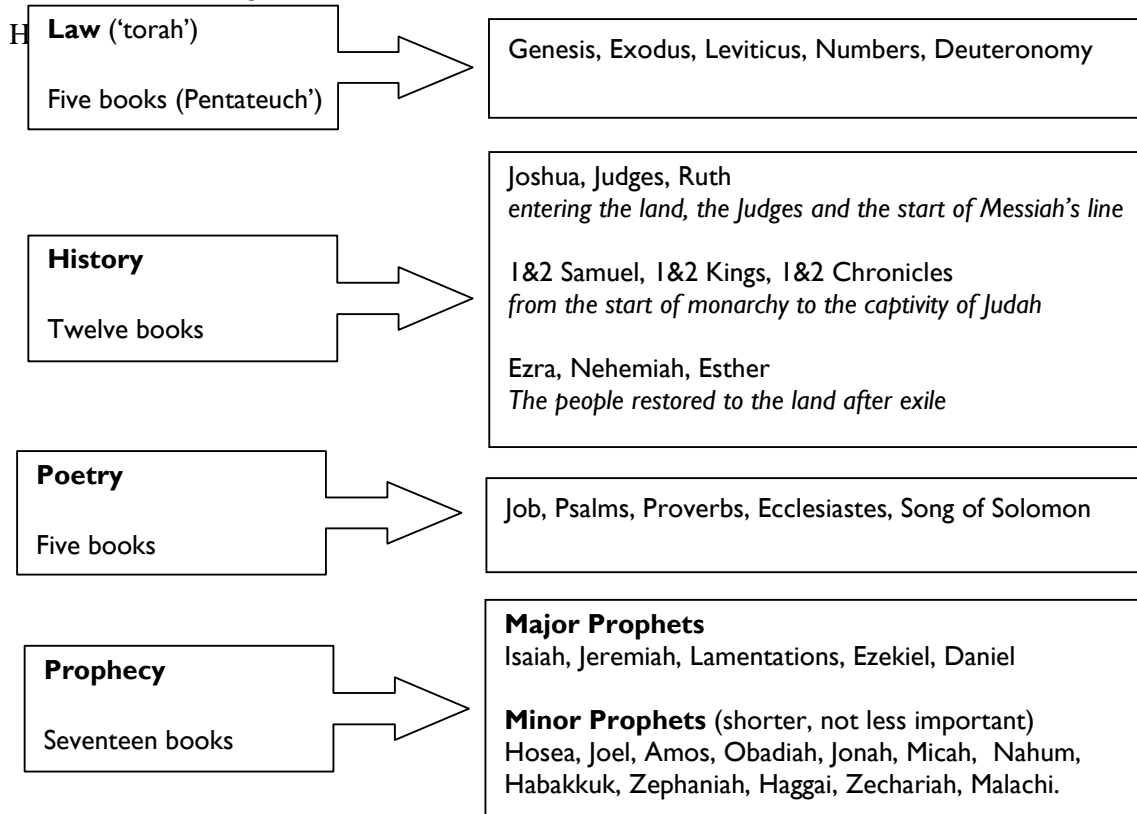


Part 1: The Old Testament

WHAT'S ON THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKSHELF

The Main Groups of Books

The 39 books of the Old Testament are commonly divided into four categories (the Hebrew Bible has three categories).



The Types of literature – Genres

Across these 39 books there lies a wide variety of types or 'genres' of writing. The main genres are:

Law (e.g. Leviticus) – mostly in the Pentateuch, though there are other genres in the first five books too.

History (e.g. 1&2 Chronicles) – though this is a particular kind of history in that it is always about God, so it's more or less history seen through theological eyes, or written to make theological points.

Narrative (e.g. Ruth) – the straight telling of a story, but again, it's a story that fits in with the flow of God's work that will lead to the true Messiah.

Prophecy (e.g. Isaiah) – most of it is calling the people back to the right way to live as the prophets proclaim God's opinion of what the people need ('forth-telling'). Some of it predicts what is to come ('foretelling').

Poetry (e.g. Psalms) – this is used to express the issues of the heart, be they joyous worship or the agonies of suffering.

Wisdom (e.g. Proverbs) – observations about life and how it works well, often expressed in pithy poetic sayings or riddles and often collected advice to younger Israelites.

Apocalyptic (e.g. parts of Daniel) – vivid imagery and visions with a culturally well-understood code of colours, numbers, etc.

