeleton into a fuller body of truth. I also trust that you will be gracious in regard to any shortcomings of the study, for there will surely be many.

Ten Mountaintops of Scripture

1. Creation and Condemnation—**Mount Ararat**, Adam to Noah (Gen 1–11)
2. The Patriarchs—**Mount Moriah**, Abraham to Egypt (Gen 12–50, Job)
3. The Exodus—**Mount Sinai**, Moses and Aaron (Exo to Deu)
4. Conquest and Chaos—Mount Hebron, Joshua to Samuel (Jos, Jud, Rut, 1Sa 1–7)
5. The Kingdom—**Mount Zion**, David, Solomon, kings to exile (1Sa to captivity)
 - a. United kingdom
 - b. Divided kingdom
6. The Prophets—Mount Carmel (Isa to Mal)
7. The Messiah—**Mount Olivet** (Gospels)
 - a. Preparation—ministries of John and Jesus
 - b. Tribulation—ministries of 144,000 and two witnesses
8. The Church—Mount Messiah (Mat 16:18; Joh 13-Phl)
9. The Kingdom—Mount Zion (fulfilled) (Heb 12:22; Rev 20 with O.T. prophets)
10. The New Heavens and Earth—The Mount of God (Exo 4:27; Isa 14:13; Rev 21–22)

Since many of these mountaintops fall into one single dispensation or age, we will direct our study primarily to five of them: **Ararat, Moriah, Sinai, Zion, and Olivet**. Those in bold print will be given the most attention.

The Dispensational Outline



While the most common dispensational charts have seven divisions, based primarily on changes of events, this chart seems more accurate when the subject matter of revelation is considered. It must be emphasized that—while the content of revelation, and the obedience required in light of it, changes dramatically between ages—the way of salvation always remains the same: by grace, through faith, on the basis of the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross. How that faith is demonstrated in obedience to the expressed will of God is not identical in every age. For example, we are not building an ark to escape the flood, nor are we offering sacrifices on the

altar. The instructions given for those times are of profit **for** us, but are not written **to** us. We will now give a brief summary of each of the ten “mountaintops”:

The Ten Mountains

Bear in mind that “a teaching aid is a memory device.” An outline is not an in-depth study, but is a skeleton on which to hang further “meat.” These mountaintops all relate to specific men and events. In the divine scheme of things, it is worth remembering that God’s men are His mountains. He brings down the self-exalted, and raises up the humble and the lowly and makes them His mountains (Isa 40:4; Luk 3:5; 1Pe 5:5).

I. Mount Ararat (Jesus Christ is our ark)

“Noah ... a preacher of righteousness” 2Pe 2:5

*“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord ...
And the Lord shut him in [the ark] ...” Gen 6:8, 7:16b*

*“Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day
of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.” Gen 8:4*

Main Characters and Events

Thus ends the first universal judgment on sin and unbelieving sinners in history. This time period is built around three men: Adam, Enoch, and Noah. The first was made in the image of God (Gen 1—2), yet by willful rebellion (1Ti 2:13) brought sin and suffering into the world. He passed on the acquired sin nature to his own posterity (Gen 5:3). But along with the curse for sin, **Adam** was given the promise of a redeemer, through the woman (Gen 3:15). The evidence of faith in the promise was animal sacrifice (Gen 3:21, 4:4). As the disastrous effects of sin spread through the human race (Rom 5:12; Gen 4—5), so does the faith (Gen 4:26; 5:21—23).

Enoch represents those who by faith “walk with God” in the midst of a degenerating world. He is also the first prophet (Jud 14—15), anticipating the victorious second coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, with His saints.

Finally, **Noah**, whose name means “rest,” builds the ark for the saving of his family (1Pe 3:20—22; Heb 11:7), and becomes a type of our position in Christ, sealed by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:1; Eph 1:13—14; 4:30) and of our future rapture out of this world (1Th 4:13—18).

From Noah and his sons come the various nations, scattered after the attempt to build the tower of Babel (Gen 10—11).

Covenants and Conditions

During this period, we have three covenants made between God and man. First, the **Edenic** (Gen 1:27—31, 2:17—25) with provisions for life in the Garden of Eden, including dominion, husbandry of earth, and marriage, with one prohibition—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The “sign” of this covenant was daily obedience to the prohibition.

