

Overview of the Old Testament

(*the “critical list” of 13 books)

5 BOOKS of MOSES or THE PENTATEUCH (Greek: “five scrolls”)

- ***Genesis** “Origin(s)” Creation to Joseph’s death (2000 years).
Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph
- ***Exodus** “Departure” The story of Moses’ Journey to Sinai and the
10 Commandments; ends with God’s filling the tabernacle
- Leviticus** “Book of the Levi priests” Both ceremonial and moral laws.
Very little historical account.
- ***Numbers** 2 numerical listings. Sinai to Jericho. Murmuring in the wilderness; spies
on Canaan; Aaron’s rod; Moses’ sin; Balaam
- ***Deuteronomy** (“Second Law”) God’s love; 10 Commandments repeated;
details on the Law; mostly addresses by Moses; Moses’ death.

12 BOOKS of HISTORY or THE FORMER PROPHETS

- ***Joshua** Joshua is Moses’ successor. Entering the Promised Land; conquest of
Canaan; land allotment of the 12 tribes of Israel; Joshua’s death
- Judges** c. 400 yrs. of apostasy and revival. Joshua’s death to the start of the kings.
13 judges of Israel, including Deborah, Gideon and Samson
- Ruth** A picture of hope during the dark time of the Judges. Ruth’s husband,
Boaz, is David’s great grandfather.
- ***1 Samuel** The life of Samuel, Saul and David until the death of Saul. Goliath.
Originally called “1 Kings” after Saul, Israel’s 1st king
- ***2 Samuel** David’s kingship. Ark of the covenant; Bathsheba.
Originally called “2 Kings” after David, Israel’s 2nd king
- 1 Kings** Solomon and the division of the kingdom. Additional kings. Elijah.
Originally called “3 Kings” after Solomon, Israel’s 3rd king
- 2 Kings** Rehoboam & more kings. Elisha. The destruction of Israel (to Assyria)
The destruction of Judah (to Babylon); Originally called “4th Kings”
- 1&2 Chronicles** Genealogies. Overview of OT history with much repetition. The temple of
God is the key theme. 2 Chronicles starts w/Solomon.
- Ezra** Revival in Babylon under Cyrus. A remnant returns to Jerusalem. The
rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel & prophet Ezra.
- Nehemiah** The rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah.
The final historical record of the Old Testament.
- Esther** God’s working on behalf of the Jewish people. Jewish Esther becomes
Queen of Xerxes and protects her people from destruction.

5 BOOKS of POETRY or WISDOM LITERATURE

- Job** Why do bad things happen to good people? The mystery of suffering
Possibly the oldest book in the world. Setting: pre-Moses.
- ***Psalms** The hymnbook of the Old Testament. Many Psalms by David.
- ***Proverbs** The wisdom of the Old Testament. Many proverbs by Solomon.
- Ecclesiastes** The meaninglessness of worldly attainment, as related by Solomon.
Conclusion? – all is vanity; and fear God, for there is a judgement

Song of Solomon (or “Song of Songs”) Romantic love. A picture of Christ and the Church.

5 BOOKS of MAJOR PROPHETS (or LATTER PROPHETS)

*Isaiah	The major book of Bible prophecy in the Old Testament There is much about the Christ in this important prophetic book.
Jeremiah	Warnings about sin and judgment. Promise of hope and restoration. Contains the clearest OT prophesy of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
Lamentations	A lament concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. 5 separate poems.
Ezekiel	A prophetic book which includes numerous references to the Millennial Kingdom. Ezekiel prophesies of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and Israel.
*Daniel	History and prophecy. Often studied together with Revelation. Includes stories of the fiery furnace, the lion’s den and handwriting on the wall.

12 BOOKS of MINOR PROPHETS (or LATTER PROPHETS)

Hosea	Israel likened to Hosea's unfaithful wife. Hosea prophesied under king Jeroboam to the Northern kingdom (Israel).
Joel	Desolation (locust plague) and deliverance. Probably prophesied under king Joash to the Southern kingdom (Judah).
Amos	A word of warning to Israel (the northern kingdom). Amos was a contemporary of Hosea.
Obadiah	A prophecy against Edom (the descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother). Shortest book in the Bible.
*Jonah	The best known of the "Minor Prophets," “Running from God.” 2 Miracles: swallowed by the big fish and Ninevah’s repentance.
Micah	A word of prophecy to Judah (the southern kingdom). Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah. Micah prophesies of the advent of the Messiah.
Nahum	A prophecy of the fall of Nineveh.
Habakkuk	2 questions and 2 answers. Written in Hebrew lyric poetry.
Zephaniah	Prophecies of wrath and coming Millennial blessing. Prophesied during the reign of king Josiah.
Haggai	Setting priorities straight. A contemporary of Ezra and Zerubbabel, he urged the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.
Zechariah	A major prophetic book, but one that is little studied. Strong emphasis on repentance. Includes many visions and Messianic prophesies.
*Malachi	Question and answer format. Attacks the degenerate priesthood and sins of the people after the exile. Prophesies of John the Baptist.

PRINCIPLE OLD TESTAMENT CHARACTERS

1. God throughout!
2. Satan throughout!
3. Adam Genesis
4. Noah Genesis
5. Abraham Genesis

6.	Isaac	Genesis
7.	Jacob (Israel)	Genesis
8.	Joseph	Genesis
9.	Pharaoh	Exodus
10.	Moses	Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, 1 Chronicles
11.	Aaron	Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, 1 Chronicles
12.	Caleb	Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, 1 Chronicles
13.	Joshua	Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua
14.	Deborah	Judges
15.	Gideon	Judges
16.	Samson	Judges
17.	Ruth	Ruth
18.	Samuel	1 Samuel
19.	Saul	1 Samuel
20.	David	1 & 2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles
21.	Solomon	1 Kings, 2 Chronicles
22.	Elijah	1 Kings
23.	Elisha	2 Kings
24.	Jehoshaphat	2 Kings, 2 Chronicles
25.	Hezekiah	2 Kings, 2 Chronicles
26.	Josiah	2 Kings, 2 Chronicles
27.	Isaiah	2 Kings, Isaiah
28.	Jeremiah	Jeremiah
29.	Ezekiel	Ezekiel
30.	Daniel	Daniel
31.	Nebuchadnezzar	2 Kings, Daniel
32.	Cyrus	2 Chronicles, Ezra,
33.	Zerubbabel	Ezra, Haggai
34.	Ezra	Ezra, Haggai
35.	Nehemiah	Nehemiah
36.	Esther	Esther

PRINCIPLE FACTS / EVENTS

1.	Creation	Genesis
2.	Fall of man	Genesis
3.	Great flood	Genesis
4.	Tower of Babel	Genesis
5.	Call of Abraham	Genesis
6.	Slavery in Egypt	Genesis, Exodus
7.	Exodus from Egypt	Exodus
8.	Passover	Exodus
9.	10 Commandments	Exodus, Deuteronomy
10.	Wilderness	Numbers
11.	Conquest of Canaan	Joshua
12.	“Dark Ages”	Judges
13.	Saul as king	1 Samuel, 1 Chronicles
14.	David as king	2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles
15.	Solomon as king	1 Kings, 2 Chronicles
16.	Divided kingdom	1 Kings, 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles
17.	Babylonian captivity	2 Kings, 2 Chronicles.

18. Return to Jerusalem Ezra, Nehemiah