Part 1: The Old Testament

THE BIG EVENTS – THE TIMELINE

- Creation, the Flood, re-settling creation, Babel.
- The covenant-promise with Abraham and the other patriarchs, Isaac and Jacob ('Israel').
- *The Old, Middle and New Egyptian Kingdoms rise successively and the Hittite kingdom rises.*
- Into Egypt and then the Exodus, during which God gives the Law at Sinai.
- Desert wanderings (40 years) and then entry into the Promised Land ('Canaan').
- Israel is ruled by judges (e.g. Gideon) but wants a king to be like the other nations. The way is paved in Ruth for the messianic line that will begin with David, Israel's second king.
- *The 'Sea Peoples', or the 'Philistines', settle in the Mediterranean and the Hittite Kingdom collapses.*
- The monarchy is united under David and Solomon, but then divides under his son Rehoboam. The northern 10 tribes (sometimes called 'Ephraim') centre on Damascus in Samaria, the southern two (Judah and Benjamin, always just called Judah) centre on Jerusalem.
- *Pharaoh Sheshonq invades Palestine from the south. The Syrian Empire rises to the north. It is succeeded by the Assyrian Empire.*
- The northern kingdom falls to Assyria, finally in 722.
- *The Assyrian Empire falls to the Babylonians.*
- The southern kingdom falls to the Babylonians lead by Nebuchadnezzar in 586/7 and the exile begins with captivity in Babylon, though some are deported to Memphis in Egypt and a small remnant is kept in ruined Jerusalem.
- *The Medes and Persians rise and conquer the Babylonians.*
- The return from exile to Jerusalem begins, lead by Zerubbabel in 538. The temple is rebuilt by 516 and the walls by 445.

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

- The Old Testament contains many themes which require the New Testament for their fulfilment, but the principle thread is from creation to new creation.
- The first creation sets Adam at the head of humanity; the new creation sets Christ at the head of a new humanity.
- The first creation is ruined by sin and alienated from God; the second is redeemed from sin and reconciled to God.
- In both cases, people relate to God through covenants that he establishes out of his grace according to his promises.
- In both cases, he is the King over his Kingdom.
- So the Old Testament is all about preparing for the one who will fulfil God's loving, fatherly purposes that were seen right from the beginning.

Part 1: The Old Testament

What the Bible is all About

Tonight

1. Why we have one Bible in two parts – the two Testaments
2. What's on the Old Testament bookshelf
 - a. The main groups of books – the list
 - b. The types of literature – the genres
3. What happens in the Old Testament books
 - a. The big events – the timeline
 - b. Book-by-book – the key verses
4. What the Old Testament is all about – the plot and purpose

ONE BIBLE IN TWO PARTS

- The Bible contains 66 books: the Old Testament contains 39 books and the New Testament contains 27 books.
- It was written over a span of 1,500 years: the Old Testament was written between 1400BC and 400BC and then New Testament was written between 40AD and 95AD.
- It was written mostly in Hebrew and Greek with a little Aramaic.
- It was written by over 40 different authors.

This Bible is divided into two testaments, or better, covenants. But why?

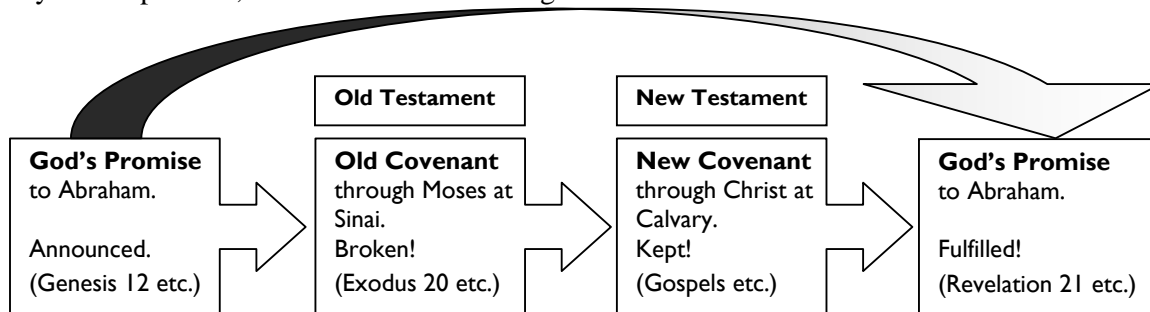
The 'Old Covenant' was the one that God made through Moses with the Israelites at Mount Sinai as they came out of Egypt and were making their way to the Promised Land. It was enshrined in the law that God gave there and showed the people how they should live with God in the promises of grace that he had given through Abraham 430 years previously. The people reaffirmed their commitment to the covenant when they crossed the Jordan and arrived in the land; the life of the people in the land was supposed to be shaped by it; the prophets repeatedly called the people back to it. God promised that blessing would come from keeping it and he warned that curses, principally exile from the Promised Land, would come from breaking it.