Second, the **Adamic** (Gen 3:14–19) governed life in a sinful world. This included spiritual warfare, a promised redeemer, intensified childbirth, and hard work to live. The sign of this covenant was animal sacrifice (Gen 3:21).

The third, the **Noahic** covenant (Gen 9:1–17), governed life in the post-flood world and included human government, capital punishment, meat-eating, and the promise that God would never again flood the earth. The sign of this covenant is the rainbow in the clouds.

The central theme through this section is that sinful man, separated from God by spiritual death (Gen 2:17) stands in need of a redeemer. The coming redeemer is called “the seed of the woman” (Gen 3:15) anticipating the virgin birth (Isa 7:14; Mat 1:23), and pictured in the sacrificial lamb (Gen 4:4). Men of faith “*began to call on the name of the Lord*” (Gen 4:26) in anticipation of the coming of “*the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*” (Joh 1:29). Jesus Christ is anticipated as the coming **seed**, the **Lamb** of God, and our **ark**.

Lessons and Applications

1. This first section of biblical history is concerned with the entrance of sin, the nature of sin, the effects of sin, and finally, the judgment of God on sin.
2. Sin originates with Satan, the serpent of the garden, the tempter of mankind (Gen 3:1–6; 2Co 11:3).
3. Sin is defined as disobedience to the specific prohibition or command of God. Though Eve was deceived, Adam sinned knowingly and willfully (1Ti 2:13–15).
4. The sin of Adam is imputed to the entire human race, along with its consequence—spiritual death (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:12; 1Co 15:22).
5. Adam then passes on the sinful nature to his own progeny (Gen 5:3). It is due to this transmission of the sin nature by the father in procreation that Messiah had to come as “the seed of the woman,” virgin born (Gen 3:15; Isa 7:14; Mat 1:23).
6. The spread of sin and death is chronicled in Gen 4–6 by the murder of Abel, the polygamy and vengeance of Lamech, the violence of Noah’s generation, and the Tower of Babel.
7. The flood stands as a warning of future universal judgment by fire to those who reject God’s remedy for sin by faith in Jesus Christ (2Pe.2:4–9, 3:1–9).

II. Mount Moriah (Jesus Christ our substitute)

*“And he [Abram] believed in the Lord,
and He accounted it to him for righteousness.” Gen 15:6*

*“And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide,” [Yahweh Yireh]
as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided.” Gen 22:14*

Main Characters and Events

The main figures in this section are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. However the figure of **Abraham** towers above all the others. He becomes the standard of regeneration by faith utilized by Paul (Rom 4:3; Gal 3:6). In his separation from Ur, he becomes the head of a new nation,

“the seed of Abraham” (Rom 9:6), thereby signifying that the promised Messiah will come through Israel. His life is a prolonged effort of sustaining faith (Rom 4:13–22). In the offering of Isaac, he is shown to have matured in his faith to withstand great testing (Jam 1:12, 2:21–24). Though his life story includes many failures and examples of poor judgment (Gen 12:10–20, 15:1–3, 16:1–6, 20:1–13), yet he rises up in faith from each of them, and goes on to greater victory. In the entire Old Testament, no life so captures the way of faith as greatly as does that of Abraham. He is willing to step into the unknown by faith (Gen 12:1), give place to a weaker believer (Gen 13:8–9; Rom 15:1), demonstrate unconditional love for an erring brother (Gen 14:13–16), refuse worldly offers of wealth (Gen 14:21–24), intercede in behalf of others (Gen 18:16–33), have a spiritual impact on his neighbors (Gen 21:22–34), and make of himself, through his beloved son, a living sacrifice (Gen 22:1–14). We would do well to *“walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had ...”* (Rom 12).

Covenants and Conditions

In this section we have the primary covenant of the Old Testament, the **Abrahamic Covenant**. It is first given in Gen 12:1–3, and is reiterated and expanded in Gen 13:14–17, 15:1–21, 17:1–21. In its simplest form, this covenant guarantees to Abraham three things:

1. **Land**—from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates
2. **Seed**—immediately in Isaac, ultimately in the Lord Jesus Christ
3. **Blessing**—not only for himself, but through him to the whole world

The **sign** of the covenant was **circumcision**, predating the Law 430 years (Gen 17:9–14).

