

Culture of the Bible

The concepts people have, customs, habits, skills of the people.

Ancient cultures developed out of a rebellion of God – led to immorality.

As nations developed, they began to exchange gods and customs. The God of Heaven was often rejected. Romans 1 – commentary on the pagan world. Self-centered life – evil prevalent in the hearts of men.

Jewish people did not understand the influence of the people around them. All things had a bearing on:

1. Mind of Man
2. Fullness of Time (Gal. 4:4)

Adam -> Abraham

Worship: Cain and Abel (Righteous) Gen. 4
Introduces the ugly word of murder.

Satan referred to as a murderer from the beginning.

Not love brother = murder.

Noah: Men's thoughts evil always

Tower of Babel – evil. Brought different cultures. Constant change since.

Abraham -> Moses

Abraham guided by faith. Promise (Gen. 12).
Son promised, Isaac not Ishmael. Seed promised through Isaac. Offering of Isaac – God knew Abraham.

Isaac -> Jacob -> 12 sons – Joseph -> brought slavery.

God sent Joseph -> Gen. 50: benefit brethren.
Goshen -> slavery.

Moses

Born in a time when he was supposed to die.
Saw mistreatment -? Fled to Midian.
Burning Bush. Plagues and eventual deliverance.

Moses successfully delivered them – not allowed to enter Canaan.

Joshua

People right in their own eyes.

Went aside – began to live in selfish way.

Judges

450 years

Samuel – prophet and judge. Acts 3 spoke of these days.

Anointed Saul as king – children of Israel changed forever.

Saul – 1st King (40 years)
Rebellious, disobedient
Introduced foreign gods.

David – 2nd King (40 years)
Gave great rise to the Nation

Solomon – 3rd King (40 years)
Built temple

Many wives – political alliances. Wives brought in many gods – Solomon gave them place.
People longed for the days of David and Solomon.

Divided Kingdom

Dreadful time for God's people.

Northern – 10 tribes – Israel – Jeroboam
Southern – 2 tribes – Judah – Rehoboam
Jeroboam changed object, location, time, and manner of worship and the priesthood.
Not of great benefit to God's people – but part of their history.

North – never had a good king.

South – had some good kings but not successful.

Elijah – prophet

Elisha – prophet

Elijah stood against Baal – I Kings 18

God won; Baal lost. The people were trying to worship both God and Baal.

Prophets

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel -> Babylonian captivity.

Ezekiel -> confronted them in Babylon. Taught the people and projected Christ and coming kingdom.

Captivity – drastic change.

Assyrian – Northern tribes. Some left. Other nations mixed there. Birth of Samaritans; problems arose, c.f. John 4.

Return of Southern Kingdom – Samaritans opposed work.

Jeremiah – 70 years – Babylonian captivity.
Isaiah – prophesied man to rise up. Isa. 44:45 –
Cyrus – return home.
Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah brought them home.

Babylonian captivity – great works done. Before – idolaters; after – idols not in their heart. Brought them together as a people.

Inter-Testament Period

Persian rule.

Maccabees – desire for Independence.

Mattathias Maccabees – High Priest

134 BC – some form of victory – lasts until 37

AD – Romans brought in the Herodian line.

People desired independence.

People desired a restoration of the “glory days” and wanted Jesus to restore those, both spiritually and materially.

Jesus encountered a cultural – social life – and traditions that “made void the testimony of God.”

Jesus describes them as the “children of the devil.” Not 100% (Simeon and Anna) but a majority.

Over the centuries, people have allowed themselves to be removed from God and instituted their own traditions.

They took pride in calling themselves “children of Abraham” and many other things – had a bearing on their spiritual concepts and their social norms.

Jesus had to correct their false beliefs, their incorrect culture, and the local traditions. ¹

©2016, 2020 Justin D. Reed
Post Office Box 292 · Woodbury TN 37190
thejustinreedshow.com/bibleresources

¹ Notes from Charles Williams’ class on January 14, 2016.