

## OLD TESTAMENT (FIRST TESTAMENT) OVERVIEW

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### ***Torah***

Genesis

Exodus

Leviticus

Numbers

Deuteronomy

- **Lens of Time**

Gen 1-11 // 12-50 \ \ Exodus → Numbers \ Deuteronomy  
Leviticus

- **Key Scripture**

**4 great events:** List the four great events and their references.

1. Gen 1-2
2. Gen 3-5
3. Gen 6-9
4. Gen 10-11

**4 great persons:** List the four great persons and their chapters.

1. Genesis 12:1ff, Abram/Abraham
  - Find Ur on a map of Bible lands. Next find Haran, then Beersheba.
2. Isaac
  - Where does Abraham's servant travel to find a wife for Isaac? Are his relatives in Ur or Haran?

- See Genesis 22: Can you find the word “see” in the story of the binding of Isaac? How does your translation translate the word “see”?

3. Jacob

- See Genesis 32:22ff: How is the wrestling match a picture of Jacob’s life?

4. Joseph

**Exodus 1:1-7** What happened in the intervening 400 years between Genesis 50 and Exodus 1?

**Deuteronomy 4:1** – This verse summarizes the conclusion of the Torah. It has all led up to this place. How so?

Exodus 3:14, 15 – How does this explain the possible question of the Israelites?

Exodus 6:2ff

- In 6:2-8, what verbs are used and what tenses? How can you relate the tenses to the name, Yhwh (Yahweh or LORD)? Do they help explain Yhwh’s name?

Exodus 20:1ff; compare Deuteronomy 5

- Which commandment is different between the two lists?

Numbers → 7 grumbings? Can you find all seven?

Deut 6:5ff

- Verse 5 is called the *shma`* in Hebrew and is central to Judaism today, quoted at morning prayers, before services, before Sabbath meals. What does it say that we affirm?
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Deut 6:10

## Stage Set

*Begins* → It opens with the spoken word of God (Gen 1). Everything begins, but nothing ends. We look forward to the rest of the story.

*Ends* → We are paused on the edge of God's promised land.

## ***Prophets (Nebi'im)***

(Historical Books or Former Prophets)

Fill in a summary statement of the basic content of each book.

Joshua

Judges

Samuel

Kings

(Prophetic Books or Latter Prophets)

Isaiah

Jeremiah

Ezekiel

The Twelve

- What is the relationship of the two sections of the Prophets?
- Key scripture

Joshua 1 (Deut 17:14-20; 31:9): Why was Joshua afraid or fearful? What are the answers given by the Lord to Joshua's fears?

Deut 28:1ff = obedience/disobedience

1 Samuel 8:4-9 What warnings does Samuel give to Israel about kingship? Was he correct?

1 Samuel 12:12, 20-25 What perspectives does Samuel show that speak to us?

2 Samuel 7: What are the seven promises given to David and his lineage?

Isaiah 1

- This chapter summarizes what Isaiah wants to say in the chapters that follow. He does so with a legal scene. Can you find legal language portraying a courtroom drama?

Isaiah 6: What characteristic of God impacts Isaiah most specifically? How often does this characteristic occur in Isaiah?

Jeremiah 30:12, 15; 33:31-34; 34:18: How is the New Covenant new? Is it related to the old with something new?

Ezekiel 1-3, 8-11, 40-48: Trace the “glory” of God in these chapters.

### Scenes

Historical and political

*Begins* → They enter the promised land with an attitude of listening and walking with God as a nation, according to the instructions of the Torah, a written word (Josh 1:8).

*Ends* → Exile from the land and promises because of disobedience, even though the prophets kept warning them.

## ***Writings (Kethubim)***

(Poetical Books)

Fill in a summary content for each biblical book below.

Psalms

Job

Proverbs

(Megilloth)

Ruth

Song of Songs

Ecclesiastes

Lamentations

Esther

Daniel (prophet)

Ezra-Nehemiah (historical)

Chronicles (historical)

- Why such a different arrangement? Try to put a label on each book from the following list: skeptical, hymns, prayers, apocalyptic, laments, love poem, historical, wisdom sayings, wisdom reflections.
- Key scriptures

Psalm 1 Read the psalm in several translations. Do you find some differing translations, especially in the last verse?

Psalm 2 Read the psalm in several translations. Do any words or pronouns exhibit capitalization as an interpretive device?

Job 42:1-6 What is Job saying when he finally responds to God?

Psalm 124 Why do you think verse one and two repeat?

Lamentations 3:19-24 What word might this provide you today? How about sharing it with someone else to see what they would think?

Neh 9:26-31 How do these verses summarize the historical records?

### Scenes

*Begins* → A righteous person will listen to the Torah (the written word) and will choose the wise course (Ps 1).

*Ends* → The OT closes with despair, awaiting with hope a return from exile, an anointed leader, and a new day.

### Resources:

Carl G. Rasmussen, *NIV Atlas of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989). [Many atlases exist, but this is one you can read easily and has a great index]

Raymond B. Dillard and Tremper Longman III, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994). [An introduction exists for every perspective of the theological spectrum. This one is conservative, yet carefully embraces difficulties with mediating answers]