This covenant is unique in that it is **unconditional** (Note the *“I will”* statements of the Lord in the passages above), and it is **everlasting** (three times in Gen 17:7–14). As Paul declares (Gal 3:15–25), this covenant cannot be abrogated by any later covenant. However, it can only be entered and enjoyed by faith! The permanence of this covenant is seen in that it lays the foundation for **three future covenants**:

1. **Palestinian** (Gen 15:18; Deu 29:1–30:20);
2. **Davidic** (2Sa 7:12–13; 1Ch 17:7–14); and
3. **New** (Jer 31:31–34; Eze 36:22–28).

The primary significance of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph is that they share the faith of Abraham, and the covenant is perpetuated through Isaac—not Ishmael; Jacob—not Esau; and by the faith of Joseph—not his brothers. Additionally, Isaac illustrates the guidance of the Spirit through faith (Gen 24:42–48; Joh 16:13–14), Jacob illustrates the transforming power of faith (Gen 32:24–30; Rom 12:1–2), and Joseph the perseverance of faith (Gen 37–50; Rom 5:1–5; Jam 1:2–5, 12). Isaac and Jacob *“dwelt in tents,”* as did Abraham, because *“he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”* (Heb 11:9–10).

Lessons and Applications

1. Abraham stands as the example for new birth (regeneration) by faith alone (Rom.4:1–5; Gal 3:6–9).
2. At the same time, he is an object lesson of spirituality by faith (Rom 5:12; Jam 2:21–23).

3. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all “lived in tents” as an illustration that they were seeking a “city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb 11:9–10).
4. Sarah should not be overlooked for in her own right, and late in life, she became a spiritual hero of the faith (Heb 11:11).
5. As an encouragement, we can see that Abraham’s life was not perfect, or without failure. Yet by faith, he rose above his weaknesses and failures, setting an example for us all to strive for.
6. One of the key lessons of his life is, never, never, never quit (Rom 4:13–22).

III. Mount Sinai (Jesus Christ our Righteousness)

“Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.” Exo 19:20

“So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend ...” Exo 33:11

Along with Abraham, Moses is one of the main figures of the Old Testament. His work and ministry will have lasting effects, along with that of Aaron, the high priest.

Main Characters and Events

Moses and Aaron are the two main figures, establishing the offices of **prophet** and **priest** to the nation of Israel. In fact, Moses becomes a type of Jesus Christ, a greater lawgiver and deliverer who is to come (Deu 18:15, 18–19; Heb 3:1–6). Both of these offices look to Jesus Christ as God’s final spokesman (Heb 1:1–4), and as High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psa 110:4; Heb 7:14–28).

Covenants and Conditions

1. The Mosaic Covenant (conditional)—Exo 19:1–8; 20:1–17; Deu 11:26–28, 27–28
2. A total of 613 commands covered spiritual, moral, and civil life.
3. This law was between God and Israel—a redeemed people (Exo 6:6, 15:13; 31:12–18; Deu 7:8, 15:15, 21:8, 24:18)
4. Tabernacle/temple—7 furnishings; Exo 25–30, 39:31–43
5. The Aaronic priesthood—Exo 29; Lev 8
6. Seven annual feasts—Num 29; Lev 23 (Passover, Atonement, Trumpets are all mandatory feasts)
7. Five Levitical offerings—Lev 1–5
8. Also, the “Palestinian” or Land Covenant (Deu 29:1, 14, 23–29; 30:1–10) furthers the land promise in the Abrahamic Covenant.

Lessons and Applications

1. All the Law was fulfilled perfectly in Jesus Christ—Mat 5:17.
2. Christ is the end of the Law to those who believe—Rom 10:4, Gal 3:13.
3. Faith in Christ does not, however, nullify the Law, but rather the Law reveals our sinfulness, points us to faith in Christ—Rom 5:20; Gal 3:23–24.
4. The Law cannot justify—Rom 4:3–6; Gal 2:16–21; 3:10–14.

5. The Law cannot make one spiritual or mature—Rom 8:1–17; Gal 4:21–5:1, 5:16.
6. Every aspect of the Law of Moses speaks of Jesus Christ, our righteousness.
7. Christ is the One who is “*greater than Moses*”—Deu 18:15–20; Joh 1:17; Heb 3:3. Moses shrinks into obscurity; he fades under the Light.

