

O.T. Subject and Structure

The End Opened Up & Revealed from the Beginning

The Old Testament can be divided into three major sections — *Genesis through Esther (historic)*, *Job through the Song of Solomon (personal and experiential)*, and *Isaiah through Malachi (prophetic)*.

First Section

Insofar as the historical nature (and much of the typical nature) of that seen throughout the first part of these three major sections is concerned, “Esther,” *having to do with Israel and concluding the first section*, outlines, in a succinct typical fashion, that seen throughout the whole of this first section of Scripture (particularly beginning with Gen. 11b ff).

Thus, in this respect, the Book of Esther simply presents a brief summary *of all which has preceded surrounding Israel*, with the emphasis placed in the same realm seen in the preceding Scriptures, placed on the latter days, leading into the Messianic Era.

And the Book of Esther coming at the end of the first of these three major sections would be the proper place for this book in the Canon of Scripture.

This first major section of Scripture (Genesis through Esther) is often thought of *ONLY in the sense of providing Biblical history, along with spiritual lessons drawn from Biblical history*.

However, *viewing THIS section of Scripture from THIS perspective alone ONLY presents part of the picture. THIS section, through mainly its type-antitype structure, is HIGHLY prophetic in nature.*

In fact, *FROM a typical perspective, this first section is JUST as prophetic in nature as the third section* — from Isaiah through Malachi, containing the major and minor prophets (major and minor *in the sense of length, NOT importance*).

(In the preceding respect, note a problem with the oft-repeated statement that about one-fourth to one-third of the Bible is prophetic — *a claim which has NOT taken the typical facet of Biblical structure into account at all, else the figure being used would be MUCH higher, probably MORE than doubled.*)

Also, though this first section centers around *Israel and the nations* from a historical perspective, *typology* throughout this section is another matter.

The typical structure and prophetic nature of this section of Scripture, a section covering about one-half of the entire Old Testament, is somewhat divided between God and Israel and Christ and the Church.

For example, viewing two parts of Genesis (chs. 2-8 and 23-25), chapters two, three, and five have to do with *Christ and the Church*, and chapters four and six through eight have to do with *God and Israel*; then chapter twenty-three has to do with *God and Israel*, chapter twenty-four has to do with *Christ and the Church*, and chapter twenty-five has to do with *God and Israel* once again.

Both aspects of these typical teachings can be seen in the lives of Joseph in the latter part of Genesis (chs. 37-45) and Moses in the first part of Exodus (chs. 2-4).

Both Joseph and Moses *took Gentile brides during a time after they had been rejected by and separated from their brethren* (having to do with *Christ and the Church*, following Christ's rejection by and separation from Israel, His brethren according to the flesh).

But the time came when both Joseph and Moses *dealt with their brethren again* (having to do with *Christ and Israel*,

with that time when God resumes His national dealings with Israel).

Then, whole books deal with matters in this typical manner.

Most of the Book of Exodus deals with *God and Israel* in this respect, and the Books of I, II Samuel deal with *Christ and the Church* in this same respect.

Then, the same thing can be seen in the Books of Ruth and Esther. The Book of Ruth deals with *Christ and the Church*, while the Book of Esther deals with *God and Israel*.

And, viewing matters from a different perspective yet, note that the journey of the Israelites under Moses and Joshua (Ex. 12 through Joshua) typifies *NOT ONLY* the experiences of Israel yet future *BUT* that of Christians under Christ today.

An earthly land lay before Israel in the type, and antitype; and *a heavenly land* lies before Christians in the antitype.

This type-antitype structure is that which is referenced through the use of the word *typos* (type) in the Greek text of I Cor. 10:6, 11; *this is the basis upon which particularly the second, third, fourth, and fifth of the five major warnings in Hebrews are to be understood* (Heb. 3-12); *and this forms the basis for a proper understanding of the entire pilgrim walk of the Christian today* (a journey from Egypt [a type of the world] to Canaan [a type of that heavenly land, connected with an inheritance and a rest, awaiting Christians]).

