

A Brief “History” of the Bible

Adult Bible Study, Grace Lutheran Church

| “Historical” Book | Main Events / Outline | Approximate Dates | Other Books |
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| Genesis | <p>Primeval & Patriarchal History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Introduction (1:1-2:3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Creation --The Account of the heavens and the earth (2:4-4:26) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fall, Cain and Abel --The written account of Adam’s line (5:1-6:8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Increase of sin --The account of Noah (6:9-9:29) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Flood, Covenant, sons --The account of Shem, Ham, and Japheth (10:1-11:9) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Table of Nations & Babel --The account of Shem (11:10-26) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Line to Abraham --The account of Terah (11:27-25:11) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Call of Abram, in Egypt, separate from Lot, rescue of Lot (Melchizedek), Covenant, Hagar and Ishmael, circumcision, Three Visitors, Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot and daughters, Abimelech and son, Isaac, Beersheba treaty, testing with Isaac, Nahor’s sons, Rebekah --The account of Abraham’s son Ishmael (25:12-18) --The account of Abraham’s son Isaac (25:19-35:29) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Jacob (aka “Israel”) and Esau, Leah and Rachel <i>et al.</i>, twelve sons/tribes and exploits --The account of Esau (36:1-37:1) --The account of Jacob (37:2-50:26) [really Joseph] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Dreams, coat, sold to Egypt, Potiphar and wife, fall, rise , famine and family, Manasseh and Ephraim, blessings, deaths | 2500 B.C.-1800 B.C. | Job (?) |

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| Exodus | <p>Delivery from slavery to worship God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Multiplication, Moses (burning bush), Aaron, plagues (blood, death of first born, etc.), Passover, Exodus, Red Sea (Miriam and song), to Sinai (water and manna), Covenant, Worship (true, false [golden calf], Tabernacle) | <p>1526 Moses's birth 1446 Exodus</p> | <p>Leviticus-at Sinai Psalms (?)</p> |
| Numbers | <p>"In the desert"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --At Sinai (1:1-10:10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Census, lots of covenantal provisions (including priestly blessing, etc.) --Sinai to Kadesh (10:11-12:16) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Complaints, quail, "mutiny" --At Kadesh, rebellion and delay (13:1-20:13) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Spies (especially Joshua and Caleb), unfaithfulness, more provisions, Korah <i>et al.</i>, water of cleansing, water (bad Moses and Aaron) --Kadesh to Plains of Moab (20:14-22:1) [38 years in a couple of chapters] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Bronze snake (aka "Nehushtan") --Plains of Moab (22:2-32:42) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Balaam and his talking donkey ("star will rise from Jacob's house"), another census, more provisions --Appendices (33-36) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Journey stages, land of inheritance, inheritance for women | <p>1446 B.C.-1406 B.C.</p> <p>1406 Moses's death</p> | <p>Deuteronomy</p> |
| Joshua | <p>Conquest and Fulfillment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Entrance into the Land (1:1-5:12) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Rahab and Spies, crossing the Jordan, circumcision --Conquest of the Land (5:13-12:24) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Jericho ("For us or for our enemies?"), Achan's sin, Covenant renewal, sun stands still --Distribution of the Land (chs.13-21) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Levites towns, Ephraim and Manasseh for Joseph and Levi --Epilogue (chs.22-24) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Covenant renewal | <p>1406 B.C.-1375 B.C.</p> <p>1375 Joshua's death</p> | |
| Judges | <p>"Everyone did what was right in his own eyes ... the Lord raised up judges"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Prologue: Incomplete conquest and apostasy (1:1-3:6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Two episodes: failure to purge the land, God's dealing with rebellion --Oppression and deliverance (3:7-16:31) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Othniel, Ehud (left handed!), Shamgar, Deborah (and other women), | <p>1375 B.C.-1050 B.C.</p> | <p>Ruth-David's line</p> |

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| | <p>Gideon (fleece wet, dry), Abimelech (anti-judge), Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson (riddle and bride, Delilah)</p> <p>--Epilogue: Religious and moral disorder (17-21)</p> <p>* Two episodes (!)</p> | | |
| 1 Samuel | <p>Setting up and establishing the monarchy & Saul’s reign</p> <p>--Historical setting (1-7)</p> <p>* Eli, Hannah (pre-Magnificat), Samuel, Eli’s sons, famous “call”, Ark taken and restored (rats and tumors)</p> <p>--Samuel establishes Saul as king (8-12)</p> <p>* People request a king (Dt 17:14-20), Saul anointed privately and chosen publicly, confirmed with victory, inaugurated and covenant renewed</p> <p>--Saul a failure as king (13-15)</p> <p>* Jonathan</p> <p>--Saul’s reign deteriorates and David rises to the throne (16:1-31:13)</p> <p>* Shepherd-boy David anointed, in service to Saul, harp playing, kills Goliath, friends with Jonathan, pursuit and sparing, witch of Endor, Saul’s defeat, Jonathan’s death, and Saul’s suicide</p> | 1050 B.C.-1010 B.C. (Saul’s reign) | Psalms |
| 2 Samuel | <p>David’s reign</p> <p>--David reigns over Judah and then all Israel (1:1-5:5)</p> <p>* Laments death (not parted?)</p> <p>--Accomplishments and glory (5:6-9:12)</p> <p>* Jerusalem as capital, Ark comes to Jerusalem, Covenant with David</p> <p>--Weaknesses and failures (10-20)</p> <p>* Bathsheba, individual confession and absolution from Nathan, family “antics” (Absalom’s conspiracy)</p> <p>--Final reflections (21-24)</p> | 1010 B.C.-970 B.C. (David’s reign) | Psalms |
| 1 & 2 Kings | <p>Solomon’s reign & the beginning of the divided kingdom (Israel & Judah)</p> <p>--Solomon’s reign (1Ki 1:1-12:24)</p> <p>* Succession, wisdom request and promise, building projects (Temple and palace), Ark brought and Temple dedicated, folly with wives (and Queen of Sheba), threatened, succeeded by Rehoboam</p> <p>--Israel from Jeroboam I-Ahab & Judah from Rehoboam-Asa (12-25-16:34)</p> <p>* Israel: Jeroboam I (golden calves at Bethel and Dan), Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab</p> <p>* Judah: Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa</p> | <p>970 B.C.-930 B.C. (Solomon’s reign)</p> <p>930 B.C.-874 B.C.</p> | <p>Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Psalms (?) Psalms (?)</p> |

