

An Overview of the Bible

This chart is intended as a tool for personal study and lesson preparation.

The small version on pages 1 and 2 is designed to fit inside a Bible for handy reference.

The larger version on pages 3 and 4 is designed for use in a notebook.

An OVERVIEW of the BIBLE

God used more than 40 men to write the Bible during about 1600 years. This *one* book is a marvelous "library" of 66 unified books. It is a book of *historical events*, not myths. A study of these events and books in "chronological order" (time order) can be helpful. However, a *perfect* time order is not possible, because many of the same events are recorded in more than one book.

The dates in this overview were calculated by *humans*, who often disagree. The purpose of the dates is to provide insights into the *approximate times* of the books and events.

OLD TESTAMENT

A "testament" is a covenant, contract, or will. Genesis through Malachi (39 books) is called "the Old Testament," because it focuses on God's Covenant with the nation of Israel.

Genesis 1-11. Creation of the world in six days, sin, flood, ancestry of Abram. **Job.** Suffering of righteous Job; lived about 200 years (see 1:1-5; 42:12-17; Gen. 11:18-32).

Genesis 12-50. God calls Abram (1921 B.C.), promises to make his descendants a great nation; Isaac; Jacob ("Israel") and 12 sons; Joseph; Israel enters Egypt. **Exodus.** Israel multiplies; slavery; Moses leads them out of Egypt; Old Covenant given (1491 B.C.).

Leviticus. Laws for priests (from tribe of Levi) and for Israel. **Numbers.** Counting the people; wandering 40 years. **Deuteronomy.**

Review of wandering; review of the law; Moses' farewell. **Joshua.** Conquest of Canaan (1451-1427 B.C.). **Judges.** Cycles of prosperity, sin, oppression, deliverance by "judges," new prosperity (1427-1120 B.C.). **Ruth.**

David's great-grandmother; during judges (1322-1312 B.C.). **1 Samuel.** Eli and Samuel (judges); King Saul (reigned 1095-1055 B.C.); anointing of David; Samuel dies. **2 Samuel.**

King David (reigned 1055-1015 B.C.). **1 Kings 1-2.** David dies. **1 Chronicles.** Genealogy from Adam; Saul dies; David reigns, dies.

Psalms. Songs by David and others. **1 Kings 3-11.** King Solomon (reigned 1015-975 B.C.). **2 Chronicles 1-9.** Solomon's reign.

Proverbs. Wisdom from Solomon and others. **Ecclesiastes.** Solomon shows life is vain

without serving God. **Song of Solomon.** A love song. **1 Kings 12-2 Kings 14.** Kingdom divides (975 B.C.): Northern Kingdom (10 tribes, "Israel"); Southern Kingdom (2 tribes, "Judah").

Many kings, to mention of Jonah (2 Kgs. 14:25). **Jonah.** (860 B.C.). **Joel.** (800 B.C.).

2 Chronicles 10-26. Kingdom divides; Uzziah dies. **Amos.** (787 B.C.); in Uzziah's reign. **Hosea.** (785-725 B.C.); in reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. **Isaiah.**

