

# Old Testament Survey Class



**Part 1 – Old Testament Facts and History**

**Part 2 – Why it's important and Keys**

August 20, 2008

Wednesday night Bible Study

## Bible – A definition

**Main Entry:** bi·ble

**Pronunciation:** \ˈbi-bəl\

**Function:** *noun*

**Etymology:**

Middle English, from Old French, from Medieval Latin *biblia*, from Greek, plural of *biblion* book, diminutive of *byblos* papyrus, book, from *Byblos*, ancient Phoenician city from which papyrus was exported

**Date:** 14th century

- 1 *capitalized a:* the sacred scriptures of Christians comprising the Old Testament and the New Testament **b:** the sacred scriptures of some other religion (as Judaism)
- 2 *obsolete :* book
- 3 *capitalized :* a copy or an edition of the Bible (like NIV Bible)
- 4: a publication that is preeminent especially in authoritativeness or wide readership <the fisherman's *bible*> <the *bible* of the entertainment industry>

We are all familiar with the term “Bible” and we associate it with our scriptures. Historically it has other uses and its derivation is simple: a word for book, although it has the historical meaning of small book or booklet, and our Bible is a gathering of many smaller books.

We call this gathering of approved books, the Canon, which means the Books that Christians believe are Divinely inspired by God.

# Our Bible

## Two Main Parts

– **Old Testament → Old *Covenant* →  
*Beginning Covenant***

- *Apocrypha – Inter testamental Books (in some Bibles but not considered inspired by many)*

– **New Testament → New *Covenant* →  
*Ending Covenant***

If you were to be unfamiliar with the Bible and open one for the first time you would notice two major sections (besides maps and Concordance). In some Bibles, there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> section, called the Apocrypha, which I will deal with later.

As you can see, the word “testament” may be a little confusing but is Better thought of as a covenant or contract. This idea of a covenant Is a key item to understand the OT and its place in the overall Relationship between God and Man. We will cover this more next week.

## The Bible is:

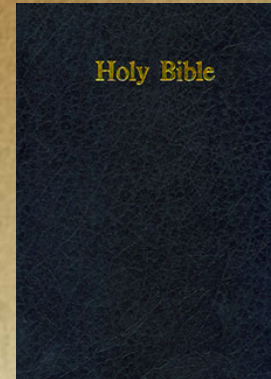
Made up of 66 different books.

Written over a span of 1,600 years (approximately 1500 BC to AD 100).

OT - 1500 BC to 400 BC

NT – 55 AD to 100 AD

Written by more than 40 kings, prophets, leaders, and followers of Jesus.



As mentioned before, the Bible is made of many smaller books, and They were written between 1500 BC and 400 BC for the OT and about 55 AD and 100 AD for the NT. The NT books were written with about 70 years after Jesus' death, but the OT covers a wider sweep of time and other historical details like the creation of man, earth, plants and animals, and the world.

**Old Testament:**  
39 books  
Written approximately  
1500-400 BC

*No original texts – only  
copies have been found*

**Stone**

**Clay**

**Leather**

The image shows three fragments of ancient text. On the left is a rectangular stone tablet with a grid of small characters. To its right are two clay tablets, one above the other, both with several lines of cuneiform script. Below the clay tablets is a fragment of a leather scroll with Hebrew text written in a cursive hand. The background is a textured, light brown surface with faint Hebrew characters.

In our OT there are 39 books, and the material we now have has come from many fragment sources of stone, clay, and vellum or leather.

---

The discovery of the **Dead Sea Scrolls** confirmed the astonishing reliability of some of the copies of the Old Testament made over the years.