The Old Testament is the story of the people's life under the Old Covenant. Mostly, it's about them breaking it.

In the Old Testament God promises a New Covenant. This will be different from the old one in that it would be kept! Someone will come who would keep it on the people's behalf – a 'true Israel' personified, Jesus Christ. All nations will be brought into the new covenant. God's law will be written on people's hearts and God's Spirit will be poured out on all who came into this relationship. In this way, everything that was graciously promised to Abraham will be fulfilled under the New Covenant.

The New Testament is the story of the life of the people of God under the New Covenant.

If you like pictures, the two testaments fit together like this.



17 keys to unlock the Old Testament

Bible Book	Main Theme	Key Word	Key Verse in Book
Genesis	God chooses one nation to bless all nations	Beginnings	'In the beginning God.' <i>Genesis 1:1</i>
Exodus	Deliverance from Egypt	Redemption	'I will redeem you.' <i>Exodus 6:6</i>
Leviticus	Approaching a holy God	Holiness	'Be holy, because I am the Lord your God.' <i>Leviticus 20: 7</i>
Numbers	Disbelief and disobedience	Wanderings	'You did not trust in me.' <i>Numbers 20: 12</i>
Deuteronomy	Beware that you do not forget	Covenant	'Walk ... love ... serve the Lord ... with all your heart.' <i>Deuteronomy 10: 12</i>
Joshua	Entering the Promised Land	Conquest	'Joshua took the entire land.' <i>Joshua 11: 23</i>
Judges	From Joshua to Samuel	Forgot	'Everyone did as he saw fit.' <i>Judges 21: 25</i>
Ruth	Godliness illustrated	Kinsman-redeemer	'Your God (will be) my god.' <i>Ruth 1: 16</i>
1 Samuel	Israel's early kings	Rejection	'To obey is better than sacrifice.' <i>1 Samuel 15: 22</i>
2 Samuel	Israel's early kings	David	'I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.' <i>2 Samuel 7: 13</i>
1 Kings	Story of two kingdoms I	Division	'I will ... tear the kingdom away from you.' <i>1 Kings 11: 11</i>
2 Kings	Story of two kingdoms II	Captives	'...taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria.' <i>2 Kings 17: 23</i>
1 Chronicles	A spiritual perspective	Covenant	'I will be his father, and he will be my son.' <i>1 Chronicles 17: 13</i>
2 Chronicles	Solomon and kings of Judah	The Temple	'If my people ... will humble themselves.' <i>2 Chronicles 7: 14</i>
Ezra	Returning to Jerusalem	The Temple	'Let him go up to Jerusalem.' <i>Ezra 1: 3</i>
Nehemiah	Rebuilding	Jerusalem Walls	'So the wall was completed.' <i>Nehemiah 6: 15</i>
Esther	Jews under threat	Providence	'You have come to royal position for such a time as this.' <i>Esther 4: 14</i>

22 more keys to unlock the Old Testament

Bible Book	Main Theme	Key Word	Key Verse in Book
Job	Suffering man, loving God	Sovereignty	'Though (God) slay me, yet will I hope in him.' <i>Job 13: 15</i>
Psalms	Hymn book of the Jews	Worship	'My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord.' <i>Psalms 145: 21</i>
Proverbs	To give moral instruction	Wisdom	'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.' <i>Proverbs 1: 7</i>
Ecclesiastes	Search for meaning to life	Vanity	'Fear God and keep his commandments.' <i>Ecclesiastes 12: 13</i>
Song of Solomon	A love song	Love	'Many waters cannot quench love.' <i>Song of Solomon 8: 7</i>
Isaiah	Salvation comes from God	Salvation	'Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.' <i>Isaiah 40: 1</i>
Jeremiah	God's patience and holiness	Obey	'I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.' <i>Jeremiah 31: 33</i>
Lamentations	Mourning over Jerusalem's destruction	Weep	'The Lord's compassions never fail. They are new every morning.' <i>Lamentations 3: 22-3</i>
Ezekiel	Condemnation and consolation	Restoration	'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you.' <i>Ezekiel 36: 26</i>
Daniel	To encourage exiled Jews	God's plan	'... wisdom and power are (God's).' <i>Daniel 2: 20</i>
Hosea	God's love for Israel	Return	'My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.' <i>Hosea 4: 6</i>
Joel	God's judgement	The day of the Lord	'I will pour out my Spirit.' <i>Joel 2: 29</i>
Amos	Social justice	Judgement	'I will punish you for all your sins.' <i>Amos 3: 2</i>
Obadiah	Judgement on Edom	Judgement	'You will be destroyed for ever.' <i>Obadiah 10</i>
Jonah	Salvation for non-Jews	God's love	'Salvation comes from the Lord.' <i>Jonah 2: 9</i>
Micah	Injustice exposed	Mercy	'Love mercy ... walk humbly with your God.' <i>Micah 6: 8</i>
Nahum	The fall of Nineveh	Judgement	'The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble.' <i>Nahum 1: 7</i>
Habakkuk	Sin in God's world	Faith	'The righteous will live by his faith.' <i>Habakkuk 2: 4</i>
Zephaniah	The coming day of judgement	Restoration	'The great day of the Lord is near.' <i>Zephaniah 1: 14</i>
Haggai	Rebuild the temple	The temple	'Work. For I am with you.' <i>Haggai 2: 4</i>
Zechariah	Future blessings for Israel	Vision	'Your king comes to you ... gentle and riding on a donkey.' <i>Zechariah 9: 9</i>
Malachi	An appeal to backsliders	Return	'Return to me, and I will return to you.' <i>Malachi 3: 7</i>