Or, as previously seen, going back to God and Israel, these same experiences of the Israelites under Moses foreshadow, as well, the future restoration of the Jewish people to the land under Christ.

Thus, an immense wealth of information lies within the way God has designed this opening section of His Word.

Within the inherent typical structure, this section of Scripture is HIGHLY prophetic — as prophetic and instructive in this respect as ANY section of subsequent Scripture.

And *NOT ONLY* are numerous prophecies seen in the types extending from Genesis through Esther *BUT* also in places such as the account of Balaam (Num. 22-24), or that seen in God's promises and warnings to Israel in Leviticus chapter twenty-six and Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight.

These sections of Scripture provide a *detailed history* of Israel, relating *the reason WHY the nation was called into existence, WHAT was expected of this nation, and the reason WHY the Jewish people ultimately found themselves uprooted from their land and scattered among the Gentile nations.*

THEN, viewing *the typical aspect* of these sections of Scripture, events move beyond history into prophecy, showing the end of the matter — the same thing seen in the Psalms and the Prophets.

This is the way in which God designed and structured this opening section of His Word. And if man would properly understand God's revealed Word, *he MUST recognize this fact and study this Word after the same fashion in which it has been given.*

Note the opening two verses of Hebrews in this respect:

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds [‘ages’]”

God, at different times and ways spoke in time past to the Jewish people through the prophets. Then, at times beyond that, referred to as “these last days,” He spoke to us in the person of the One Whom He has appointed “heir of all things,” through Whom he arranged and set the ages in place and order.

This opening section of Scripture, from Genesis through Esther, referenced in Heb. 1:1, forms *the backdrop* for *NOT*

ONLY the second major section (a section covering five books, from Job through the Song of Solomon) *BUT* the third major section as well (all of the prophetic books, extending from Isaiah through Malachi).

That would be to say, Genesis through Esther forms *the backdrop for the remainder of the Old Testament*. And *IF* man *does NOT* understand (or *IF* he ignores) that placed at the beginning, *it will be IMPOSSIBLE for him to EVER come into a proper understanding of later revelation (including, of course, the N.T. as well), for the latter is INSEPARABLY tied to and built upon the former in this respect.*

(Thus, the first part is *FOUNDATIONAL*. And “*IF* the foundations be destroyed” [whether ignored, *NOT* dealt with after the fashion in which the material has been put together, or *ANY* other similar negative means (Ps. 11:3)], *THEN...*)

Second Section

God’s revelation to man *is progressive* in the sense that it has been designed so that a proper understanding of later revelation rests on a proper understanding of earlier revelation. One part progresses into the other, and, *with THIS in mind, Scripture MUST be compared with Scripture* — later revelation with earlier revelation, and earlier revelation with later revelation (I Cor. 2:9-13; *cf.* Isa. 28:10).

For example, in the second section, there are numerous Psalms covering *NOT ONLY* Israel’s present condition (scattered among the Gentile nations) *BUT* also that which lies in the future for Israel (the end of Gentile world power, with Israel restored to her land and elevated to her proper place among the nations [*e.g.*, chs. 2, 8, 22-24, 37, 45-47, 76, 83, 89, 97, 102, 110, 121, 126, 137, 145]). And these Psalms *CANNOT* be properly understood apart from the backdrop provided by the first section of Scripture.

The fact that numerous Psalms *CANNOT* be properly understood apart from this first section should be easy enough to understand, for this first section of Scripture reveals the history of Israel, *extending FROM the reason for the nation's calling as God's firstborn son TO the reason WHY God allowed the Gentile nations to come into the land and uproot His people.*

THEN, beyond that, the typical aspect of this first section enters into the matter, projecting events out into the future, introduced in the historic section in this typical fashion and later seen in the Psalms after a different fashion (again ref. Heb. 1:1, 2).

Third Section

And all of the prophets present *EXACTLY the SAME central theme.*

It is *THAT* seen throughout the preceding Psalms, or the preceding historical books, viewing the latter from both historical and typical vantage points.