(760-698 B.C.); in reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. **Micah.** (750-710 B.C.); in reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. **2 Kings 15-23.** Southern Kings Uzziah ("Azariah"), Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Northern Kingdom falls, taken into captivity by Assyrian Empire (721 B.C.); Judah's last kings before captivities. **2 Chronicles 27-35.** Reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Judah's last kings before captivities. **Nahum.** (713 B.C.); foretells fall of Nineveh (Assyria's capital). **Zephaniah.** (630 B.C.); in Josiah's reign. **Habbakuk.** (626 B.C.). **Jeremiah.** (629-586 B.C.); foretells New Covenant; Jerusalem falls. **2 Kings 24-25.** Babylonian Empire takes captives from Judah (606 and 597 B.C.). Jerusalem falls, temple destroyed, more captives taken (586 B.C.). **2 Chronicles 36.** Jerusalem falls; mentions the start of returns. **Lamentations.** Jeremiah "laments" (weeps) over sieg and fall of Jerusalem. **Obadiah.** (586 B.C.); foretells return of captives. **Ezekiel.** Early captive (593-574 B.C.); foretells return of captives and rebuilding the temple. **Daniel.** Early captive (606-534 B.C.); foretells of God's everlasting kingdom. **Ezra 1-4.** First group returns to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel (536 B.C.); rebuilding of temple begins; enemies stop it. **Esther.** Captive Jewish girl becomes queen, saves lives of Jews (521-495 B.C.). **Haggai & Zechariah.** In Jerusalem, Haggai (520 B.C.) and Zechariah (520-487 B.C.) urge people to resume building temple. **Ezra 5-10.** Zerubbabel and people finish temple. Ezra (7:1) leads second group to Jerusalem (457 B.C.). **Nehemiah.** Leads third (last) group to Jerusalem (446 B.C.); rebuild walls. **Malachi.** (397 B.C.); rebukes people for breaking the Covenant again; foretells punishment, coming of forerunner (John), coming of Christ, and His Covenant. gospelteacher.org

"OLD" and "NEW"

The covenants are called "first" and "second" (Heb. 8:6-7; 9:15), "old" and "new" (Heb. 8:8, 13; 2 Cor. 3:6, 14; Lk. 22:20).

Moses began revealing God's Covenant for Israel in Ex. 12. They agreed, and the Covenant between God and Israel began in Ex. 24. It was an agreement to obey every word which God *would speak* through any prophet or angel — an agreement to live "by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord" (Dt. 8:3; see Ex. 20:3; 23:20-25).

God continued revealing His will for Israel through many prophets (1 Sam. 3:20; 15:1-23; 1 Kgs. 12:22-24; 2 Chron. 29:25; 36:12). Even the Psalms were part of Israel's "law" (Jn. 10:34 with Ps. 82:6; see Jn. 15:25). Some of the Psalms refer to Old Testament ways of worship, not worship today. Some examples are: special holy days (Ps. 81:3-4), animal sacrifices (Ps. 51:19; 66:13-15), instrumental music and dancing (Ps. 68:24-29; 149:3; 150:3-5), and praying *against* enemies and *their children*, instead of *for* enemies (Ps. 55:15; 58:10; 149:3-9; 109:1-20). Jesus did not include any of these in the New Covenant.

The Old Covenant ended when Jesus died (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:14-18). However, we need to continue believing it and learning many things from it (Gal. 3:24-25; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

Jesus began revealing God's New Covenant while He was living under the Old (Gal. 4:4; Matt. 5:21-22, 28-32; Jn. 12:48). After He died, the New Covenant became God's will for His people (Heb. 9:15-17). In Acts 2, people began entering this Covenant by obeying the gospel.

Jesus finished revealing the New Covenant to His disciples through the Holy Spirit in the first century A.D. (Jn. 16:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:3; Jude 3).

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew through Revelation (27 books) is called "the New Testament," because it focuses on God's New Covenant for all people.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John. The "good news" of God's *grace* through Jesus, His Son: birth (about 4 B.C. by present Gregorian calendar), life, teachings, miracles, fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, death for our sins, resurrection, and return to heaven (A.D. 29).

