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Discoveries to follow DVD and audio recordings

Bible Discoveries: The Old Testament

These Discovery Sheets were designed to help you explore Scripture on your own and draw some conclusions from that exploration.

They were designed for small-group activities, where 4-6 people could do them together and benefit from what others might already know, but they can be done individually or in larger groups if you prefer. Doing them will give you a greater confidence in your ability to explore the Scriptures and get further background on important aspects of the story.

Please don't take these too seriously, or get frustrated in trying to find the "right answer." That's not their purpose. They are meant to be fun and simply help people realize that they can read various sections of Scripture and see them as part of a larger story.

They were designed to be completed in 10-15 minutes of quick reading and discussion. A few may take a bit longer, but not much. If you're in a group see what kind of discussion about particular issues or the Scriptures themselves will arise from these discoveries.

A New Testament Perspective On the Old, Part I

Assignment: Read the Scripture at the head of one of the columns, and answer the questions about it from the first column. Not every question may fit every passage, but answer them the best you can.

	Matthew 5:17-20	Luke 24:25-27
Context: What is this passage dealing with?		
What does this passage say about the Old Testament?		
What does this indicate that we should look for in interpreting the Old Testament?		
Give some examples of this use of the Old Testament in the New.		
Give some examples of how the Old Testament has provided this kind of insight in your own life.		

A New Testament Perspective On the Old, Part II

Assignment: Read the Scripture at the head of one of the columns, and answer the questions about it from the first column. Not every question may fit every passage, but answer them the best that you can.

	Romans 9:1-9	I Cor. 10:1-3
Context: What is this passage dealing with?		
What does this passage say about the Old Testament?		
What does this indicate that we should look for in interpreting the Old Testament?		
Give some examples of this use of the Old Testament in the New.		
Give some examples of how the Old Testament has provided this kind of insight in your own life.		

The Ten Commandments

Assignment: Discover how God applies the Ten Commandments to our lives today.

1. In the first column below, list as many of the Ten Commandments that you can remember. Try to list them as close to the original order that you can. Then, in the second column, check your answers with the list from Exodus 20:1-17:

From Memory	From Exodus 20
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

2. Which of the commandments in Column 2 do you think God feels differently about now (compared to when he gave them to Moses)?
3. Why do you think this?
4. Where do the Ten Commandments fit in the life of the believer today?

The Sacrifices of the Old Covenant

Assignment: Discover the meaning and the process of making a sacrifice under the Levitical system and its implications for us today.

1. Read Leviticus 4:27-31. List the three acts the sinner does in making the sacrifice as well as the three acts of the priest below.
 - a. The Sinner
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - b. The priest
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
2. How does this process differ if a leader is the one who sins (4:22-26)?
3. What happens if the whole assembly sins (4:13-21)?
4. What about if the priest sins (4:3-12)?
5. What do you think accounts for these differences?

Blessings and Curses

Assignment: In Deuteronomy God links his relationship with Israel to a series of promised blessings and threatened curses. Take a look at these blessings and curses and see if they apply to our lives today.

1. First, look at the list of blessings and curses in Deuteronomy 28 and summarize them in the chart below:

Promised Blessings	Threatened Curses

2. What qualified someone for God's blessings?

3. What qualified someone for God's curses?

4. How much does God relate to us on the same basis today?

The Spy Commission¹

Assignment: Read Numbers 13:26- 14:9 and Deuteronomy 1:19-46. Choose two people in your group to represent Joshua and Caleb (the minority report), and the rest will represent the majority – the other 10 spies. Study the passage and prepare to re-enact the presentation of the Spy Commission report. Research the position you will defend and prepare to present it to the rest of the group.

Resolved: We shall not at this time go up to the Promised Land.

	Promised Blessings	Threatened Curses
Arguments		
Motives		

¹ This Discovery Sheet is for a group or class setting.

Joshua's Sermon

Assignment: Summarize Joshua's final charge to the Israelites after they conquered Canaan. Read Joshua 24:2-27.

1. What illustrations did Joshua use from Israel's history and what point did he make of each of them?

Illustration	Point being made

2. What response was he looking for from the Israelites?
 - a. In their hearts?
 - b. In their actions?
3. What did the people decide?
4. How does Joshua depict God's character to reinforce their decision?
5. In one sentence or phrase, what is the theme of Joshua's last words?

