One Story, Two Sources

I remember sitting in history class, 7th grade. The televisions hung in the corner of each classroom were all turned on. Very few of us spoke—not even the teacher, as we watched the two monstrous towers fall from the sky. I remember the initial image. The bloom of what looked like dirt and dust as the building crumbled.

One friend was pulled from the classroom already; her father had gotten on a plane to New York City that morning.

Next to me, my friend Fatima delicately adjusted her hijab.

It truly was much longer ago than I'd like to admit, but in some ways it feels like yesterday. There are so many details I do remember, yet so many that my mind now has filled in with the books I've read, documentaries I've watched, photographs I've seen, or poems I've heard.

The Avengers films were far from being made yet in 2001, but I imagine it was something like the end of *Age of Ultron*. The screaming, the running, the panic, the filthy, thick air. And then I'm struck with my sheer luck (if you can even call it that—happenstance, maybe?) that I have to compare it to a film because I've never had to personally experience something so terrifying.

My chest tightens and its hard to breathe just thinking about *watching* it still.

To experience it? To relive it? To survive it? To come afterwards and put the pieces back together? To try and navigate grief and a desire for revenge as a leader, or as a young Muslim girl sitting in a predominantly white, Christian classroom? As a brother and sister sitting in the office, waiting for the call to find out that their father was, in fact, *not* on one of those planes and was not near the World Trade Center when it fell.

To experience it? To relive it? To survive it?

Moments like these change us—not just as individuals but as a people.

Maybe that is what the original audiences of these two different perspectives of history experienced in our Old Testament, in Tanakh. Maybe that is what the original authors hoped. That people would remember, because moments like these change us—not just as individuals but as a people. The kingship of Saul, the defeat of Goliath, battle after battle, the death of Jonathan, the heroics and failures of David himself, and the generations that came after, leading to the split and loss of a kingdom (or an empire?). How did they cope? How did they grieve? Who did they blame?

We can connect so many of the events like these to our current world. When we remember that these stories were drafted as prophetic history as well as a piece more like a documentary—this challenges our understanding, reshapes it. And the fact that these two perspectives (our Source A/Source B) are arranged and experienced differently in the Hebrew Scriptures versus our Bibles, should make us a bit curious as to why, or at least wonder what else this different perspectives can teach us.

So, take a few minutes and compare the end of your Christian Bible's Old Testament to the end of Tanakh through the eyes of the intended audience, a people who had made mistakes again and again, but had experienced the redemption of God again and again.

Tanakh
See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the other to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.
– Malachi 4:5–6

Old Testament
… the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus… This is what Cyrus, king of Persia says: The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdom of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Anyone of his people among you—may the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.
– 2 Chronicles 36:22–23

What do the endings to this story, or at least this part of the story, tell the original audience, those exiled in Babylon? What do these endings tell us about God? And what might they show us about perspectives, intentionality, and even our awareness of agenda as we study the Text?

PRAYER

As my knowledge of Your Word is stretched and shaped
like clay, I thirst for more of You—
more understanding of who You are
and how You have, and will continue,
to move and work within the world.
The Text is so much more than we know,
so much larger than we could grasp.
May we continue to recognize and ask better questions
about what this means for all of us and how we can be molded
into Your Story.

Amen

EPISODE 40 (SESSION 2)

THE FOUR PILLARS



BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember **to elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:

I

TEXT

What Text might you spend more time in? What do we know about shepherds from the Text that might give us more insight into David's versus Saul's character?

II

COMMUNITY

How are you, or your community, choosing to lead others? Through the qualities of a shepherd, or something that looks and sounds more like the world?

III

DISCIPLESHIP

Who are you modeling this kind of leadership for? Who can you invite to come alongside you in not just studying the Text, but in hallowing the name of God?

IV

WRESTLING

What are you wrestling with in this story? Israel asking for a King? Why God let them have Saul instead of waiting for David? Remember, questions are good!

Spotify

Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.

BEMA SESSION 2

MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases that we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE
SPIRITUAL FORMATION

True success is developing intimacy with God. In Session 1, we encountered the idea of "Creating Space for God" in our lives. We believe that ***if we do our part of creating that space, God will fill it*** *as He desires. You're already doing this as you dive into the Text and jump into a place to discuss. God will meet you in these places! Look for places the Holy Spirit can do work in and through you as you go about your everyday life.*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS
YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

We believe that young adults are shaping the future of this world. *Jesus modeled a ministry of discipling young adults, and that approach has and will work. If you are a college student who is listening, we want this material to be directly helpful to your pursuits. If you are not a college student, we want to challenge you to come alongside one and work together.*

SACRED STATION
THEOLOGY OF WORK

This isn't only for church or Bible study; this is about what we do every day. How we do our job and how it may take advantage of or bring life to others is something God says is central to our presence in the world. Justice is very much something God cares about. Does our physical work (our 9–5 job) bring shalom or chaos? Does it exploit creation? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products can provide relief to others. ***The work we do every day is sacred and matters!***

© 2026 BEMA Discipleship