**Lesson One**

**An orientation to reading Scripture as narrative**

Overview: this lesson will orient us to studying the Scriptures as narrative. The basic narrative arc will be unpacked, from Genesis to Revelation, with an emphasis on how to read the whole Christologically. In particular, the major thrust of the Old Testament will be unpacked in terms of “God becoming man” and the New in terms of “man becoming God,” with Jesus Christ as the hinge on which the narrative turns.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Summarize how God uses the Scriptures to form his people
* Give examples of common ways people misread the Scriptures, and describe how reading the Scripture as narrative can illumine its meaning
* Recall key moments in this history of salvation according to the Bible
* Explain the idea of interpreting the Bible “Christologically”; memorize St. Augustine’s famous axiom about the Bible
* Identify the main genres which comprise the Old Testament, and summarize their key components

Key Text(s): Nehemiah 8:1-18; Luke 24:13-35; Romans 10:5-17

Office Texts: Psalm 1, Nehemiah 8:1-18, Luke 24:13-35

Core Elements:

The importance of studying Scripture

Not just head knowledge, but a fruitful *life* (Psalm 1)

Sowing in our hearts faith (Romans 10:5-17)

Launching pad into today’s talk: look how Paul uses the Old Testament

Patterns of devotion: the centrality of the word (Nehemiah 8:1-19)

The people cut to the heart, convicted then encouraged

Word and Sacrament, the order is important

God who speaks, by his word he Creates, Sustains, Redeems

God who speaks and made us to hear

God who speaks and made us to hear *together*: why we have a book

It’s not easy to read though, is it?

Common approaches vs narrative

Reading the Bible as narrative

A sequence of covenants: Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, Messianic

The story is about Jesus

All the Law and the Prophets (Luke 24:13-35)

A proposal: the OT is the story of God becoming man, the NT of man becoming God

What we will be accomplishing in this series

Quick orientation to the Old Testament

Library of books, genres, translations

**Lesson Two**

**Creation as Kingdom Making**

Overview: This lesson explores the basis of all God’s other claims and titles from the human perspective: he created all things. He defines all things, establishing their limits and proper function. He orders all things to reflect his rule, fashioning created agents of his rule (to be co-rulers under him) in increasing degrees of complexity. He creates humankind most especially to reflect his sovereign glory, calling us to co-rule his creation with him by filling it and ordering it on the basis of the pattern he establishes. His rule is benevolent, his creation designed to flourish: it is very good.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Explain how God as Creator is the basis of all his other claims to rule, judge, and redeem
* Define “sovereignty” with relation to God, and distinguish it with relation to man (see also next lesson)
* Relate the days of creation to one another in a pattern which reveals God’s creation of the world in an ordered way ruled by created agents of his own sovereignty
* Identify four major implications of a proper reading of Genesis 1

Key Text(s): Genesis 1:1-2:3

Office Texts: Psalm 104, Genesis 1:1-2:3, John 1:1-13 (deliberately stopping short of v14)

Core Elements:

God’s most basic quality vis-à-vis man: he is Creator

How God as Creator is leveraged throughout the story of redemption

The Creator God can rightly rule, judge, and redeem (some uncomfortable truths)

Redemption as recreation

Some big themes in Genesis 1

Creation by fiat: “And God said… and it was so…”

Creation by division, establishing boundaries, creating space for life (basis of law)

Framework of Genesis 1

Quick word about Hebrew poetry and Hebrew narrative (genre as interpretive foundation)

Days 1 -3 correspond to Days 4-6 as the establishment of kingdoms and kings

Creation as ordered realm in which God’s sovereignty is channeled through created agents

Divine sovereignty is benevolent: we are created to flourish

Creation of mankind to rule all of it (contextual and structural clues)

What it means to “image” him: to rule with him in his stead

\*\*\*We are made to *look like God*\*\*\*

Sovereignty of man divine, yet derivative: we are stewards (more next lesson)

Implications:

divine claim to human obedience

the reality of both objective truth, and our ability to know it

the scientific method works because the creation is ordered for its good

environmentalism: we must steward creation in ways consistent with its divine order