Each book is for everyone, but **Matthew** writes primarily to Jews, **Mark** to Romans, **Luke** to Gentiles, and **John** to all. **Acts 1-14.** People begin entering the New Covenant of Christ and His church, the Kingdom (Acts 2; A.D. 29) when they believe, repent, confess faith, and are baptized in water for the forgiveness of sins. Paul and Barnabas make their 1st preaching Journey. **Acts 15-Acts 18:17.** Discussion in Jerusalem; Paul begins 2nd Journey. **1 & 2 Thessalonians.** From Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:18) to Christians in Thessalonica (A.D. 53). **Acts 18:18-22.** Paul finishes 2nd Journey. **Acts 18:23-Acts 19:20.** 3rd Journey begins; teaches in Ephesus two years. **1 Corinthians.** From Paul in Ephesus to Christians in Corinth (A.D. 59). **Acts 19:21-Acts 20:2.** 3rd Journey continues. **2 Corinthians.** From Paul in Macedonia (Acts 20:1-2) to Christians in Corinth (A.D. 60). **Galatians.** From Paul in Corinth (Acts 20:2-3) to Christians in Galatia (A.D. 60). **Romans.** From Paul in Corinth area (Acts 20:2-3) to Christians in Rome (A.D. 60). **Acts 21-28.** 3rd Journey ends; imprisonment in Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Rome. **Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians.** From Paul during 1st imprisonment in Rome to Christians in Ephesus, Philippi, and Colossae (A.D. 64). **Philemon.** From Paul during 1st imprisonment in Rome to Philemon at Colossae (A.D. 64). **Hebrews.** Probably from Paul, during 1st imprisonment in Rome, to Jewish (Hebrew) Christians (A.D. 64). **1 Timothy.** From Paul during a brief release from Roman prison, to Timothy at Ephesus (A.D. 65). **Titus.** from Paul during brief release from Roman prison, to Titus on island of Crete (A.D. 65). **2 Timothy.** From Paul during 2nd imprisonment in Rome, shortly before death, to Timothy (A.D. 66). **James.** From James, possibly brother of Jesus, to scattered Christians. **1 Peter.** From Peter in "Babylon" to scattered Christians. **2 Peter.** From Peter, shortly before death, to scattered Christians (A.D. 66). **1 John.** From John to all Christians. **2 John.** From John to a church or a Christian lady. **3 John.** From John to Gaius. **Jude.** From Jude, possibly brother of Jesus, to all Christians. **Revelation.** From John in exile on island of Patmos, to seven churches — and everyone willing to hear; visions of severe troubles and final, eternal victory for faithful Christians! gospelteacher.org

An OVERVIEW of the BIBLE

God used more than 40 men to write the Bible during about 1600 years. This *one* book is a marvelous "library" of 66 unified books. It is a book of *historical events*, not myths. A study of these events and books in "chronological order" (time order) can be helpful. However, a *perfect* time order is not possible, because many of the same events are recorded in more than one book.

The dates in this overview were calculated by *humans*, who often disagree. The purpose of the dates is to provide insights into the *approximate times* of the books and events.

OLD TESTAMENT

A "testament" is a covenant, contract, or will. Genesis through Malachi (39 books) is called "the Old Testament," because it focuses on God's Covenant with the nation of Israel.

Genesis 1-11. Creation of the world in six days, sin, flood, ancestry of Abram. **Job.** Suffering of righteous Job; lived about 200 years (see 1:1-5; 42:12-17; Gen. 11:18-32). **Genesis 12-50.** God calls Abram (1921 B.C.), promises to make his descendants a great nation; Isaac; Jacob ("Israel") and 12 sons; Joseph; Israel enters Egypt. **Exodus.** Israel multiplies; slavery; Moses leads them out of Egypt; Old Covenant given (1491 B.C.). **Leviticus.** Laws for priests (from tribe of Levi) and for Israel. **Numbers.** Counting the people; wandering 40 years. **Deuteronomy.** Review of wandering; review of the law; Moses' farewell. **Joshua.** Conquest of Canaan (1451-1427 B.C.). **Judges.** Cycles of prosperity, sin, oppression, deliverance by "judges," new prosperity (1427-1120 B.C.). **Ruth.** David's great-grandmother; during judges (1322-1312 B.C.). **1 Samuel.** Eli and Samuel (judges); King Saul (reigned 1095-1055 B.C.); anointing of David; Samuel dies. **2 Samuel.** King David (reigned 1055-1015 B.C.). **1 Kings 1-2.** David dies. **1 Chronicles.** Genealogy from Adam; Saul dies; David reigns, dies. **Psalms.** Songs by David and others. **1 Kings 3-11.** King Solomon (reigned 1015-975 B.C.). **2 Chronicles 1-9.** Solomon's reign. **Proverbs.** Wisdom from Solomon and others.