6. Give some examples of how this same instruction could apply to circumstances today.

What Happened to the Tribe of Benjamin?

Assignment: Something happened to the tribe of Benjamin that almost wiped that tribe from the face of the earth. Read about it in Judges 19-21 and see if you can answer the questions below.

1. What great offense did the people of Gibeah do?
2. How did the Levite inform the nation of Israel of the crime against him?
3. What did Israel decide to do about it?
4. How did all of Benjamin participate in their crimes?
5. The body count:

How many Israelites died the first day?

How many Israelites died the second day?

How many Israelites died the third day?

How many Benjamites died the third day?

6. How Benjamite men survived?

7. How did they get wives for them?

Who are the Midianites?

Assignment: Through chapters 6-8 of Judges the major enemy of Israel is the Midianites. In this discovery you will find out all you can about Midian and how their path had crossed with Israel many times before. Answer the following questions from the references provided, and from materials in your study Bible.

1. How did the Midianites begin? (Genesis 25:2-6).
2. Locate the land of Israel and the land of Midian on the map below.



3. Here is a list of encounters between the children of Israel and Midian. Describe briefly what happened in each encounter (don't forget the context).
 - a. Genesis 37:28
 - b. Exodus 2:15-22
 - c. Exodus 18
 - d. Numbers 22:1-7

- e. Numbers 25
 - f. Numbers 31
4. Why did the Midianites have so much power over Israel in Gideon's time and what did they do to the Israelites?
 5. Why do we hear so little of Midian after Gideon's battles with them? See Judges 8:28...

The Book of Ruth

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Ruth, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

1. Author:

2. Name:

3. Historical Context:

2. Theme

3. Major Characteristics

4. Content

5. Application

Give Us a King!

Assignment: Discover what God thinks of human kings, and why Israel demanded one. Start by reading I Samuel 8, and then answer the questions below.

1. Why did Israel want a king?

2. How did God view their desire to have a king?

3. What did God tell Samuel to warn the people about what a king would do to them?
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

 - d.

4. How will the king regard his people?

5. How will the people feel about the king once they get one?

7. Did the people believe Samuel?

David's Greatest Failure

Assignment: Take a close look at the nature of David's sin in the matter of Bathsheba and how it was resolved. Read 2 Samuel 11-12 and answer the questions below.

1. List the specific sins David commits in this instance.

2. How did David act before his sin was exposed?

3. How did God expose David's sin?

4. How did David act after his sin?

5. What were the consequences David would suffer for his sin?

6. Explain verse 12:14.
 - a. How did David respond to that prophecy before it was fulfilled? Why?

 - b. How did he respond after the prophecy?

7. Read Psalm 51. This is the prayer David prayed when he repented of sinning with Bathsheba. What does it teach us about repentance?

Whose Sin Was Worse?

Assignment: Both David and Saul fell to major temptations during their reign. One, however, was quickly forgiven and his kingdom reestablished, while the other lost his kingdom. Why was there a difference? Compare the sins of David and Saul. Think through why one was so quickly forgiven, and the other not. And then, answer the questions below.

	Saul 1 Samuel 15	David 2 Samuel 11-12
What sin was committed?		
What motivated the sin?		
Whose failure was worse (in your opinion)?		
How was the sin exposed?		
What was the response when the sin was exposed?		

How did God respond?		

1. Why do you think one of these kings lost their kingdom?

2. Why do you think one of these kings retained their kingdom?

Solomon's Intercession

Assignment: Lets take a close look at the prayer of dedication that Solomon offered on the day the temple was completed. Read 1 Kings 8 and answer the questions below.

1. How does Solomon begin his prayer?

2. Why is this an important model of prayer for us?

3. List below the specific requests that Solomon asks of God.

4. What request does he make of the Israelites when he blesses them?

5. How did God respond to Solomon's prayer?

Jesus in the Psalms

Assignment: A number of the Psalms are called 'Messianic' because they contain very detailed prophecies about Jesus and his life on earth. Psalm 22 is a good example of a Messianic Psalm. Study it and find the similarities between David and Jesus.