**Lesson Three**

**Installation of Kings**

Overview: This lesson explores the cultural and cultic mandates of the human race, and explores in more detail the idea of humankind as coregents of God. All this reveals God’s fundamental purpose in creating us is that we should look like him as a ground and consequence of fellowship with him. This basic truth of humanity is the basis of all human culture, politics, art, and worship- a co-creating with God, and bringing his creation to its most created perfection in intimate union with himself. This union is sacramentally expressed in creation in the union of man and woman as one flesh in the covenant of marriage.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Explain what is meant by humans being “image bearers” of God in terms of co-creation
* Define “sovereignty” with relation to God, and distinguish it with relation to man
* Distinguish the cultural and cultic mandates and apply various human activities to either sphere
* Define a sacrament as a leveraging of created things to convey divine reality
* Articulate how marriage images God’s intent for his creation

Key Text(s): Genesis 2:1-25 (end)

Office Texts: Psalm 8, Genesis 2:1-25, Colossians 1:15-23

Core Elements:

A kingdom of priests

King: providing order to an earthly city, conveying God’s sovereignty from heaven to earth

Priest: offering up the fruit of human labor to God, conveying man’s culture from earth to heaven

To “image” is to share sovereignty: fashioning and ordering as a creator

God has ultimate sovereignty; delegated to man as co-creator

The naming of the animals: as God names in creating, so he invites man into the process

The Cultural Mandate (Genesis 2:15 -> to “work” it)

Providing a new layer of order to the raw materials of God’s creation: culture

Filling the earth with culture, building an earthly city as an extension of God’s creative rule

An application of the divine command to “fill and subdue” by leveraging divine knowledge to harness creation for production

The dignity of human culture: horticulture, architecture, economics, polity, art

Even the human family, “be fruitful and multiply”

The Cultic Mandate (Genesis 2:15 -> to “keep” it)

Cultivating creation’s materials in order to present them back to God

The “sacrament” of culture, and the Sabbath

Fellowship: a helper suitable for him

Marriage as the creaturely sign of God’s design for fellowship

Love as a self-offering

Why man is given a test

**Lesson Four**

**Abdication**

Overview: we arrive now at the second major element of the story, the fall of creation from God’s good purposes for it. This lesson will unpack the fall as a sundering of relationship between both God and man and individual men from each other. This enmity produces—in the vertical—the separation of creation from God’s presence leading to death, and—in the horizontal—warfare between men, and especially between men and women, leading to frustration, decay, slavery, and pain.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Articulate how the fall represents a reversal of God’s created order
* Define “sin” and why death is the consequence of it (see also next lesson)
* Describe how the curses of Genesis 3 reveal the nature of humanity’s fall by reversing their original created purposes
* Understand the inherent nature of sin to spread and intensify
* Identify the *protoevangelium* and repeat it from memory

Key Text(s): Genesis 3 and 4

Office Texts: Psalm 51, Genesis 3, Matthew 3:13-4:11

Core Elements:

Satan’s emergence in the garden: the identity of the serpent

The first reversal: going to the woman

The second reversal: distorting, then denying God’s words

The third reversal: seeing as good what God calls evil

The fourth reversal: the animal now rules the rational

The fifth reversal: shame (sundering of intimate fellowship)

The nature of sin: a turn earthward rather than Godward

God’s arrival immediately reverses the reversals

He speaks to the man first, then the woman. He doesn’t even bother hearing the serpent’s take

The curses hit on man’s creational mandates

The woman’s unique contribution to creation becomes painful

The man and woman are put an enmity with one another

The man’s labor is now frustrated

The nature of sin: a world inclined toward frustration and enmity (Romans 8:19-22)

The ultimate reversal: death

To the east: a banishment from the presence of God, the cherubim now guard the way

The nature of sin: alienation from our Creator

Sin’s murderous spread:

Cain kills Abel, Cain disdain’s God, Lamech twists (again) God’s words

Hints of redemption

The woman’s new name, the man and woman’s new clothes

The *protoevangelium* (Genesis 3:15): the first announcement of the Gospel

The significance of the birth of Seth: the beginning of an elect line by which promise will be fulfilled