Ecclesiastes. Solomon shows life is vain without serving God. **Song of Solomon.** A love song. **1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 14.** Kingdom divides (975 B.C.): Northern Kingdom (10 tribes, "Israel"); Southern Kingdom (2 tribes, "Judah"). Many kings, to mention of Jonah (2 Kgs. 14:25). **Jonah.** (860 B.C.). **Joel.** (800 B.C.). **2 Chronicles 10-26.** Kingdom divides; Uzziah dies. **Amos.** (787 B.C.); in Uzziah's reign. **Hosea.** (785-725 B.C.); in reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. **Isaiah.** (760-698 B.C.); in reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. **Micah.** (750-710 B.C.); in reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. **2 Kings 15-23.** Southern Kings Uzziah ("Azariah"), Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Northern Kingdom falls, taken into captivity by Assyrian Empire (721 B.C.); Judah's last kings before captivities. **2 Chronicles 27-35.** Reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Judah's last kings before captivities. **Nahum.** (713 B.C.); foretells fall of Nineveh (Assyria's capital). **Zephaniah.** (630 B.C.); in Josiah's reign. **Habbakuk.** (626 B.C.). **Jeremiah.** (629-586 B.C.); foretells New Covenant; Jerusalem falls. **2 Kings 24-25.** Babylonian Empire takes captives from Judah (606 and 597 B.C.). Jerusalem falls, temple destroyed, more captives taken (586 B.C.). **2 Chronicles 36.** Jerusalem falls; mentions the start of returns. **Lamentations.** Jeremiah "laments" (weeps) over siege and fall of Jerusalem. **Obadiah.** (586 B.C.); foretells return of captives. **Ezekiel.** Early captive (593-574 B.C.); foretells return of captives and rebuilding the temple. **Daniel.** Early captive (606-534 B.C.); foretells of God's everlasting kingdom. **Ezra 1-4.** First group returns to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel (536 B.C.); rebuilding of temple begins; enemies stop it. **Esther.** Captive Jewish girl becomes queen, saves lives of Jews (521-495 B.C.). **Haggai & Zechariah.** In Jerusalem, Haggai (520 B.C.) and Zechariah (520-487 B.C.) urge people to resume building temple. **Ezra 5-10.** Zerubbabel and people finish temple. Ezra (7:1) leads second group to Jerusalem (457 B.C.). **Nehemiah.** Leads third (last) group to Jerusalem (446 B.C.); rebuild walls. **Malachi.** (397 B.C.); rebukes people for breaking the Covenant again; foretells punishment, coming of forerunner (John), coming of Christ, and His Covenant.

gospelteacher.org

"OLD" and "NEW"

The covenants are called "*first*" and "*second*" (Heb. 8:6-7; 9:15), "*old*" and "*new*" (Heb. 8:8, 13; 2 Cor. 3:6, 14; Lk. 22:20).

Moses began revealing God's Covenant for Israel in Ex. 12. They agreed, and the Covenant between God and Israel began in Ex. 24. It was an agreement to obey every word which God *would speak* through any prophet or angel — an agreement to live "*by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord*" (Dt. 8:3; see Ex. 20:3; 23:20-25).

