

Helpful History

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When following the account of the Nation of Israel, we should determine where in time they are. They started out as a nomadic people, spent time as slaves in Egypt, wandered a wilderness, lived in the promised land under the rule of judges and then under the rule of kings, eventually were taken captive by other nations, and some returned to the land under the authority of other nations. Each of these time periods has a significant impact on how the nation behaved and followed the One Most High. Also, the nation of Israel was not independent of world events. Wars, plagues, famines, and other events would directly and indirectly effect them. Major events like these can be well documented from many societies and help us know how it related to Israel.

Another point to be aware of through history is the progress of revelation. We have the benefit of looking back through time and seeing what has occurred and what the actual fulfillment of a prophecy turned out to be. Those who received the prophecies and who lived at other times, did not have this benefit and likely could not know what was genuinely going to happen. Many prophecies about Messiah are found throughout the Scriptures, yet could anyone have accurately predicted how his birth, life, and death would occur? To accurately understand Scripture, we should try viewing what is stated as they would have viewed it. After that, if the passage is quoted in the New Testament, we can see how that author understood the meaning of the passage at that time as well.