

BIBLE CONSTANTLY DEALS WITH FALSE GODS AND IDOLATRY



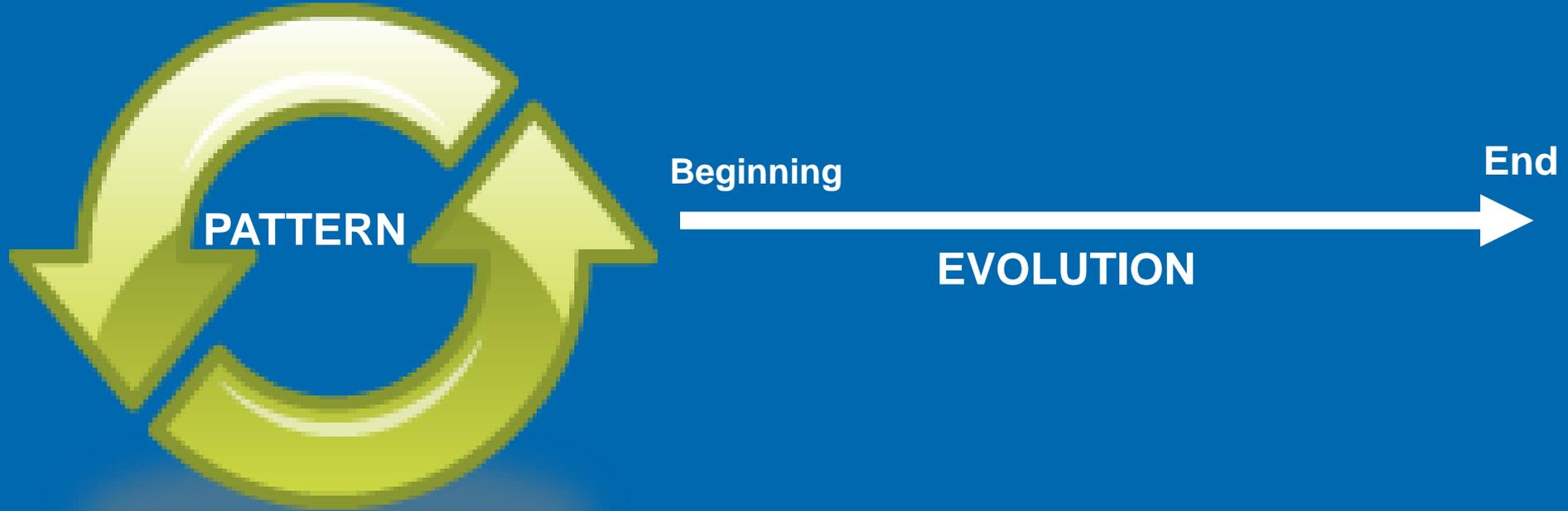
- Joshua 24 exposes Israel's mindset towards gods and idols
- Israel tended to either deny worship of YHWH or to mix in worship of other gods
- The writers of the Bible had in mind the current worldview of the god system when they wrote

COMPARTMENTALIZING OUR FAITH

- We tend to divide our activities up into times and purposes
- We separate our jobs from our families and everything else from our religion
- The ancients did not compartmentalize their lives
- The over arching umbrella of the lives of the ancients were their gods
- To serve a god meant that every detail of your life revolving around pleasing that god
- The Hebrews thought exactly as their neighbors about how gods operated



HISTORY: CIRCULAR OR LINE?



- Ceremony taking place at Shechem because this is the place Abraham was promised the land, and now that promise has become reality
- Proves history is circular
- Today Western society is based on philosophy of life and history as an evolution NOT as a pattern