IV. Mount Hebron (Jesus Christ our Commander)

*“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve ... But as for me
And my house, we will serve the Lord.”* Jos 24:15

*“As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me ... now
therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spoke ...”* Jos 14:11–12

Main Characters and Events

1. The main figures are Joshua, Caleb, and Rahab.
2. Joshua, under guidance from the “*Commander of the army of the Lord*” (Jos 5:13–15), first strikes Jericho, cutting Canaan in half defeating the southern coalition, followed by the fall of the northern coalition.
3. Joshua and Caleb were the only adults to survive the Exodus, due to their faithfulness at Kadesh Barnea, Num 13:31–33, 14:6–9, 26–35.
4. The victory of Caleb at Hebron illustrates the courage of faith, and the blessings of faithfulness to the Lord, Jos 14:6–15. (Caleb was a Gentile, Num 32:12; Jos 14:6, 14.)
5. Six cities of refuge were established (Num 35:6, 13–15; Jos 20:1–9). These cities are a picture of Jesus Christ our refuge (Deu 33:27; Heb 6:18–20).

Covenants and Conditions

1. Israel continues under the conditional covenant of the Law.
2. In the following four hundred years of the Judges, Israel begins to reap the “*cursing*” portion for disobedience (read Deu 27:15–68).
3. The judges were raised up when the nation collectively repented. Due to disobedience, Israel would suffer future defeat and exile (Deu 29–30).

Lessons and Applications

1. Joshua is a type of Christ, who leads His people in battle, winning peace and rest (Heb 4:1–16).
2. Caleb is an example of a faithful and dedicated “*Christian warrior*” who stays spiritually and physically fit, patiently waiting on God’s timing for his blessings.
3. Rahab stands out as a picture of God’s life-changing mercy, and of the honor God gives to those who avail themselves of it (Mat 1:5; Jam 2:25).
4. The dismal experience of Israel in the time of the judges is an eloquent commentary on the life of the reversionistic or persistently carnal believer, as illustrated by the many warnings of Paul’s epistles and Hebrews.
5. During this time Joshua established the six cities of refuge (Num 35:13; Jos 20:7–9). Each of these speaks in a unique way of Jesus Christ, our spiritual and eternal refuge (Deu 33:27; Heb 6:18–20).

V. Mount Zion (Jesus Christ our King)

“Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is the City of David) ... Then David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the City of David ... So David went on and became great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him.” 2Sa 5:7, 9–10

“Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree, the Lord has said to Me, You are My Son, Today I have begotten you ...” Psa 2:6–7

Note: There are two Zions revealed in Scripture. The first is earthly; the second is heavenly, representing two spheres of Christ’s kingdom. The focus for Israel is the earthly kingdom (millennium), but for the Church the emphasis is on the heavenly kingdom.

Main Characters and Events

David is the main character, but always behind the story of David is the shadow of His greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In every act of courage, honor, faithfulness, righteousness, wisdom, David foreshadows Christ our Lord (Isa 22:22; 1Co 1:30–31; Rev 3:7, 5:5, 22:16).

Covenants and Conditions

1. The Davidic Covenant (2Sa 7:11–16; 1Ch 17:10–14)
2. This covenant amplifies the “Seed” portion of the Abrahamic covenant and the “promised seed” portion of the Adamic covenant (Gen 3:15).
3. The promised Messiah’s lineage has now been narrowed down to:
 - a. A virgin woman (no male involvement means no transfer of the sin nature).
 - b. She will be of the lineage of Abraham (Gen 12:3).
 - c. She must be of the lineage of Isaac (Gen 26:4).
 - d. She must be of the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10–11).
 - e. She must be of the family of David (2Sa 7:12–13; 1Ch 17:11–12).

Lessons and Applications

1. David is one of the most thrilling examples of the greatness of God’s grace and mercy.
2. He was great because as a “*man after [God’s] own heart*” (1Sa 13:14; Psa 89:20; Act 13:22) he relentlessly pursued God’s grace (Psa 18:35).
3. So great was God’s love for David that He vowed to never withdraw His mercy from him (1Ch 17:13). This became known as “*the sure mercies of David*” (Isa 55:3).
4. These sure and certain mercies are the birthright of every believer in Jesus Christ (read Isa 55:1–13).