Although some spelling variations exist, no variation affects basic Bible doctrines. The earliest known copy of Isaiah is found among the scrolls

---

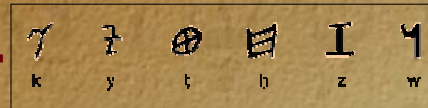
Some of you know, that the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the late 1940s but were not really analyzed until the 50s. These scrolls were accidentally found hidden in caves near Qumran and were probably placed there by a Jewish group called the **Essenes** long ago. There is not clear understanding of who exactly they were or when or why they placed these in the caves, but there is some thought that they were placed there to hide them from Roman invaders to protect them. Due to the lack of light and the extremely dry air, plus the physical protection of them being rolled up and placed in clay jars, the fragments of scrolls were remarkably preserved.

Vicki and I went to a Dead Sea Scroll exhibit in Raleigh last month since there were real fragments and the scroll story on display. It is an extremely interesting story and confirms the reliability of the copies of the texts we were using.

## Pictures from Qumran



The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic.





A sample of Aramaic letters.



The letter "aleph" in Hebrew script.

**1500-400 BC** **Old Testament**

Events are written down in Hebrew (with portions in Aramaic) over many centuries. In Exodus, the LORD tells Moses to write in a book. Other writers, inspired by God, include leaders, kings and prophets. Together, these writings on leather scrolls and other materials are called the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament.



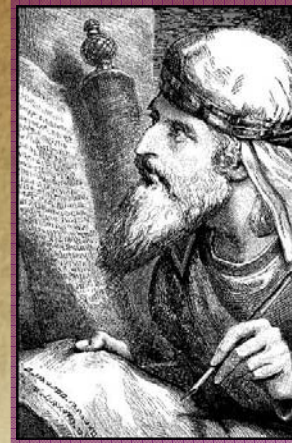
1500 BC 500 BC AD 1 AD 500 AD 1000 AD 1500 AD 1900 AD 2000

Aramaic is the language common to Jews after 500 BC. It was the language of the land of Aram (who was Noah's grandson) and is now the area around Syria. It is a semitic language very similar to Hebrew, but more widely spoken by ancient semitic people. It was used from Egypt to Asia Minor, through Persia and was the language of the Assyrians and Babylonians.

450 BC

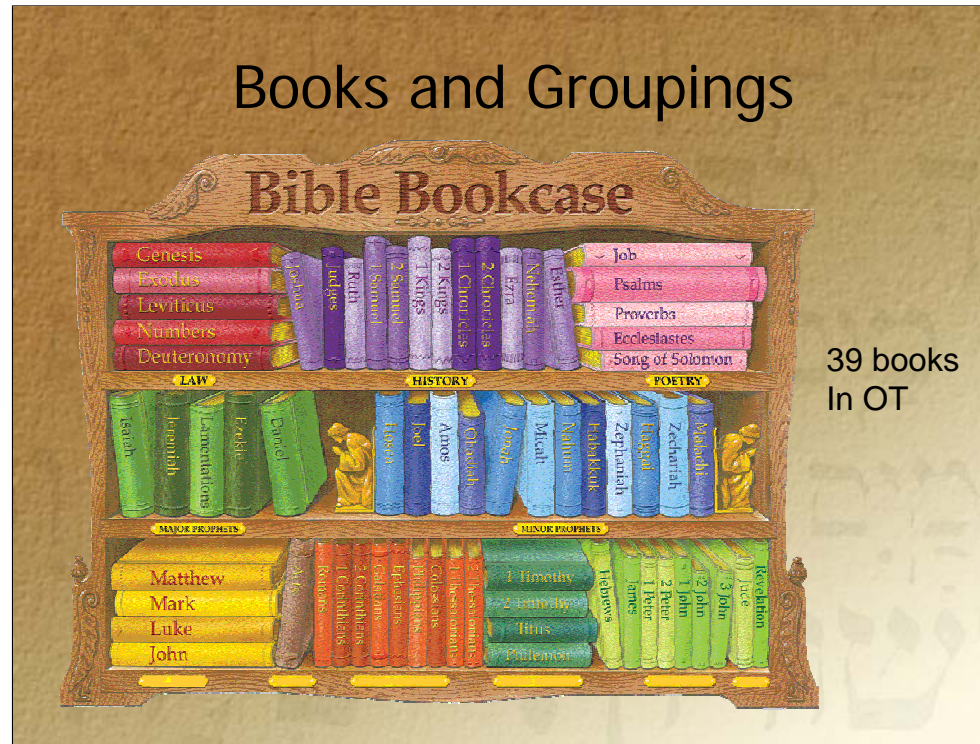
## Ezra

According to Jewish tradition, Ezra, a priest and scribe, collects and arranges some of the books of the Hebrew Bible, around 450 BC.