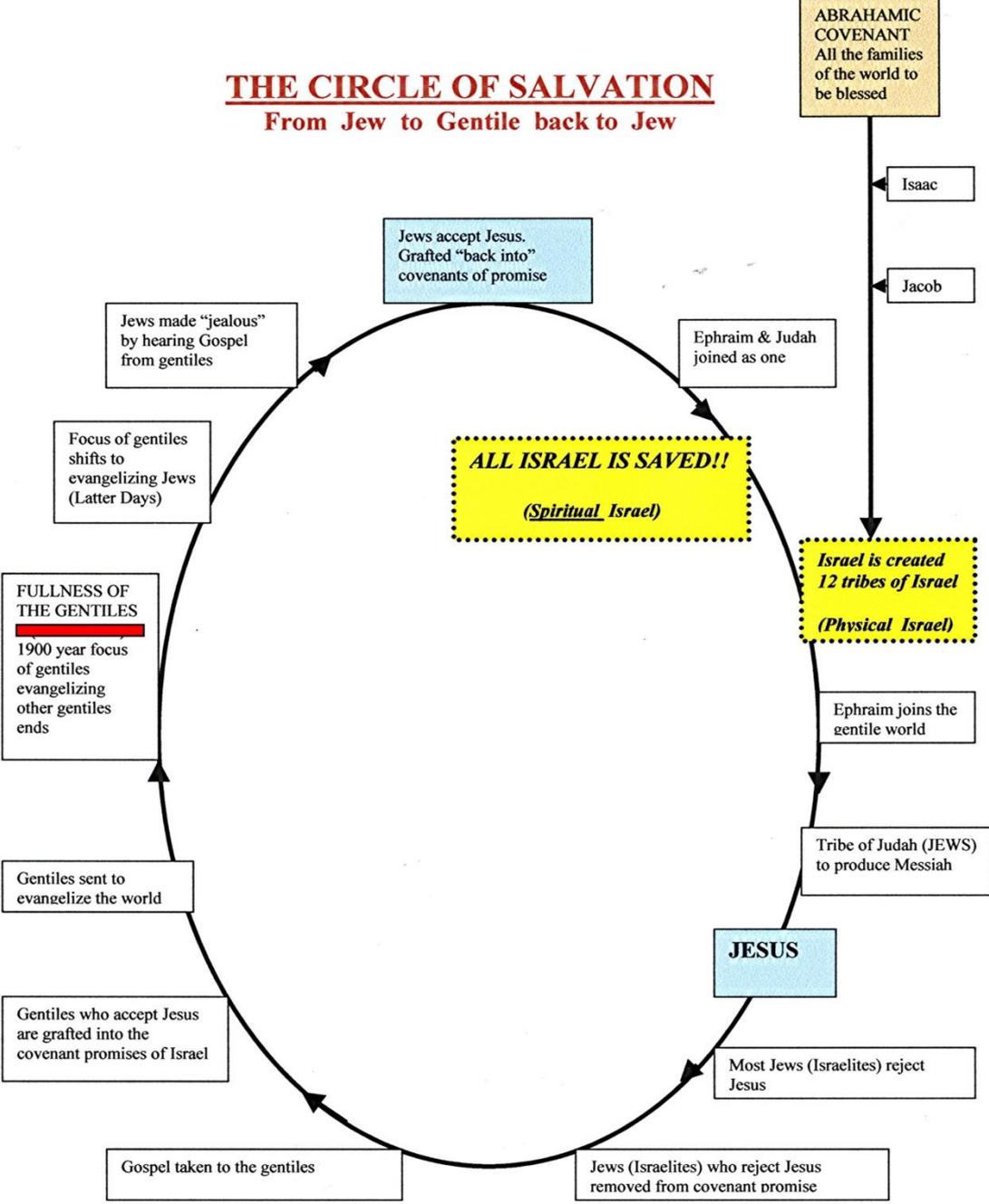
JACOB RETURNS WITH IDOLS



- After 20 years in Mesopotamia, Jacob returns to Canaan
- Wife Rachel stole her father's idols
- After calamity at Shechem, Jacob ordered all of his family's idols buried Gen.35
- Earrings also buried because they carried symbols of god attributes
- Now Joshua orders all idols to be put away (buried, left)