God continued revealing His will for Israel through many prophets (1 Sam. 3:20; 15:1-23; 1 Kgs. 12:22-24; 2 Chron. 29:25; 36:12). Even the Psalms were part of Israel's "*law*" (Jn. 10:34 with Ps. 82:6; see Jn. 15:25). Some of the Psalms refer to Old Testament ways of worship, not worship today. Some examples are: special holy days (Ps. 81:3-4), animal sacrifices (Ps. 51:19; 66:13-15), instrumental music and dancing (Ps. 68:24-29; 149:3; 150:3-5), and praying *against* enemies *and their children*, instead of *for* enemies (Ps. 55:15; 58:10; 149:3-9; 109:1-20). Jesus did not include any of these in the New Covenant.

The Old Covenant ended when Jesus died (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:14-18). However, we need to continue believing it and learning many things from it (Gal. 3:24-25; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

Jesus began revealing God's New Covenant while He was living under the Old (Gal. 4:4; Matt. 5:21-22, 28-32; Jn. 12:48). After He died, the New Covenant became God's will for His people (Heb. 9:15-17). In Acts 2, people began entering this Covenant by obeying the gospel.

Jesus finished revealing the New Covenant to His disciples through the Holy Spirit in the first century A.D. (Jn. 16:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:3; Jude 3).

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew through Revelation (27 books) is called "the New Testament," because it focuses on God's New Covenant for all people.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John. The "*good news*" of God's *grace* through Jesus, His Son: birth (about 4 B.C. by present Gregorian calendar), life, teachings, miracles, fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, death for our sins, resurrection, and return to heaven (A.D. 29).

Each book is for everyone, but **Matthew** writes primarily to Jews, **Mark** to Romans, **Luke** to Gentiles, and **John** to all. **Acts 1-14.** People begin entering the New Covenant of Christ and His church, the Kingdom (Acts 2; A.D. 29) when they believe, repent, confess faith, and are baptized in water for the forgiveness of sins. Paul and Barnabas make their 1st preaching Journey. **Acts 15-Acts 18:17.** Discussion in Jerusalem; Paul begins 2nd Journey. **1 & 2 Thessalonians.** From Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:18) to Christians in Thessalonica (A.D. 53). **Acts 18:18-22.** Paul finishes 2nd Journey. **Acts 18:23-Acts 19:20.** 3rd Journey begins; teaches in Ephesus two years. **1 Corinthians.** From Paul in Ephesus to Christians in Corinth (A.D. 59). **Acts 19:21-Acts 20:2.** 3rd Journey continues. **2 Corinthians.** From Paul in Macedonia (Acts 20:1-2) to Christians in Corinth (A.D. 60). **Galatians.** From Paul in Corinth (Acts 20:2-3) to Christians in Galatia (A.D. 60). **Romans.** From Paul in Corinth area (Acts 20:2-3) to Christians in Rome (A.D. 60). **Acts 21-28.** 3rd Journey ends; imprisonment in Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Rome. **Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians.** From Paul during 1st imprisonment in Rome to Christians in Ephesus, Philippi, and Colossae (A.D. 64). **Philemon.** From Paul during 1st imprisonment in Rome to Philemon at Colossae (A.D. 64). **Hebrews.** Probably from Paul, during 1st imprisonment in Rome, to Jewish (Hebrew) Christians (A.D. 64). **1 Timothy.** From Paul during a brief release from Roman prison, to Timothy at Ephesus (A.D. 65). **Titus.** from Paul during brief release from Roman prison, to Titus on island of Crete (A.D. 65). **2 Timothy.** From Paul during 2nd imprisonment in Rome, shortly before death, to Timothy (A.D. 66). **James.** From James, possibly brother of Jesus, to scattered Christians. **1 Peter.** From Peter in "*Babylon*" to scattered Christians. **2 Peter.** From Peter, shortly before death, to scattered Christians (A.D. 66). **1 John.** From John to all Christians. **2 John.** From John to a church or a Christian lady. **3 John.** From John to Gaius. **Jude.** From Jude, possibly brother of Jesus, to all Christians. **Revelation.** From John in exile on island of Patmos, to seven churches — and everyone willing to hear; visions of severe troubles and final, eternal victory for faithful Christians!