**Lesson Five**

**Destruction of the Kingdom**

Overview: this lesson explores why the ultimate consequence of sin is death, and how the Bible describes it in terms of uncreation, or the reversal of God’s separations in Genesis 1. We will see how this plays out especially in the flood narrative. We will explore the nature of judgment and how God preserves a remnant for the eventual restoration of all. We will explore God's covenant with Noah (the “Noahic Covenant”) as that which sets the stage generally for salvation history to unfold by providing for humankind’s preservation and the limiting of sin’s advance.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Define “sin” and why death is the consequence of it
* Explain why the Bible uses water as a metaphor for judgment, and how it does so
* Explain how the Bible uses water as a metaphor for new life, and how the flood anticipates baptism
* Describe how the genealogies of the Bible underscore the nature of the Gospel
* Understand how sin tends to advance, and in what forms it finds its most extreme expression

Key Text(s): Genesis 6:1-9:17

Office Texts: Psalms 46, 124, Genesis 9:1-17; 2 Peter 3:1-13

Core Elements:

The genealogy of Genesis 5 follows the line of Seth and ends with Noah – preservation of a remnant

The competition between the line of promise and the line of apostasy (6:1-2)

God is grieved by the sin of man; it saddens him to see us destroy each other

The nature of the sin: violence and sexual immorality

The earth is “filled with” violence, the way it was supposed to be filled with God’s glory

Judgment comes when the earth is filled with violence, not before

A principle played out repeatedly in the biblical narrative

Why? Why doesn’t God just end it?

The preservation of line of promise

Waters coming from above and below (7:10-11; cf. 8:2-3) undoes creation (and then reestablished it)

Water as a symbol of both destruction and renewal

Notice the role of the Spirit (or “breath”) in pushing the waters back (8:1)

Man’s mandate to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (8:17; 9:1, 7) continues creation mandate

Pervasiveness of sin – even a deluge doesn’t wipe it out

Institution of death penalty in 9:5-6 limits impact of sin by empowering man to execute judgment in God’s stead

(last time “image” used in positive sense; from here on out, the word only ever refers to idols)

The genealogy of Genesis 11 follows the line of Shem and ends with Abram – continuation of remnant

**Lesson Six**

**Planting Seeds**

Overview: having set the stage with creation and the fall, we begin to unpack the fulfillment of the promise to preserve a “seed” in the calling of Abraham. The story of salvation is launched against the backdrop of Babel, when men conspire together to make their own names great; God promises to make Abraham’s name great, establishing the Gospel-principle that salvation comes by God’s initiative alone. We will explore how the nature of the promise to Abraham reinforces this truth, how the ground is laid for the incarnation and cross, and the role plaid in Abraham’s life between faith and works.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Relate the promises to Abraham to God’s primordial promise of a “seed”
* Explain how the nature of God’s initiative with the patriarchs makes faith alone necessary
* Define “faith” in relation to God’s promises, and explain why it is all God requires of us
* Describe how God’s promise to Abraham commits him to a radical fulfillment of the promise
* Identify points in the biblical narrative where God’s promise to Abraham moves it forward

Key Text(s): Genesis 12:1-9; 15:1-21; 26:1-5; 28:10-17

Office Texts: Psalm 105; Genesis 15; Romans 4

Core Elements:

Genesis 11 – the story of Babel, men making their name great

Contrast with Genesis 12, and God’s promise to make Abraham’s name great

Aspects which reinforce God’s initiative

Genesis 12 – Abram is an idolater (Joshua 24:2)

Genesis 15 – Abram has no natural reason to expect biological children (Rom 4:19)

Genesis 15 – God alone walks through the broken animals

Genesis 17 – Sarai has no natural reason to expect to be a biological mother (Heb 11:11)

The ratification of the promise

With Isaac – Genesis 26:1-5

With Jacob – Genesis 28:10-17

With Jacob’s children – Genesis 49

Reuben, Simeon, and Levi passed over for Judah (vv. 8-12)

Promise precedes law; faith precedes obedience – the narrative driven by promise

Still a preoccupation with preserving a line

The line is progressively narrowed and clarified, always by God’s initiative

Children of the promise heirs rather than children of the flesh (Romans 9)

