

A Missions Journey Through The Bible
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Old Testament

1. Law - God's global view, creation, mission of God, dispersion, commission, calling (Abraham), community (Israel as a missionary nation), Egypt/Exodus ("mixed multitude"), inclusion of "*aliens, foreigners, sojourners, strangers, nations, Gentiles.*" **Highlights/Insights** – (1) *Telescope* - Genesis 1-11; Creation (1.1 "missio Dei"); Command 1.28; Conquest 3.15; Commission 9.1; Confusion (Babel) 11.1-9; (2) *Microscope* – Genesis 12 – 50 (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph); 12.1-3 missionary nation; Exodus 9.13-16; 12.38,48; 19.4-6 – Egypt, Exodus, Sinai Commission; Leviticus 16.29; 17.8; 19.33-34 – aliens, foreigners invited to worship; Numbers 14.12-21 "all the earth filled with glory of the Lord; Deuteronomy 10.18-19 love the alien. God is a missionary God with a global, international view. Mission is God's mission, not ours; God called and created a missionary nation (Israel) to include all peoples of the earth.

2. History – *possessing* the land, Israel's *presence* in the midst of surrounding nations as a *proclaiming* community. **Highlights/Insights** – Queen of Sheba "heard" and came, 1 Kings 10.6; "diaspora missions" – captive Jewish maiden testifies, 2 Kings 5; Ruth/Naomi economic migrants; foreigners brought into line of Christ – Ruth and Rahab; Queen Esther and Jews in dispersion in Persia; Solomon/Temple dedication (1 Kings 8.41-43) – all peoples invited to pray; 2 Chronicles 2.17 – census of 153,600 aliens living in Jerusalem. Israel is to be *present* among the nations and *proclaim* to the nations.

3. Poetry/Wisdom – songs, stories, and worship of the missionizing community. **Highlights/Insights** - In Psalms more than 175 references with universal/international theme (Psalms 2, 22, 33, 47, 50, 66, 67, 72, 96, 98, 117, 145); Psalm 67 – "your salvation among the nations," "May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you;" Psalm 67 a Psalm for Feast of Pentecost (compare to Acts 2 Day of Pentecost). Blessings of God are not only individual but meant for the nations.

4. Prophets – Israel is to be the proclaiming community to the world, a light to the nations. The prophets give a vast, global overview of the work of God in the world through His people, even to the end of time. **Highlights/Insights** – Israel's mission is (1) *God-appointed* ("...the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise"), (2) *God-centered* – upholding Monotheism (One true, holy God) in midst of polytheism/idolatry ("I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God" Isaiah 44.6), (3) *A mission to the nations* - Book of Isaiah is particularly clear on this (Isaiah 45.21; 49.6; 52.10; 56.7). Before captivity (Babylon) strangers were permitted to join Israel (proselytes, God-fearers), entire nations were to be attracted to Israel, and all nations were to know and worship the Lord. During the exile/captivity, Israel's missionary role began to shift from attraction/invitation to dispersion as an outward-going force. In the

Diaspora (between O.T. and N.T. times) Israel became actively involved in winning converts and planting synagogues.

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New Testament

1. Gospels - “But when the time [kairos] had fully come, God sent his Son...” (Galatians 4.4); God’s salvation in Jesus Christ for the Jews and Gentiles (cross-cultural ministry, death, resurrection, ascension); gospel of the kingdom, “ekklesia, koinonia, diaspora”; the global Great Commission. **Highlights/Insights** – In the mission and teaching of Jesus we see the Seeking/Finding/Sending God (Luke 15), the “totality” of the Great Commission, and the promise of power for a new global Church.

2. History (Book of Acts) – the disciples receive power and the church spreads throughout Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. **Highlights/Insights** – The gospel of Luke is, “...about all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach...(Acts 1.1). In Acts, Jesus enters His ministry as Baptizer in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.32-33) and *continues* to work with his disciples. The “Holy Spirit” is central (listed 72 times in 28 chapters). There is “spontaneous strategy” of the Holy Spirit in leading the church to reach out to new peoples, races, cultures (Acts 8 – Philip; 10 Peter to Cornelius; 13 Saul/Barnabas to Gentiles; 16 Paul and team to Macedonia/Europe). Three-fourths of the book (75%) is about cross-cultural evangelism (Acts 10 – 28).

3. Epistles (Letters) – written to the missionary churches among new peoples in new territories. Written to urban, multicultural congregations and groups of local churches, addressing issues/procedures/practices arising from gospel among new peoples. **Highlights/Insights** - Romans written by Apostle Paul to churches in Rome to seek for missionary support for his intended mission to Spain and to the Gentiles. He says that the gospel must go to people/places who have not heard (Romans 10.12-15; 15.16-24). In Philippians, he thanks friends/supporters for prayer/financial partnership (1.3-6). His letter to Philemon has lessons for “diaspora missions” (migrants, refugees, etc.).

4. Prophecy (Revelation) - written to missions churches planted in cities of Asia Minor but with global, international, eternal perspectives for all of God’s people everywhere. **Highlights/Insights** - It is “The revelation of Jesus Christ...(1.1) and Christ is central throughout the book. It is not tribal, localized, parochial, national, or regional but international in focus and perspectives (“Jesus Christ, ruler of the kings of the earth” 1.5; “for all the peoples of the earth” 1.7). There is a sense of urgency (“the time is near” 1.3) and timelessness - with eternity in view (“...from him who is, and who was, and who is to come...” 1.4). God’s intended purpose is that all nations, peoples, and ethnic groupings will worship and serve Him (“...from every tribe and language and people and nation.” 5.9). God’s salvation story closes with the expectation and longing for the coming of Jesus Christ (“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus”) and God’s grace (22.20 - 21).

Additional overview and insights of a missions journey through the Bible are provided in [Globalbeliever.com: Connecting To God's Work in Your World](http://Globalbeliever.com) ©Grant McClung 2010 (Available online as free, downloadable "ebook" at www.MissionsResourceGroup.org – go to "Globalbeliever.com" link and then "Read the Book")

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