1500 BC 500 BC AD 1 AD 500 AD 1000 AD 1500 AD 1900 AD 2000

# Books and Groupings



# Books and Groupings

## Law – 5 books

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy  
*also known as Torah, or Pentateuch, or Law of Moses*

## History – 12 books

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

## Poetry – 5 books

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

## Major Prophets (prophecy) – 5 books

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel

## Minor Prophets (prophecy) – 12 books

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

*Called Minor because of smaller size*

**250-100 BC** **The Septuagint**

The Septuagint is the first Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament).

It was translated in 250-100 BC by Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt.

A horizontal timeline at the bottom of the slide shows a sequence of colored blocks representing different eras: 1500 BC (purple), 500 BC (purple), AD 1 (purple), AD 500 (pink), AD 1000 (pink), AD 1500 (blue), AD 1900 (green), and AD 2000 (green). A yellow cross is positioned above the AD 1 block, and a red triangle points down to the boundary between 500 BC and AD 1.

Remember, the last of the books of the OT to be written was Malachi in about 400 BC. Malachi means ***My Messenger*** in Hebrew, and is a short but important book to close the OT and gives instruction to the Jews and scolds the priests for being unfaithful to God's covenant with Abraham and with Levites. There is good instruction to us about keeping the faith, and being people who honor and keep our commitments to God and our covenants with God.

250-100 BC

## The Septuagint

The word “Septuagint” means seventy in Latin.

- Refers to the tradition that 70 or 72 men translated it.

“Septuagint” is often abbreviated LXX, the Roman numeral for seventy.



250-100 BC

## The Septuagint

The 53 books of this translation are arranged by subject.

- Torah
- History
- Poetry
- Prophecy

*Contains 39 OT books plus the books of the Apocrypha*

1500 BC    500 BC    AD 1    AD 500    AD 1000    AD 1500    AD 1900    AD 2000

This book is the basis of the early Latin translations by Jerome, an early Catholic priest and becomes the basis for the OT portions of the Latin Vulgate, which is the base text for many early Bibles.

200 BC

## Papyrus

Scrolls of leather, and later of papyrus, are used to make copies of the Scriptures.



A papyrus codex is a bound volume made from sheets folded and sewn together, sometimes with a cover. They are used more than scrolls after AD 1-100.



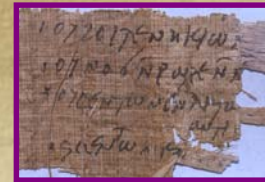
Codex is the first appearance of book like publications and not scrolls

200 BC

## Papyrus

The papyrus plant is cut into strips and pressed into sheets of writing material and can be made into a scroll or a codex.

The New Testament books were probably first written on papyrus scrolls.



AD 1560

## Apocrypha

### Some Apocryphal Books and Additions

1 Esdras	Baruch, with Letter to Jeremiah
2 Esdras	Song of Three Young Men
Tobit	Susanna
Judith	Bel and the Dragon
Additions to Esther	Prayer of Manasseh
Wisdom of Solomon	1 Maccabees
Ecclesiasticus	2 Maccabees



## Old Testament Survey Class



### Part 2 – Why it's important and Keys

Next week we will focus on the content of the OT and why it is important in its own right, as well as important for Christians. We will start with the notion that the final or present covenant builds on the first covenant. To understand really Christianity, one needs to be familiar with the keys of the OT building blocks. We will look at them then.

Any Questions?