1. Read Psalm 22 and list below in the first column the references in the Psalm that correspond to the life of Jesus.

Psalm Reference	Comparison	Matthew Reference
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2. Now read Matthew 27. See if you can pick up any references you might have missed in the Psalm. Add these references to those above to show the New Testament fulfillment of the words of the Psalm. Write the Matthew references in the third column.
3. Which of the following do you think is true?
 - A. David knowingly wrote this Psalm as a prophecy for the Messiah.
 - B. Jesus found a Psalm that corresponded to his condition and used it.
 - C. God fulfilled these things in Jesus because of what David had written.
 - D. Two different events corresponded because God worked prophetically through David.
 - E. God made these things happen to David so he would have a prophecy about Jesus.

Financial Counsel From Proverbs

Assignment: Explore and glean from the financial counsel that Solomon offers us in the book of Proverbs. Begin by reading chapters 17-19.

1. Find all the references to money in these three chapters and note them below under the proper heading.
 - A. How we get money:

- B. How we use money:
 - C. The value of money in our lives:
 - D. Our attitude towards money:
2. Now write five statements about you and your money that summarizes some of the teachings of Proverbs.
- A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.

The Enticement of Evil

Assignment: Throughout Proverbs the honesty and value of wisdom is contrasted with the deception of wickedness. Read Proverbs 7 and 8. In this passage of Scripture a young man is lured into sin. We'll see how he was tempted, and what it produced in his life.

1. List the steps of temptation this young man goes through.

- a. How did the young man make himself available to temptation?
 - b. What were the arguments used to entice him?
2. This passage is not just about sexual sins. What other temptations fit a similar pattern?
 3. What can we do to thwart the tactics of evil's enticements?
 4. Conclusion: What does evil promise the young man? What does it really deliver?

Where Do We Find Meaning?

Assignment: "Where do we find meaning?" is the great question of Ecclesiastes. We'll take one example from this book and see what Solomon discovered.

1. Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11.
 - a. List the things Solomon did to find fulfillment.

- b. What did Solomon find out when all was said and done?
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- 3. Read Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.
 - a. What is Solomon's conclusion from all his searches for meaning?

 - b. Where can one find meaning in this life?
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- 4. Read Ecclesiastes 5:18-19.
 - a. How are we to think about the practical necessities of our life, like work, possessions, etc.?

The Book of Lamentations

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Lamentations, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

- A. Background
 - a. What can you find out about the author?

- b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this book was written?
- B. What is the theme of this book?
- C. What is distinctive about this book?
- D. Summarize the content of this book:
- E. How should the message of this book apply to us today?

The Complaining Prophet

Assignment: Early in Jeremiah's prophecy there are six sections where Jeremiah complains to God. These passages give us a highly personal view of Jeremiah's life and motives. For each of these instances see if you can find out what Jeremiah's complaint is, what gave birth to it, what he wants God to do about it, and read beyond the passage to see how God actually responds to it. And finally, answer the question below.

	Jeremiah's Complaint	What Caused It?	What Does He Want God to do About It?	How Does God Respond?
11:18-23				
12:1-4				
15:10-21				
17:12-18				
18:18-23				
20:7-18				

What do these passages show us about Jeremiah's personality?

Prophetic Actions

Assignment: Prophets not only just spoke God's word to his people, many of them were given specific actions to perform that would illustrate God's word. Ezekiel was perhaps called to do such prophetic

actions more than any other of the prophets. Lets take a look at one instance of this kind of prophecy and see what God was saying to his people. Fill out the graph, and then answer the question below.

Read Ezekiel 4. In the left column list the actions God told Ezekiel to take, and in the right column write out the meaning of the action.

Prophetic Action	Meaning

Why do you think God used this kind of prophetic word with his people?

Sin in the Family Line

Assignment: Much has been said today about generational sins; that the children can be guilty of the sins of their forefathers, and punished accordingly. How did that thinking get started? And is it still in force today? Read the passages below and answer the questions in order to find out.

Exodus 20:5-6

1. What does this passage say about God's judgment against those who hate him?
2. For how many generations would it continue?

Deuteronomy 24:16

3. Does that mean God wanted Israel to punish the children for their father's sin?

Jeremiah 31:29-30

4. What does this Proverb mean?
5. Does its revision indicate a change in how God is dealing with generational sin or guilt?

Ezekiel 18:1-23

6. Why will this Proverb no longer be quoted in Israel?
7. What happens to the violent son of a righteous man?
8. What happens to the righteous son of a violent man?
9. What sums up God's response to personal sin?