THE CIRCLE OF SALVATION
From Jew to Gentile back to Jew

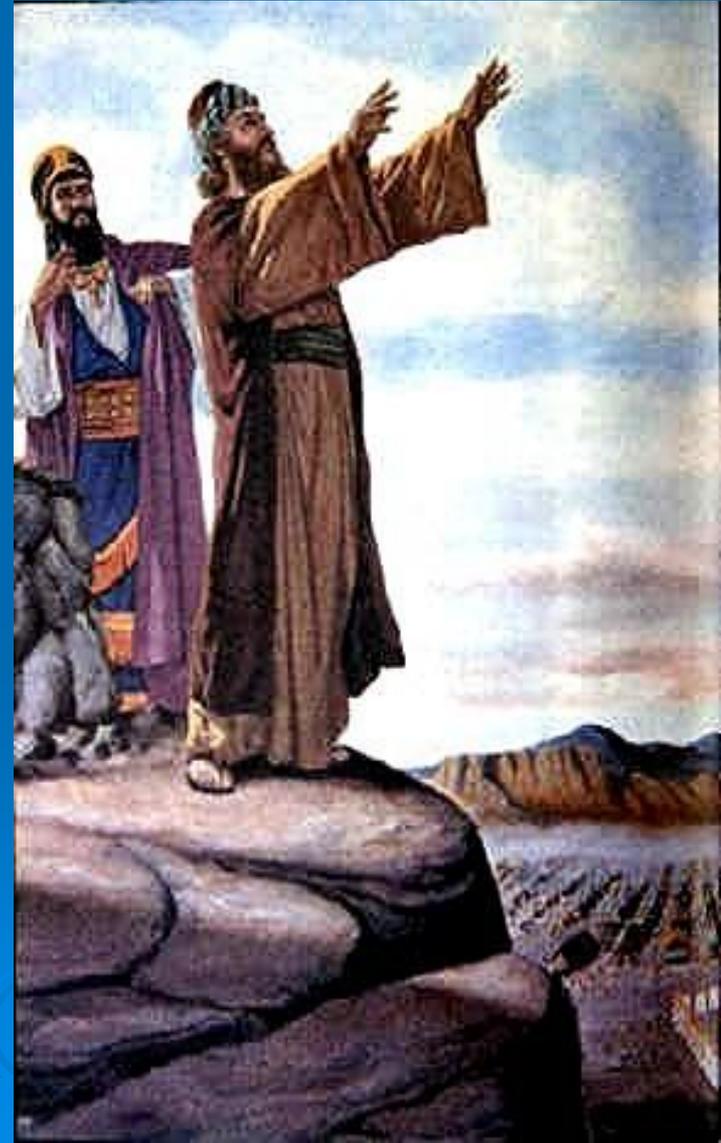


SALVATION HISTORY

- Salvation has a long history that goes back before Jesus
- Salvation process is NOT completed
- Much more to happen as shown by End-Times prophecies
- Israel's identity is wrapped up in their history with God

BIL'AM AND BALAK: THE LIMITATIONS OF PROPHETS

- King of Moab hired Bil'am to curse Israel Num.22 – 24
- God interrupts Bil'am and tells him he is NOT to curse Israel but IS to bless Israel
- Bil'am was for real
- He was a prophet for a false god (Satan)
- Principle: prophets of YHWH can only take orders, not manipulate God



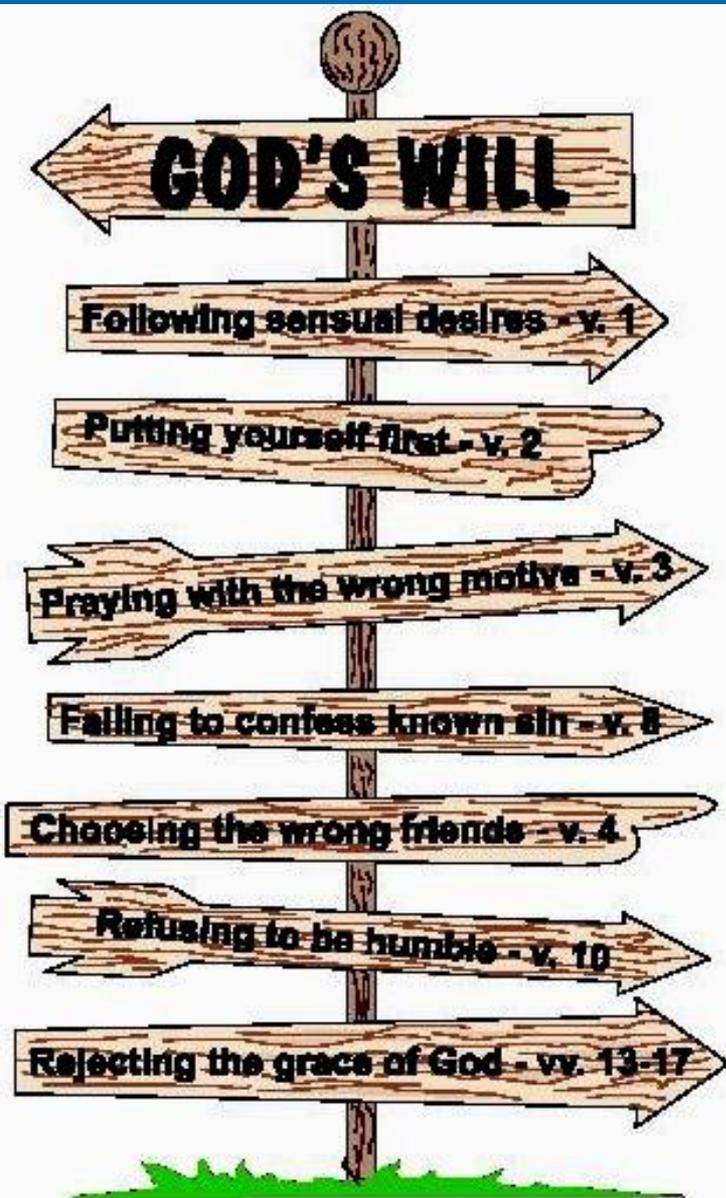
SERVE GOD FAITHFULLY!!