Curses and covenant ratification commit God deeply to resolution of humanity’s problem

An emerging tension: man must (Gen 3:15), man can’t (Gen 6-11), God can and must (Gen 12, 15)

The typology of Genesis 22 – resurrection power and substitution

**Lesson Seven**

**Creation of a New Kingdom**

Overview: the major focus of this lesson is on how the Exodus of Israel from Egypt recapitulates major elements of the creation story, and how the biblical narrative explicitly identifies Israel’s redemption as an act of new creation every bit as miraculous as the first creation. All of this makes it abundantly clear that God, and God alone, is the author and finisher of redemption just as much as he is of creation. The only difference is symbolized by the Passover, a poignant symbol that a substitutionary sacrifice is now needed to spare God’s people from the fate common to all: death. This concrete historical action forms the grounds of Israel’s national identity as a nation set apart by God to be the locus of his saving activity for the human race, the fulfillment of his promise to Abraham to bless the nations through him.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Summarize the major events separating Abraham from the time of the Exodus.
* Identify key features of the Exodus narrative (Exodus 11-14) which identify the event as entirely divinely orchestrated.
* Describe how the Exodus of Israel represents an act of new creation, vis-à-vis Genesis 1-2.
* Explain the importance of substitution on the Exodus narrative and its relationship to Christ.

Key Text(s): Exodus 11-14

Office Texts: Psalm 77; Exodus 12:1-42; Mark 14:10-25

Core Elements:

Review of backstory

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

How Joseph and his brothers end up in Egypt

Israel’s progress in Egypt and their sudden change in fortunes

Israel as a new creation, a new humanity (Exodus 1:7)

Birth and exile of Moses

Moses meets God, is commissioned to go to Egypt to liberate Israel in God’s name

The Pharaoh of the Exodus – who is he?

His name is omitted on purpose; only God’s name matters in all the earth

The Tenth Plague and God’s designs

To show forth his glory to the Egyptians

To punish the gods of the Egyptians

To set Israel apart (“make a distinction,” 11:7)

Set apart by substitionary sacrifice

The Passover and its annual “memorial”

Israel’s day of national independence

The importance of history in our faith

Parting of the Red Sea an act of creation

How the text goes out of its way to describe God as agent of all this

The significance of the Exodus for Israel’s national life

**Lesson Eight**

**Abdication, Redux**

Overview: in this lesson we focus on what happens to Israel immediately after they leave Egypt: they fall into idolatry. In this, Israel begins to clarify for herself and us what her role in redemptive history is, to be the distinct locus of God’s self-revelation of himself to fallen and ignorant man, by which her own fallen waywardness is revealed as the condition of all men before a holy God. By Israel’s example, mankind’s basic inclination toward idolatry will be explored. Yet God choses her to be the conduit through which the promised “seed” of Eve, by which he will destroy sin and death, will come.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Describe Israel’s “rough start” between Egypt and Sanai.
* Summarize the incident with the Golden Calf, and relate it to our common experience with idolatry.
* Define idolatry.
* Explain the wrath of God and why it is a just and reasonable result of human idolatry.
* Relate Moses’s ministry of mediation to that of Christ’s, both positively and negatively.
* Begin to articulate Israel’s national vocation in relation to the prior promises of God.

Key Text(s): Exodus 32-34

Office Texts: Psalm 106, Exodus 32, 1 Corinthians 10:1-22

Core Elements:

Israel’s vocation comes into focus

Israel becomes the locus of divine truth, and in herself reveals the fallen state of mankind and God’s solution

Israel’s rough start

They begin to grumble right away

Yet they ratify the covenant God makes with them at Sinai

The Golden Calf

And then they fall immediately into idolatry

The definition of idolatry – anything in which we seek our ultimate surety apart from God

Characteristics of idolatry, for Israel and for us

A counterfeit god

We fashion it after our own image, what we really want

Being this guided by our own whims, we throw ourselves into sensual indulgence

Why God’s wrath is a necessary consequence of human rebellion

God’s *personal* opposition to human sin

Injustice committed, love is spurned

Moses as mediator

He has favor with God, he appeals to God’s promise and nature, and he offers himself as a substitute