Conclusion

10. Do you carry any guilt or judgment for the sins of your parents or grandparents?

Daniel's Intercession

Assignment: One of the most powerful passages of personal intercession in God's Word is found in the book of Daniel. Let's take a close look at Daniel's prayer and see what we can learn from it. Read Daniel 9:1-19 and answer the questions below.

1. What spawned Daniel's prayer?
2. How did he pray?
3. What did he pray? Write a one-sentence summary from each paragraph of his prayer.
 - a. 4-6
 - b. 7-11
 - c. 11-14
 - d. 15-16
 - e. 17-19
4. What else did his prayer involve? (see verse 20)
5. How quickly did Daniel get an answer?
6. What was God's response?
7. Compare this to his next prayer in chapters 10:2-3 and 12-14.

The Book of Hosea

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Hosea, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

1. Author:

2. Historical Context:

B. Theme

C. Distinctives

D. Content

E. Interpretation

The Unholy Alliance

Many of the Minor Prophets address the unfaithfulness of Israel and Judah to the Lord. Some of that had to do with their idolatry. And some of that had to do with military alliances where the Israelites depended on their own ingenuity or the might of their armies instead of on the Lord. One such incident happened around the time of Hosea and had to do with Assyria. Read 2 Kings 16 and answer the questions below.

1. Who was king of Judah and what kind of king was he?
2. Who allied themselves against Judah?
3. Who did the king of Judah seek to help him?
4. What was the immediate cost for this military assistance plan?
5. Was the alliance successful in defeating Judah's immediate threat?
6. What was compromised in Judah as a consequence of this alliance between God's people and an unholy nation?
7. Conclusion: What does this story teach us about being faithful to God alone?

The Book of Joel

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Joel, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

- a. What can you find out about the author?

- b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this prophecy was given?

B. What is the theme of this book?

C. What is distinctive about this book?

D. Summarize the content of this book:

E. How should the message of this book apply to us today?

The Book of Amos

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Amos, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

1. Author:

2. Historical Context:

B. Theme:

C. Distinctives

D. Content

E. Interpretation

The Social Fabric of Amos' Day

Assignment: Amos gives us a valuable picture of life in Israel as it was decaying into ruin. Read Amos 2:6-16 and 3:14-5:15. Formulate a picture of life in Israel during the time of Amos by answering the questions below.

1. Does Israel seem to be a wealthy nation? Support your answer.
2. List the sins that Israel continued to commit and give examples:
3. How did they treat the prophets?
4. How did they treat the poor?
5. How was their system of justice corrupted?
6. How had God tried to get their attention?
7. What was God simply asking of Israel in order to save them from the promised judgment.

The Land of Edom

Assignment: Obadiah's brief prophecy is directed at the land of Edom. Read the following Scriptures: Genesis 25:30, Genesis 36:8-9, Numbers 20:14-21, 2 Samuel 8:13-14, 2 Kings 8:20, Ezekiel 25:12-14, Amos 1:11. Now, answer the questions below.

1. From whom did the nation of Edom descend?
2. Mark the area settled by the Edomites.



3. What happened in the first encounter between children of Israel who had come out of Egypt and the people of Edom?
4. What happened in the Valley of Salt, and what was the result for the Edomites?
5. Did they remain subservient to Judah?

6. Why was God now ready to punish Edom?

The Book of Jonah

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Jonah, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

1. Author:

2. Historical Context:

B. Theme:

C. Distinctives:

D. Why was Jonah mad in chapter 4?

E. Content

F. Interpretation

The Great City of Nineveh

Assignment: Find out all you can about Nineveh by using the resources of your Study Bible and these Scriptures: Genesis 10:8-9, 2 Kings 19:36, Jonah 1:1-2, Jonah 3:3-4, Jonah 4:11, Zephaniah 2:13-15. Now, answer the questions below.

1. Mark the city of Nineveh on the map.



2. Who founded the city?
3. Describe Nineveh in the days of Jonah.
4. Why was it a significant city?
5. Who lived there?

- 6. How large was it?
 - a. Population?
 - b. Geographical Size?

- 7. What was the eventual end of Nineveh?

The Sins of Nineveh

Assignment: After Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, it wasn't too many decades later that they returned to their old ways. Nahum prophesies the eventual end of Nineveh and in doing so cites the specific sins that God would judge her for. Read through Nahum and list as many specific sins of Nineveh as you can find, as well as the punishments they would receive for their sins. List them in the chart below.