VI. Mount Carmel

“And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, ‘Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel ...’” 1Ki 18:36

Main Characters and Events

1. Elijah and the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah are the primary focus.
2. However, Elijah was seen as the representative of “the prophets.” The phrase “*the Law and the Prophets*” being a common designation for the entire Old Testament (Mat 5:17, 7:12, 11:13; Rom 3:21), of which Moses and Elijah are the representatives.
3. Here, the battle between Elijah and the prophets of Baal illustrates the ages-long sin of idolatry which infected Israel, and which all the prophets fought against.
4. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah met with Jesus to discuss His soon “exodus” via crucifixion and resurrection (Mat 17:3; Mar 9:4; Luk 9:30).
5. In the incident recorded above, it is worth noting that Elijah rebuilds the altar with twelve stones—representing the twelve tribes—thus not endorsing or recognizing the divided kingdom. Further, consider his quiet, confident, and brief prayer in contrast to the antics of the false prophets. There is much instruction in this for our discernment regarding many popular practices today.

Covenants and Conditions

The covenant of Moses (the Law) is the rule of the “household of Israel.” Moses is the primary and dominant spokesman of God throughout the Age of Israel, which runs up to the time of John the Baptizer (Luk 16:16). Remember that the Law of Moses was a covenant between God and the children of Israel, a redeemed people. It was never given to save, but rather to point the way to sanctification, so that God’s people would be holy as He is holy (Lev 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:7; 1Pe 1:16).

Lessons and Applications

1. The history of Israel is filled with object lessons that are of value to believers today.
2. We see that when Israel obeys God, He guards them, protects them, and richly blesses them.
3. When the nation revolts against God, their protection is removed, they are defeated by their enemies, and their economy is devastated.
4. America today is like Israel under Ahab or any of the other evil kings. We have forsaken our God, “*the fountain of living waters,*” and in our modernistic arrogance, we have chosen to carve for ourselves “*cisterns that can hold no water*” (Jer 2:13).

VII. Mount Olivet (Age of Preparation)

*“And everyone went to his house,
but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.” Joh 7:53–8:1*

*“And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night
He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet.” Luk 21:37*

*“Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed,
and His disciples also followed Him.” Luk 22:39*

Main Characters and Events

1. John the Baptist—*“I indeed baptize you with water ... ”* (Mat 3:11; Joh 1:26)
2. The Lord Jesus Christ—*“Immanuel ... God with us”* (Isa 7:14; Mat 1:23)
3. The disciples and apostles—includes many men and women (1Co 15:6)

Covenants and Conditions

1. Inauguration of the New Covenant—cf., Jer 31:31–34; Eze 36:22–26; Heb 8:7–13. Note that this covenant is made *“with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.”*
2. During the Lord’s ministry, the disciples were sent *“to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”* Mat 10:6–7
3. We must make distinction between *“the gospel of the kingdom”* (Mat 4:23; 9:35) and the Gospel that was revealed to Paul, for the world (Gal 1:11–12; 1Co 15:1–4).
4. The Gospel of the kingdom was “preparatory” for Israel (Mat 3:3; 11:10; Luk 1:17) to receive her King, and His kingdom, promised throughout the Old Testament.
5. The Gospel revealed to the Apostle Paul was a *“mystery”* never before revealed (Eph 1:9–14; 3:1–7; Col 1:24–29), previously unknown to the original apostles (Mar 8:31–33; 9:31–32).
6. It is important to note that the Age of Preparation is interrupted by the Church Age and will continue in the seven years of tribulation—Israel’s final refining (Jer 30:7, *“the time of Jacob’s trouble”*).

Lessons and Applications

1. Although a dispensational approach to the Scripture recognizes that not every text of the Bible is written **to** us, yet we maintain that all Scripture is **for** our benefit.
2. When the Apostle Paul declares that, *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine ... ”* (2Ti 3:16), he means **all** Scripture.
3. There is a distinction, however, between **interpretation** of a given text, and its **application**.
4. When we *“rightly divide the Word of truth”* (2Ti 2:15), we are able to avoid the dual dangers of imitating or imposing actions that no longer apply, without losing the valuable lessons from those former practices (such as sacrifices, feasts, vows, etc.).
5. The teachings of Jesus in the Gospels, with the exception of Joh 13–17, are directed to *“the lost sheep of the house of Israel”* (Mat 10:6, 15:24), and are fundamental to His coming kingdom. They do have great benefit to us today, as we make wise application of them to our own spiritual lives.