And yet Moses is not sufficient, even he cannot see God, so one greater than Moses is needed

**Lesson Nine**

**The Dwelling of God is with Man**

Overview: What is the Tabernacle? How did in function within Israel, and what is its place in salvation history? These are the questions we will address in this lesson. We will find that the Tabernacle represents the paradox of the human condition in a fallen state: God’s wants to dwell with us, be we cannot approach his holy presence as sinners without being consumed by it. The Tabernacle is intentionally designed to reinforce this paradox, and provide for means of grace to overcome it, albeit with significant limitations. Its place as the locus of God’s presence on earth points to Christ, who in his human body makes humanity as a whole, and by extension the earth they are mandated from creation to fill, the dwelling place of God.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* State the definition of the word “tabernacle” from the Hebrew and interpret its significance
* Define “holiness” and how it relates to the Tabernacle
* Summarize how the Tabernacle and Court represents the heavens and the earth
* Summarize how the Tabernacle represents Israel’s history with God
* Relate the symbolism of the Tabernacle to our condition before God

Key Text(s): Exodus 35:30-38:20; and Exodus 40

Office Texts: Psalm 15 and 24, Exodus 40, Hebrews 9:1-10

Core Elements:

Quick reminder of where we are *in the story*: Israel is the mode of God teaching the world about himself.

The Tabernacle as God’s dwelling place (*mishkan* from root *shakan*, to dwell; whence *Shekhinah Glory*).

Not a “religious” building, but a public one, a tent among tents for the king

Brief discussion of the Tabernacle’s relationship to the Temple

How the Tabernacle represents the earth and the heavens

How the Tabernacle represents our approach to God

How the Tabernacle represents the obstacles in our approach to God

How the Tabernacle reveals a great paradox:

God intends to live with his people

God cannot be in direct contact with them without “consuming” them

Looking forward to a new dwelling place for God

**Lesson Ten**

**Dealing with Sin**

Overview: If the Tabernacle represents both the nearness of God to his people and his separateness, the sacrificial and priestly system which surrounds it represents how these two can go together, especially among a people who are prone to sin continually (Israel itself representing the fallen human race). The sacrifices represents God’s own provision for dealing with the sin and its corresponding pollution among Israel, so that they may be “holy” as God “is holy,” bringing us to a further understanding of Israel’s vocation. What is holiness, how is Israel’s cultic symbolism meant to convey this, and how does this help us more fuller understand the meaning of “atonement”?

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Define holiness with regards to God and the people respectively
* Define atonement with respect to sin’s multiple effects, as symbolized by the Levitical cult
* Differentiate between the three overarching uses for sacrifice
* Summarize the variegated symbolism of the five sacrifices and what they accomplish
* Relate the Day of Atonement to the rest of the sacrificial system and to the nation of Israel

Key Text(s): [Leviticus 1-7 and] Leviticus 16

Office Texts: Psalm 50, Leviticus 16, Hebrews 9:11-28

Core Elements:

God’s use of symbolism and ritual

The core symbolism of sacrifice

Sacrifice is costly – these animals are expensive, and God wants the best

Death is necessary to approach God

Bare ritual not enough – the worshipper must be intimately involved

What the sacrifices accomplish – not just atonement

Consecration or whole dedication to God

Fellowship with God and each other

Atonement or purification of sin

Bi-fold meaning of “atone” in Hebrew

To purify

To ransom (to God: in order to propitiate)

What cannot be atoned for according to the Levitical system: most of what we think of as “sin” (i.e., *intentional* disobedience)

The nature of holiness

Perfection, wholeness, integrity, purity

Why “clean/unclean” distinctions so important – no unnecessary mixing, maintaining order

Israel’s chief vocation: “be holy as the Lord you God is holy”

Basic flow of the Day of Atonement, and what it accomplishes (both propitiation and purification)