Each of the prophetic books (seventeen in all, as there are seventeen historic books) deals with different facets of *the whole of Israel's history, current condition, and future destiny, with a particular emphasis placed upon God's punishment befalling His people because of disobedience, followed by the Jewish people's repentance, followed by the destruction of Gentile world power and the restoration of Israel.*

These things comprise *the overriding theme of ALL Old Testament prophecy as it pertains to Israel, whether in the historic books, the Psalms, or the Prophets.*

Each of the prophetic books, beginning with Isaiah, covers, after some fashion, this panorama of Israeli history — events extending *from the time of the nation's inception almost three and one-half millenniums ago to the Messianic Kingdom yet future.*

BUT, NO two of these seventeen books cover *EXACTLY* the same thing, after *EXACTLY* the same fashion. *Each book centers around a particular and peculiar facet of study within this panorama of events.*

In this respect, studying these prophetic books is much like studying types. As no one type provides the complete picture in and of itself, no one Old Testament prophetic book provides the complete picture in and of itself as well.

Note, for example, how Gentile world power is dealt with in the Old Testament. This power exists *BECAUSE OF Israeli disobedience*; and this power also exists *TO BRING Israel, THROUGH persecution at the hands of the Gentiles, TO the place of repentance.*

THEN, since the *emphasis* concerning Israel in this realm, in any part of the Old Testament, is upon Israel's repentance and restoration (which it is), the *emphasis* concerning Gentile world power should, as well, be upon the end and destruction of Gentile world power (which it is). *ONE parallels the OTHER in THIS respect, WHETHER in Moses, the Psalms, or the Prophets.*

Over and over in the Old Testament — beginning in Genesis — *the end of Gentile world power* comes into view. There is an emphasis placed in this realm, for *Gentile world power MUST be brought to an end BEFORE Israel can occupy the nation's proper place within a restored theocracy.*

THIS is WHY one finds the power of Egypt destroyed in the Red Sea *at the time of the Exodus under Moses* (Ex. 14:27-31); *THIS is WHY* one finds Haman slain in Esther *prior to the Jewish people receiving their proper and due recognition* (7:9, 10; 8:15-17; 10:1-3); and *THIS is WHY* numerous Psalms and Prophets deal with this subject *prior to Israel being restored* (e.g., Ps. 2:1-5; Isa. 24:21; Jer. 4:26-28; Ezek. 39:21, 22; Dan. 11:36-45; Joel 3:12-16).

Gentile world power is going to come to an END. And its end will be as depicted in Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45, among numerous other places in the Old Testament.

Christ will return and personally destroy Gentile world power in its final form, headed up under Antichrist in that coming day.

And *ONCE* Gentile world power has been destroyed in this manner — pictured as “chaff” thrown into the wind from a threshing floor, being carried away by that wind — *Israel WILL BE elevated to the nation’s proper place among the Gentile nations of the earth, REALIZING the position occupied by firstborn sons* (cf. Ex. 4:22, 23).

Concluding Remarks

“A threshing floor” is used in Scripture to depict *judgment*. This is true of *God’s judgment upon Christians at the end of this dispensation* (cf. Ruth 3:2ff; Matt. 3:11, 12), and it is equally true of *God’s judgment upon the Gentile nations at the end of the Tribulation* (Dan. 2:35).

And to deny that these sequences of events will occur at the end of Man’s Day is to deny central themes of all Old Testament Scripture, as it pertains to the Church, Israel, and the nations.

Much of that seen in Old Testament Scripture surrounding the Church, Israel, and the nations awaits fulfillment.

And, in this respect, when God steps in and begins to fulfill these Scriptures, multiplied thousands upon thousands of prophecies seen throughout the pages of the Old Testament, beginning with the opening chapters of Genesis, will be fulfilled in a very short period of time.

God, through the writers of the Old Testament, has provided a voluminous amount of information on this overall subject; and there is absolutely NO reason for anyone today to be uninformed or ignorant concerning that which God is about to do.

It has ALL been laid out in the Old Testament Scriptures, beginning with Moses and ending with the Prophets.