VIII. Mount Messiah (The Church Age)

“And I also say to you that you are Peter [petros], and on this rock [petra] I will build My church ... ” Mat 16:18

“Therefore it is contained in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a chief Cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.’ Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious ... ” 1Pe 2:6–7

“For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched ... But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem ... and the church of the firstborn ...to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant ...” Heb 12:18–24

Main Characters and Events

1. I use “Mount Messiah” here to speak of Jesus Christ as the “Rock” on which the Church is built.
2. The Lord Jesus Christ stands alone as the Living Word, revealed through the written word to the Church.
3. As a minor actor, the Apostle Paul was chosen by God to be the spokesman of the revelation of “*the mystery*,” the Church Age (Eph 3:1–10).
4. In his 13 epistles, Paul sets forth the unique doctrines and conditions of spiritual life for those living in this present Church Age.
5. As a consequence, any doctrine or practice that does not conform to the truths revealed in Paul’s epistles should be rejected as essential to Church Age spirituality.

Covenants and Conditions

The believer living in the Church Age is free from the Law as a binding principle, and lives according to “*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” (Rom 8:1–4; Gal 2:20–21). This is the provision of the New Covenant, as applied to the Church, having been “grafted into” certain privileges of the commonwealth of Israel (Rom 11:16–25; Eph 2:11–22). It must be stated that the Church does not replace Israel, and that the status and privileges of the Church far exceed any that will be enjoyed by Israel in the future.

Lessons and Applications

1. As members of the Church, the Body of Christ, believers in this present Church Age share a status, wealth, and privileges unparalleled by believers of any other age.
2. This status is summarized by the Apostle Paul in the phrase “*in Christ*.” To hold this position, through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior is to be “*a new creature*” (2Co 5:17), “*forgiven all sins*” (Col 2:13; 1Jo 2:2, 12), “*accepted in the beloved*” (Eph 1:6), “*seated in the heavenlies*” (Col 3:1–4), possessed of “*all spiritual riches*” (Eph 1:3, 3:8), having unhindered “*access into His presence*” (Rom 5:2; Eph 2:18; 3:12; Heb 4:16), are permanently indwelt by His Spirit (Joh 14:15–18; Rom 8:9–11), and “*sealed unto the day of redemption*” (Eph 1:13–14, 4:30), and “*heirs of God*” through Jesus Christ (Rom 8:17; Gal 3:29).
3. So great is the birthright of the Church Age believer that it would take volumes to expound upon them in detail, and a lifetime of study and diligent application to even begin to exploit them.

IX. Mount Zion fulfilled (The Millennial Kingdom)

“The Lord also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake; but the Lord will be a shelter for His people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So you shall know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy ...” Joe 3:16–17

“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him for a thousand years.” Rev 20:6

Main Characters and Events

The Lord Jesus Christ will reign over the earth from Jerusalem (Psa 2:6; Isa 24:23; Mic 4:7) and David (in resurrected body) will rule over Israel (Jer 30:9; Eze 37:24–25; Hos 3:5). The twelve apostles will judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Mat 19:27–28; Luk 22:28–30). Church Age believers will be the “bride of Christ” (2Co 11:2; Rev 21:1–5, 9; 22:17).

Covenants and Conditions

One thing we know will occur in the millennial kingdom is that the Lord Jesus Christ will personally expound the Scriptures to His people (Isa 54:13; Jer 31:34; Mic 4:2; Joh 6:45). This will be the expanded version of His lesson to the two on the Emmaus road (Luk 24:27).

Lessons and Applications

1. Of the triad of Christian virtues exalted by Paul (1Co 13:13), it is hope which most attaches to the promises of our glorious future, and the hope born of faith will never be ashamed (Rom 5:5).
2. Along with the assurance of our standing in Christ, we also have the anticipation of future reward for faithful works in this life (Gen 15:1; Psa 19:11; 58:11; Mat 5:12; Mar 9:41; Heb 10:35; Rev 22:12).
3. The implication of both promises, as well as warnings regarding rewards (Col 2:18; Rev 3:11) is that our rank, position, and **service in His kingdom will correlate to our service in this life.**
4. This should produce in us great diligence, as the love of Christ compels us to live—not for ourselves—but for Him who loved us (2Co 5:14–15).
5. A careful analysis of Rom 8:17 indicates that while all believers are “*heirs of God,*” the status of “*joint heirs with Christ*” is reserved for those who share in the sufferings of His service, and thus partake of His glory.