**Lesson Eleven**

**Law a Blessing and a Curse**

Overview: If the center of Israel’s national life is the pursuit of God’s holiness, then the law is the framework within which that pursuit occurs, the scaffolding which supports the enterprise. “Righteousness” is to be distinguished from “holiness” as one’s fidelity to this legal pattern. But this is more than merely “law” as we think of it, but an entire way of life organized around common bonds, authorities, and seasonal patterns, as expressed in the full meaning of the Hebrew word “torah,” as *instruction* and *guidance*. In this lesson we will explore how this works, how it relates to contemporary Christian living, and how the blessings and curses of the Law situate it into the story of salvation.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Summarize traditional Christian divisions in the law and their limitations
* Define the word “torah” and how it is both similar and dissimilar to modern concepts of “law”
* Relate the Law of Moses to contemporary Christian living and ethics
* State the law’s major limitation, and describe how the blessings and curses make this plain

Key Text(s): Deuteronomy 4:1-9:12 and Deuteronomy chapters 28 and 30

Office Texts: Psalm 19, Deuteronomy 6, Galatians 3:10-29

Core Elements:

Traditional divisions of the Law: Civil, Ceremonial, Moral

Three uses of the Moral Law: First Use/Civil Use (to curb); Second Use/Pedagogical use (to mirror); Third Use/Didactic Use/Normative Use (to guide)

Where blocs of “law” is located in the Pentateuch: Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20-23) followed by ratification ceremony (Exodus 24); Leviticus as a whole, with emphasis on the Holiness Code (chs 17-26); Deuteronomy 12-26, with 4-11 functioning as a long preamble and exhortation

Law as the framework within which Israel’s vocation to holiness is made possible, given direction

Understanding the law by situating it in its context: meaning of *torah* (more than law, *instruction*)

The nature of ANE law; covenant as legal form; casuistic vs positive law

How the Law of Israel compares to surrounding legal codes

equality for all before the law; concern for poor/marginalized; just and reasonable penalties; preference for life over property

Moses’ commentary on the Law in Deuteronomy

A sign for Israel (God made them; God separated them; God’s redemptive purposes for world)

A sign for the nations (of God’s wisdom (Deut 4:6-8); of God’s holiness (Deut 29:24-28))

Applying the law today

As such, it is not “binding” in any way on the Christian

But, analysis can help give us sense of the underlying [timeless] ethics of the law

A case study: the year of jubilee and Christian responses to the poor and systemic poverty

The blessings and the curses, and their relationship to the story (Israel a mirror for fallen humanity)

The fundamental failure of the law as external – it cannot empower us to obey it

Moses predicts Israel’s failure (Deut 31:1-10); the Law anticipates in own fulfillment

**Lesson Twelve**

**God’s Holy D-Day**

Overview: The Israelite conquest of Canaan represents one of the most difficult portions of Scripture for modern Christians to understand. Along with the Flood narrative and apocalyptic visions of the Final Judgment in both Testaments, it presents the starkest take on the consequences of human sin, and together with the symbols and reality of the Tabernacle system it most vividly portrays the dangers of God’s unadulterated holiness in a fallen world. How are we to read these stories? How are we to respond to charges that they present God as a genocidal maniac? This lesson will attempt to answer these difficult questions by situating these narratives in the larger story of salvation. Ultimately we will see how the conquest’s tightly controlled conditions and limited scope further God’s redemptive purpose of showing fallen man through Israel *both* the gravity of his condition *and also* the radical extent of God’s desire to do something about it so that he might dwell among us.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Explain holiness as an attribute of God and relate it to the conquest of Canaan
* Define *hrm* and recognize its usual translations into English
* Define “intrusion ethics” and how the concept helps situate the conquest in the biblical story
* Identify and summarize the limitations placed on *hrm* within the Law

Key Text(s): [Exodus 23:20-33, Leviticus 18:24-30, Deuteronomy 7, 18:9-13,] Deuteronomy 20, Joshua 6

Office Texts: Psalms 9 and 11, Joshua 6, Revelation 19:11-21

Core Elements:

The holiness of God as the dominant theological category – the perfect integrity of his being, actions

God has called Israel to be a holy nation, a sacred enclave among mankind dedicated to his purposes

God has provided the land of Canaan for this national mandate – it is a holy precinct

All this so that a holy God can dwell in the midst of a fallen creation

the Canaanites and especially their God’s must go

*intrusion ethics* – the breaking in of Final Judgment for specific redemptive purposes

excurses: what place is there for love amidst this holiness?