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| (1 & 2 Kings) | --Elijah and Elisha and other prophets from the time of Israel's Ahab-Joram & Judah's Asa-Jehoshaphat (1Ki 17:1-2Ki 8:15) * Elijah: drought and widow with son, prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (not Yankee Stadium), flight to Horeb ("still small voice"), transition to Elisha (parting water, chariot of fire, Elijah's mantle) * Israel: Ahab (Naboth's vineyard and Jezebel), Ahaziah, Joram * Judah: Jehoshaphat * Elisha: signs (widow's oil, resurrection, Naaman's healing, floating axhead), famine | 874 B.C.-852 B.C. | Obadiah in J. (?) Psalms (?) |
| | --Israel from Joram-Assyrian exile & Judah from Jehoram-Ahaz (8:16-17:41) * Israel: Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea * Judah: Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah and Joash (repair of the Temple), Amaziah, Azariah (aka "Uzziah"), Jotham, Ahaz | 852 B.C.-722 B.C. | Jonah in I. Amos in I. Hosea in I. Isaiah in J. Joel in J. (?) Micah in J. (?) |
| | --Judah from Hezekiah-Babylonian exile (18-25) * Hezekiah (good reign [purifies the Temple], threat and deliverance, illness [sun goes backward] and alliance), Manasseh, Amon, Josiah (repair of the Temple, Book of the Law, Covenant renewal), Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah | 715 B.C.-586 B.C. | Nahum in J. Zephaniah in J. Habakkuk in J. Jeremiah in J. Lamentations Ezekiel |
| | <i>BABYLONIAN EXILE</i> | 586 B.C.-538 B.C. | Daniel, Esther, Psalms (?) |
| Ezra | Return and rebuilding --First return under Zerubbabel and rebuilding of the Temple (1-6) * Cyrus's edict, rebuilding, Feast of Tabernacles, pause and resumption (Darius' order), dedication, Passover --Ezra's return and reforms (7-10) * Authorized by Artaxerxes, more genealogies and lists (!), mixed marriage problems | 538 B.C.- | 1 & 2 Chronicles (recap Creation to Judah's Exile and Restoration) Haggai, Zechariah, Palms (?) |
| Nehemiah | More rebuilding --First administration (1-12) * Response to plight, king's help, walls, poverty and debts, more lists, revival of religion, dedication of walls --Second administration (13) * problems while he was away, return, offerings and firstfruits | -432 B.C. | Malachi Psalms (?) |

| | <i>TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS</i> | 432 B.C.-5 B.C. | (Apocrypha) |
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| Matthew, Mark, Luke, John | Life of our Lord | 6/5 B.C.-30 A.D. | |
| Acts | <p>“In Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”</p> <p>--Peter and the church in Palestine (1-12)</p> <p>* Post-resurrection ministry, Pentecost, miracles, goods, arrests, deacons, Stephen (arrest, martyrdom), scattering, Philip’s ministry (“How can I understand unless someone explains it to me?”), Saul’s conversion, Peter’s ministry</p> <p>--Paul and the expansion of the Church (13-28)</p> <p>* First missionary journey (13-14)</p> <p>* Jerusalem conference (15:1-25)</p> <p>* Second missionary journey (15:36-18:22)</p> <p>* Third missionary journey (18:23-21:16)</p> <p>* “To Rome” (21:17-28:31)</p> | <p>30 A.D.-61/62 A.D.</p> <p>46 A.D.-48 A.D.</p> <p>49/50 A.D.</p> <p>49/50 A.D.-51/52 A.D.</p> <p>53 A.D.-57 A.D.</p> <p>59 A.D.-61/62 A.D.</p> | <p>James</p> <p>Galatians</p> <p>1 & 2 Thessalon.</p> <p>1 & 2 Corinth.,</p> <p>Romans</p> <p>Colossians,</p> <p>Philemon,</p> <p>Ephesians,</p> <p>Philippians</p> |
| | <p>* Fourth missionary journey?</p> <p>* Second Roman imprisonment (?) and martyrdom</p> | <p>62/63 A.D.</p> <p>63 A.D.</p> <p>65/67 A.D.</p> | <p>1 Timothy</p> <p>Titus</p> <p>2 Timothy</p> |
| | | <p>61/62</p> <p>60/70</p> | <p>1 & 2 Peter</p> <p>Jude</p> |
| | | 65/70 | Hebrews |
| | | 90-100 | 1, 2, & 3 John |
| | | 95 A.D.-Present | Revelation |

For further reading: *Concordia Self-Study Bible* (CPH, 1986 [helpful timelines]), Horace D. Hummel’s *The Word Becoming Flesh* (CPH, 1979), Martin Franzmann’s *The Word of the Lord Grows* (CPH, 1961), and the contemporary Daily Lectionary with its related webpages and booklets!