Nineveh's Sins	Nineveh's Punishment

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The Book of Micah

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Micah, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

1. Author:

2. Historical Context:

B. Theme

C. Distinctives

D. Content

E. Interpretation

False Shepherds and Good Shepherds

Assignment: In his prophecy, Micah makes a clear distinction between the prophets of his day and the leadership that God promised his people. Read the passages below that deal with the problems of the prophets and the promises of a shepherd and contrast and the characteristics of each by listing them in the chart below. Then, answer the questions.

False Prophets 2:6-11	Good Shepherd 2:12-13, 5:2-5, and 7:14-20

Who fulfilled the promise of a good shepherd?

The Book of Nahum

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Nahum, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

- a. What can you find out about the author?

- b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this prophecy was given?

B. What is the theme of this book?

C. What is distinctive about this book?

D. Summarize the content of this book:

E. How would the message of this book apply to us today?

The Book of Habakkuk

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Habakkuk, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

- a. What can you find out about the author?

- b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this prophecy was given?

B. What is the theme of this book?

C. What is distinctive about this book?

D. Summarize the content of this book:

E. How would the message of this book apply to us today?

Habakkuk's Complaint

Assignment: In the first two chapters of Habakkuk we have an exchange between Habakkuk and God. In the spaces below, list as specifically as you can what Habakkuk's complaints were, and how God answered them.

1. Habakkuk's first complaint (1:2-4):

2. The Lord's answer (1:5-11):

3. Habakkuk's second complaint (1:12-2:1):

4. The Lord's answer (2:2-20):

The Book of Zephaniah

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Zephaniah, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

a. What can you find out about the author?

b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this prophecy was given?

B. What is the theme of this book?

C. What is distinctive about this book?

D. Summarize the content of this book:

E. How would the message of this book apply to us today?

The Day of the Lord

Assignment: A popular theme among the prophets of Judah is the coming Day of the Lord. The Jewish people had always looked on that day of God's judgment with great joy, believing that they

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Haggai, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

A. Background

- a. What can you find out about the author?

- b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this prophecy was given?

B. What is the theme of this book?

C. What is distinctive about this book?

D. Summarize the content of this book:

E. How would the message of this book apply to us today?

Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

Assignment: Haggai and Malachi strongly challenged the people in the area of giving to God and his work. Read the references below and answer each question as simply as you can.

Haggai

1. What was the Lord telling the people to do through Haggai?
2. What was the current economic state of the people?
3. Why had that happened to them?

Malachi

4. How had the people been robbing God?
5. What had their actions toward God brought on themselves?
6. What does he mean by the 'whole tithe'?
7. What does God promise them if they give to God what belongs to him?

Haggai 2:18

8. If this is true, why does God ask the people to give?

Conclusion

9. Do these lessons apply to us today? And if so, how?

The Book of Zechariah

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Zechariah, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

- A. Background
 - a. What can you find out about the author?

 - b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this prophecy was given?

- B. What is the theme of this book?

- C. What is distinctive about this book?

- D. Summarize the content of this book:

- E. How would the message of this book apply to us today?

Messianic Prophecies in Zechariah

Assignment: Zechariah is second only to Isaiah in the amount of prophecies concerning the Messiah. Zechariah's prophecies were also very specific and accurate. Look up the following references in Zechariah. For each prophecy tell what it meant to Zechariah's readers and then how it was or will be fulfilled in Christ. Then, answer the questions below.

	To Zechariah's Readers	Fulfilled in Christ
6:12-13		
9:9-10		
11:12-13		
13:7-9		
14:4		
14:9, 16		

1. Read Matthew 26:50-56. How conscious was Jesus of fulfilling the Scriptures written about him?
2. Which of the prophecies above might he have deliberately fulfilled, and which had to be fulfilled without his help?

The Book of Malachi

Assignment: To gain a better understanding of the book of Malachi, read the book, and then fill out as much of the following outline as you can.

- A. Background
 - a. What can you find out about the author?

 - b. What can you find out about the historical context in which this prophecy was given?

- B. What is the theme of this book?

- C. What is distinctive about this book?

- D. Summarize the content of this book:

- E. How would the message of this book apply to us today?