

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

### IMPORTANT DIVISIONS IN STUDYING SCRIPTURE:

- **Two Testaments:** Old Testament (39) and New Testament (27) [*Total Books = 66*]
- **Three Time Periods (Ages):**
  - *Patriarchal Age* (Creation to Exodus – basically, the book of Genesis, possibly Job).
  - *Mosaic Age* (Mt. Sinai-Pentecost – Books of Exodus to Acts 2)
  - *Christian Age* (Pentecost-Present – Acts 2 to Revelation 22)
- **Periods of the Old Testament Prophets:**
  - **Pre-Exilic:** Prophets who wrote before the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.
  - **Exilic:** Prophets who wrote during the Babylonian/Persian captivity.
  - **Post-Exilic:** Prophets who wrote after Judah's return from Persian captivity.

### THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: (5 – 12 – 5 – 5 – 12)

- [5] **Law of Moses** (Pentateuch)
  - Books: Genesis-Deuteronomy
  - Summary: Tell the story of Israel's beginnings; Record the Law of Moses
  - Outline:
    - *Genesis:* creation (1-5), great flood (6-11), patriarchs (12-50). Key: focus on Israel's beginning, not the beginning of the universe (39 chapters on Patriarchs versus 11 chapters on creation).
    - *Exodus:* God leads Israel out of Egypt and creates covenant with them; giving of the law.
    - *Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy:* wilderness wondering, giving of the law.
- [12] **History**
  - Books: Joshua-Esther
  - Summary: Cover the history of Israel from the conquest of Canaan to the return from captivity.
  - Outline:
    - *Joshua:* The conquest of the promised land of Canaan.
    - *Judges:* The period of the judges; Key verses: Judges 17:6, 21:25.
    - *Ruth:* The story of Ruth, a Moabitess, who became the ancestor of David (Jesus).
    - *1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings:* The stories of the 3 kings of united Israel (Saul, David, Solomon); the stories of the kings of the divided kingdom (Israel, Judah); ends with Babylonian captivity.
    - *1-2 Chronicles:* Parallels 1 Samuel-2Kings; focuses on the southern kingdom (Judah).
    - *Ezra, Nehemiah:* Records the 3 returns from Babylonian/Persian captivity to rebuild Jerusalem, the temple, and the wall.
    - *Esther:* Tells the story of Esther delivering the Jews still living in exile.
- [5] **Poetry/Wisdom**
  - Books: Job-Song of Solomon
  - Summary: written largely in poetry; focuses upon finding wisdom in God.
  - Outline:
    - *Job:* The story of Job being attacked by Satan; debate about why we suffer.
    - *Psalms:* Series of songs by various authors (particularly David).
    - *Proverbs:* A book about wisdom written by Solomon to his son.
    - *Ecclesiastes:* A book on the folly of worldly pursuits written by Solomon.
    - *Song of Solomon:* A book about the romance of young love and marriage written by Solomon.

- [5] **Major Prophets** (Longer)
  - Books: Isaiah-Daniel
  - Summary: God's messages of judgment to Israel/Judah.
  - Outline:
    - *Isaiah*: Prophecies of the upcoming captivities of Israel and Judah (Many prophecies of Jesus).
    - *Jeremiah, Lamentations* – Prophecies of the captivity and destruction of Jerusalem.
    - *Ezekiel* – Addresses the Jews in Babylonian Captivity
    - *Daniel* – Addresses the Jews in Babylonian Captivity
  
- [12] **Minor Prophets** (Shorter)
  - Books: Hosea-Malachi
  - Summary: God's messages of judgment to Israel/Judah
  - Outline: *Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*

#### **THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:**

- [4] **Gospels**
  - Books: *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*
  - Summary: Tell the story of Jesus
  
- [1] **History**
  - Books: *Acts*
  - Summary: Tells the story of the establishment and spread of the early church.
  
- [21] **Law (Epistles)**
  - Books: Romans-Jude
  - Summary: Letters written to churches and individuals concerning specific matters of Christian doctrine.
  - Outline:
    - Paul's Epistles: *Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.*
    - Unknown: *Hebrews*
    - General Epistles: *James, 1-2 Peter, 1-2-3 John, Jude*
  
- [1] **Prophecy**
  - Books: *Revelation*
  - Summary: Symbolic/dramatic representation of Christ's victory over Satan/the world.