

**HOW TO STUDY THE  
OLD TESTAMENT,  
PP.1-63**

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**FRANK KNIGHT SANDERS & HENRY A. SHERMAN**

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# HOW TO STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this course of study is to enable each student to gain a clear, comprehensive and proportionate knowledge of the chief characters, events, movements and ideas represented by Old Testament history, and to secure a bird's-eye view of Old Testament literature and thinking.

### Method

These outlines divide the year's work into 104 definite assignments so that the entire Old Testament may be covered in one year of private reading and study, in one year's college work (three hours a week), or in classes in one year of fifty-two weeks (two assignments a week).

The outlines are based on Sanders' "History of the Hebrews" and in each lesson the first reading reference is always to that work. The reading references to the four volumes of Kent's "Historical Bible" present a clear translation and arrangement of the more important Old Testament writings and with the accompanying historical, geographical and literary interpretations furnish an ample basis for connected reading and study.

It will always be understood that an essential part of the preparation for each lesson is the careful answering of the questions which are placed at the beginning of each group of numbered sections of Sanders' "History of the Hebrews." (For example, section 33, page 25.) These questions are carefully formulated in order to direct the Bible reading of the student and to save his time. If every question is answered thoughtfully from the Bible, and if the incidental references are looked up, the student cannot fail to gain a complete working knowledge of the subject. At the end of each lesson additional reading references are given which are entirely optional and are intended for those having access to additional reference books. These references may be utilized for advanced study or in the preparation of special papers.

In connection with each lesson the outstanding facts are given and these should be carefully noted. The questions which are provided in connection with each lesson are to be

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fully answered. Where this outline is used in a class, the questions may be used by the instructor for the classroom discussions in which he tests or supplements the result of the student's previous reading. This method makes it possible to master thoroughly the field covered by the lesson, with the greatest economy of effort and time.

In order to complete the course of study planned in the outline beginning on page 1, the following with the abbreviations that will be used are the

### **Books of First Importance**

- SHH, Sanders' History of the Hebrews.  
 HBI, Kent's Historical Bible, Vol. I. Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History.  
 HBii, Kent's Historical Bible, Vol. II. The Founders and Rulers of United Israel.  
 HBiii, Kent's Historical Bible, Vol. III. The Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah.  
 HBiv, Kent's Historical Bible, Vol. IV. The Makers and Teachers of Judaism.

### **Additional Books**

which are entirely optional but which will be found exceedingly helpful to those who wish further reading references or more detailed and fuller information. The more important books are starred.

- Breasted's History of the Ancient Egyptians.  
 Driver's Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament.  
 Goodspeed's History of the Ancient World.  
 Goodspeed's History of the Babylonians and Assyrians.  
 \*Gray's Critical Introduction to the Old Testament.  
 \*Hastings' One Volume Dictionary of the Bible.  
 Jastrow's Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions.  
 \*Kent's Israel's Historical and Biographical Narratives, Vol. II of The Student's Old Testament.  
 \*Kent's The Sermons, Epistles, and Apocalypses of Israel's Prophets, Vol. III of The Student's Old Testament.  
 Kent's Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents, Vol. IV of The Student's Old Testament.  
 \*Kent's Songs, Hymns and Prayers of the Old Testament, Vol. V of The Student's Old Testament.  
 \*Smith's The Religion of Israel.  
 Smith's The Prophet and His Problems.  
 Kent's The Beginnings of Hebrew History, Vol. I of The Student's Old Testament.

# HOW TO STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT

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## LESSON 1

### THE HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

#### Read

SHH, 1-15 (Sanders' History of the Hebrews, sections numbered 1 to 15 inclusive.)

#### Note carefully the following facts:

1. That Hebrew history parallels that of the greatest nations of ancient times. 2. The Old Testament tells the story of the growth of the ancient world. 3. It interprets this development in terms of God. 4. It shows how the Hebrews became the religious teachers of the world. 5. The grouping of the books and their literary classification.

#### Questions to be answered:

1. Why is it important for a thoughtful person to know Hebrew history?
2. With what nine great nations did the Hebrews come into contact?
3. Of how many centuries is Hebrew history a reasonably accurate record?
4. What gives it peculiar value as a record?
5. Why are the Apocryphal books omitted from the English Old Testament?
6. How did the Hebrew scribes group the books of the Old Testament?
7. Under how many literary types should the books of the Old Testament be classified?
8. When and by whom were the Jewish Scriptures first collected into one volume?

#### Optional Reading References:

See SHH, Appendix 2, page 338, sections 2-11.

## LESSON 2

### HOW THE OLD TESTAMENT CAME INTO BEING

#### Read

SHH, 16-20 (Sanders' History of the Hebrews, sections numbered 16 to 20 inclusive).

## 2 HOW TO STUDY THE OLD TESTAMENT

### **Note carefully the following facts:**

1. That the Old Testament is in every sense a great literature. 2. That it had a very gradual development. 3. That its books represent many different methods of growth. 4. That the authors of many of the books are quite unknown. 5. That the value of the Old Testament books is evidenced by their human message.

### **Questions to be answered:**

1. Some one has said that the Old Testament is "literature plus." Plus what?
2. To what five literary tests does the Old Testament respond?
3. How many centuries did the Old Testament require for its completion?
4. Mention the books of the Old Testament whose authors are known by name.
5. What element other than known authorship gives value to a book?
6. What is the supremely valuable element in every biblical book?

## LESSON 3

### THE ANCIENT WORLD

#### **Read**

SHH, 21-30 (Sanders' History of the Hebrews, sections numbered 21 to 30 inclusive); HBi, 1-21 (Kent's Historical Bible, Volume I, pages 1 to 21 inclusive).

### **Note carefully the following facts:**

1. The relative smallness of the Old Testament world. 2. The remarkable progress of Babylonian and Egyptian civilization before 2500 B.C. 3. That the geographical location of Palestine was of great strategic value. 4. That the Hebrews and Babylonians belonged to the same racial family. 5. That this racial inheritance was at least one of the factors which made the Hebrews a chosen people.

### **Questions to be answered:**

1. With what country of today would the Old Testament world fairly compare in size?
2. What gave Babylonia its unquestioned dominance over the ancient world until about 2000 B.C.?
3. What was taking place in Egypt during the same early period?
4. What made Palestine so very desirable as a home for the Hebrews?
5. Why did not the Babylonians and Phoenicians have in many respects the same religious development as the Hebrews?

### **Optional Reading References:**

See SHH, Appendix 2, page 338, sections 21-30.