X. The Mountain of God (The Eternal Kingdom)

*“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on **the sides of the north**, the city of the great King.”* Psa 48:1–2 (bold added)

*“I [Lucifer] will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest **sides of the north** ...” Isa 14:13 (bold added)*

Main Characters and Events

It is at this point that Jesus Christ “*delivers the kingdom to God the Father*” (1Co 15:24). The present heavens and earth are destroyed by fire (2Pe 3:7, 12) to be replaced with “*new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*” (2Pe 3:13). This is the eternal state, which we refer to as heaven.

Covenants and Conditions

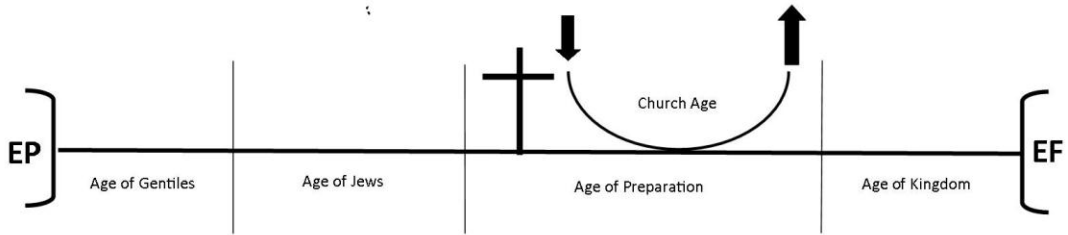
All promises and provisions of all the covenants combined that are of eternal value will continue forever. What form life will take and what future creations God may undertake, are beyond our comprehension and the scope of revelation. What we do know is that “*in the ages to come He [will] show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*” (Eph 2:7).

Lessons and Applications

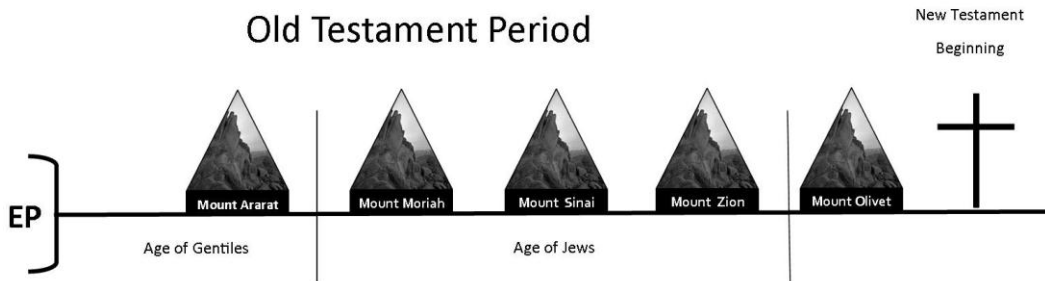
As described to us in the Bible, the eternal state will surpass our every expectation. Perhaps this is why so little detailed information is given on this subject. One thing is for sure, we will not be “sitting on clouds playing harps” for eternity. Think of a glorious kingdom, encompassing a renovated universe, with all the planets usable and habitable. Think of having “daily” conversation and teamwork with angels, Old Testament saints, Tribulation and Kingdom-age believers, in perfect sympathy and harmony with the will and wishes of our Lord and King. Consider all that is implied in Paul’s description of a regenerated creation in which all creatures that have ever existed share in this new existence (Rom 8:18–23). Words fail to describe or express what it will be. Perhaps it is best to leave it with the words of John:

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” 1Jo 3:2-3

Dispensational Chart



Old Testament Period



Mountains: Doctrinal Signposts

1. Mount Ararat- The doctrine of sin and judgment.
2. Mount Moriah- The doctrine of redemption.
3. Mount Sinai- The doctrine of God's holiness and sanctification.
4. Mount Zion- The doctrine of the king and His kingdom.
5. Mount Olivet- The doctrine of Messiah rejected, crucified and coming again.

The Age of Preparation