REDEMPTION

- Joshua asks: “if you don’t want to serve God, whom WILL you serve?”
- All men serve someone or some thing
- Atheism only a 300 year old concept, but even atheists serve someone (Satan)
- Joshua’s question to Israel had far more depth than they understood

ISRAEL ALREADY REDEEMED!

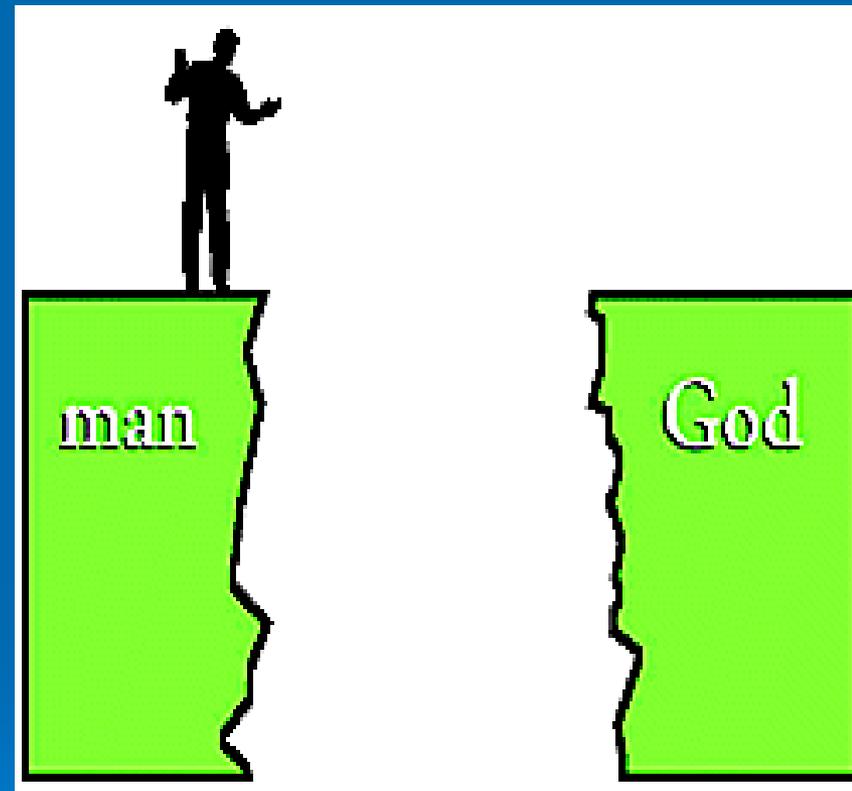


- Question of who to serve is in the context of Israel KNOWING God
- Israel had been rescued, provided for, redeemed, given land
- It's as though this question is also being asked of modern day Believers
- We are faced with this choice every day

JOSHUA:

“You cannot serve Adonai.....”

- Joshua says Israel cannot serve God because He is holy and is jealous
- Christianity has a bad habit of taking Biblical warnings and turning them into rhetorical statements
- Joshua was NOT addressing future idolatry, but rather the present reality



ISRAEL WON'T ABANDON YHWH, BUT ALSO WON'T LEAVE OTHER GODS

- People could not comprehend that the demand was to worship ONLY Yehoveh
- They didn't see the gods of fire, wind, rain as competition to God
- Joshua wanted Israel's service to YHWH to come not from obligation but from love
- Israel had to disconnect their understanding of YHWH from their understanding of all other gods
- If Israel could not see that their God was different from all other gods, then proper worship was impossible

HOLINESS: SAVING AND DESTROYING

- God's holiness is expected to so impress His followers that we imitate Him
- True Worshipper realizes that God is so Holy that it is impossible to properly meet His demands
- God is offended by those who don't care about His holiness
- God is jealous NOT of other gods, but for His people!
- God has given undivided love and attention to Israel and expects faithfulness in return



THE COSMIC DILEMMA

- We are not able, of ourselves, to serve a God that demands our service
- Our minds are too perverted, souls too unclean, ears closed to Him
- GOD'S JUSTICE = His expectations of us and the consequences of failure
- Vs. 20 says that if Israel goes seeking after other gods, Salvation History CAN be reversed !