The Monarchy

From Solomon to the Fall of Samaria and the Captivity of Judah

JUDAH – the southern kingdom centred on Jerusalem			PROPHETS	ISRAEL – the northern kingdom centred on Samaria		
Rehoboam	931-913	1K12-14		Jeroboam	931-910	1K11:26-14:20
Abijah	913-911	1K15:1-8; 2C13-14:1		Nadab	910-909	1K15:25-32
Asa	911-870	1K15:9-24; 2C14:2-16:14		Baasha	909-886	1K15:33-16:7
				Elah	886-885	1K16:8-14
				Zimri	885	1K16:15-22
				Tibni	885-880	
Jehoshaphat	873-848	1K22; 2C17-21:1	Elijah	Omri	885-874	1K16:23-28
			Elijah, Elisha	Ahab	874-853	1K16:29-20:40
Jehoram	853-841	2K8:16-24; 2C21:2-10		Ahaziah	853-852	1K22:52-2K2:25
Ahaziah	841	2K8:25-929; 2C22:1-9		Joram	852-841	2K3:1-8:15
Athaliah	841-835	2K11:1-16; 2c22:10-23:15		Jehu	841-814	2K9:1-10:36
Joash	835-796	2K11-12; 2C22:10-24:1				
				Jehoahaz	814-798	2K13:1-8
Amaziah	796-767	2K14:1-20; 2C25	Elisha, Joel	Jehoash (Jo.)	798-782	2K13:10-14:16; 2C25:17-24
Uzziah (Azar.)	791-740	2K14:21-15:1-7; 2C26	Amos, Jonah, Hosea	Jeroboam II	795-753	2K14:23-29
Jotham	750-732	2K15:32-38; 2C27	Isaiah			
			Micah			
				Zechariah	753-752	2K15:8-12
Ahaz	735-715	2K16; 2C28		Shallum	752	2K15:13-16
Hezekiah	715-686	2K18:20; 2C29-32		Menahem	752-742	2K15:17-22
Mannasseh	696-642	2K21:1-18; 2C33:1-20	Micah	Pekahiah	742-740	2K15:23-26
Amon	642-640	2K21:19-26; 2C33:21-25		Pekah	740-732	2K15:27-31
Josiah	640-608	2K22-23:30; 2C34-35		Hoshea	732-722	2K17:1-6
Jehoahaz II	608	2K23:31-34; 2C36:1-4	Micah, Isaiah	Samaria Falls	722	2K17:1-41
Jehoiakim	608-597	2K23:34-24:6; 2C36:5-7		Captivity to Assyria under Shalmaneser		
Jehoiakin	597	2K24:8-15; 2C36:8-13	Jeremiah	538	<i>Zerubbabel returns to Jerusalem</i>	
Zedekiah	597-587	2K24:17; 2C36:11-14	Zephaniah	537	<i>Rebuilding of Temple begins</i>	
Jerusalem Falls	587	2K25:8-21; 2C36:15-11	Nahum. Habakkuk	520	<i>Temple building resumed</i>	
Captivity to Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar				516	<i>Temple completed</i>	
			Jeremiah	458	<i>Ezra goes to Jerusalem</i>	
				445-433	<i>Nehemiah at Jerusalem</i>	