The basis of the conquest

God’s promise to the patriarchs (Genesis 15:2-3; 26:3-5; 28:13-15; Exodus 3:3-10, 16-17)

The justification of the conquest

The sinfulness of man, as a sign against it; the Canaanites a potent example (Gen 15:16, Lev 18:24-30)

Israel herself not necessarily more righteous (Deut 4:37-40; 9:4-8) or better (Deut 7:6-8)

The mode of the conquest

*hrm* warfare, an act of holy consecration (Deuteronomy 7:1-2, 5-6, 25-26; 20:17-18)

The limitations of the conquest – *wherein its true purposes can be seen more starkly*

Only YHWH can command it; illicit exercises are punished severely (1 Sam 4-5)

Only specific regions (Numbers 21, Deuteronomy 2:37)

Other areas received different standards for warfare (Deuteronomy 20:1-16)

The possibility of redemption for the Canaanites themselves, Rahab (Joshua 6)

Israel herself potentially subject to *hrm*, (Leviticus 18:24-30, Deuteronomy 28, 30; Joshua 7)

All this illustrates: this is God’s battle, not Israel’s (the Angel of YHWH, Joshua 5:13-15)

**Lesson Thirteen**

**Reclaiming the Throne**

Overview: We turn now to a crucial watershed in the story of salvation: the development of the monarchy in Israel, wherein the line of the promised “seed” is made even more precise and the role of the coming one becomes more clear. Birthed in the context of Israel’s difficult early history in the Holy Land, in which she consistently whores after the local gods and becomes subject to violence, God provides a telling lesson in how leadership is to work among his people by first raising up an unfaithful king (fulfilling the people’s request for a “king like the nations have”) and then raising up a king who is loyal to himself. By these means, he sets up to restoration of God’s own rule over all people.

Objectives: by the conclusion of this lesson, participants should be able to

* Define “canaanization” and describe Israel’s status in the land under the judges in light of it
* Describe how Saul’s name explicates his role in the story
* Summarize how David differs from Saul, and what this means for God’s rule of his people
* Identify key episodes in David’s rise to kingship which illustrate God’s hand in the same
* Define the Hebrew word “messiah” and how it relates to ancient Israelite kingship

Key Text(s): 1 Samuel 8-10, 15-17

Office Texts: Psalms 23 and 45:1-9, 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Matthew 3:13-17

Core Elements:

Israel’s situation during Judges: “canaanization” (she becomes like the nations she failed to drive out)

Judges 1-2 – Israel’s failure to complete the conquest and its disastrous consequences

Judges 8:22-23 [24-9:57] – Gideon and the relationship of the “judges” to the rule of YHWH

Sets up for scene with Samuel and the request of the people in 1 Samuel 9

The request for a king like the nations and its implications – God’s reign is rejected

God gives them Saul, whose name comes from the Hebrew root for “to ask” (i.e. “you asked for it”)

Saul looks pleasing to the eyes, the physical model of kingship on human terms

But he is vacillating, unfaithful, paranoid – the “[change] into another man” (10:6) ineffective

The episode with Amalek – God desires obedience rather than sacrifice

Saul shifts blame (to his men) – God rejects Saul – Saul tries to save face

David is not what anyone would expect, small and the youngest of brothers; even Samuel didn’t see it!

But David is good with the Spirit and he is bold in faith

The episode with Goliath is an case study in what sets up him apart from Saul: David doesn’t see the way the world sees, but in light of redemption of YHWH (just as YHWH himself does)

David’s rise to power an act of YHWH, not David

David’s meteoric rise (1 Sam 18)

Jonathan’s covenant with David (1 Sam 18, 20, 23:25-28)

The priest of YHWH follows David in his exile (1 Sam 21 and 22)

David eschews two opportunities to take Saul out (1 Sam 24 and 26)

The encounter with Abigail (1 Sam 25)

The Philistines refuse to let David fight (the crucial battle where Saul is killed) (1 Sam 29 and 31)

David’s lament of Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1)