



The Journey

Through the Old Testament

**A Discipleship Ministry
of Superior Avenue
Baptist Church**

Why Study the Old Testament?

1. The Old Testament is part of God's complete revelation to mankind.
2. God's plan for redemption begins in the Old Testament.
3. The New Testament will never be completely understood without studying the Old Testament.
 - There are over 1600 quotes from the Old Testament in the New Testament.
4. Old Testament deficiency exists in our churches.
 - It is estimated that less 10% of all Christians have a good, thorough understanding of the overall structure and framework of the Old Testament.

The Literature of the Old Testament

1. The Old Testament is a collection of 39 books divided into four categories:
 - Law
 - History
 - Poetry and Wisdom
 - Prophecy
2. The Old Testament was written by a variety of authors but one Divine author.
2Tim. 3:16 *All Scripture is inspired by God...*
3. The majority of the Old Testament is written in Hebrew, though some parts are in Aramaic.
4. The Old Testament was written over a span of 1,000 years.
 - The earliest parts were written around 1500 BC.
 - The latter parts were written around 400 BC.

The History of the Old Testament

1. Creation out of nothing. (Man was made in the image of God.)
2. The Fall of Man. (Sin enters the world and man and woman are driven from the Garden of Eden)
3. Humans degenerate to the point that God decides to the flood the world delivering Noah and his family by the ark.
4. In man's desire to reach God by building the Tower of Babel, mankind is divided by language and scattered over the earth.
5. God chooses Abraham and promises to make him a great nation and promises to give the land of Canaan to his descendants.
6. Abraham's descendents – Isaac, Jacob, Joseph – eventually become slaves in Egypt.
7. At the burning bush, Moses is called by God to deliver the Israelites out of slavery.
8. The Exodus – After ten plagues, the Israelites are allowed to leave Egypt.
9. At Mt. Sinai, God gives Israel the law.
10. The people of Israel enter the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua and are eventually ruled by judges.
11. The people of Israel demand a king. The first three kings of Israel are Saul, David, & Solomon.
12. King Solomon builds the temple, which becomes the center of worship for Israel.
13. After Solomon's death, the Kingdom is divided into two parts: Israel (Northern Kingdom) and Judah (Southern Kingdom).
14. The Northern Kingdom is defeated by Assyria in 722 BC.
15. The Southern Kingdom of Judah is defeated in 586 BC by Babylon.
16. After 70 years in exile, God's people return to the Promised Land and rebuild the temple.

17. The story of the Old Testament is to be continued with God's people longing for the Messiah.

Book by Book through the Old Testament

Genesis

Basic Information:

1. Author: Moses
2. Key People: Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob, & Joseph
3. Key Places: Ur, Haran, Canaan, Egypt
4. Genesis literally means "beginning."
 - The Beginning of Creation
 - The Beginning of Israel

Study Tips:

1. The first eleven chapters of Genesis are foundation for the remainder of the Bible.
 - Man is created in the image of God.
 - Humanity struggles with sin.
 - God's grace and plan for redemption begins to unfold.
2. Covenants between God and man are a major emphasis in the Old Testament story.
 - A Covenant in Eden
 - A Covenant with Adam and Eve
 - A Covenant with Noah
 - A Covenant with Abraham
3. Major Themes:
 - God's People (The descendants of Abraham)
 - God's Promises (Genesis 12)
 - God's Providence (Genesis 45:7-8)

Exodus

Basic Information:

1. Author: Moses
2. Key People: Moses and Pharaoh
3. Key Places: Egypt, the Red Sea, Mt. Sinai.
4. Exodus means "Departure"
5. Crisis for God's People: God's people are slaves in Egypt.

Study Tips:

1. The Exodus was God's great act of salvation in the OT. (Symbolized in the Passover)
2. God continues to use ordinary people to carry out His divine plans.
3. God's covenant name is revealed. Yahweh: I AM that I AM
4. The terms of God's covenant is given through the law.
5. Man's disobedience to the law is exposed. (Golden Calf)
6. God dwells among His people in the tabernacle. (Exodus 25-40)

Leviticus

Basic Information:

1. Author: Moses
2. Key Place: Mt. Sinai
3. OT Narrative is on hold. (One-year gap between Exodus 19 and Numbers 10)
4. Leviticus is the priest's handbook.

Study Tips:

1. Key Words:

- Holiness: God is Holy and His people are expected to be holy. (92 Times)
 - Sacrifice (32 times) or Offering (264 times):
 - Atone: (51 times)
2. The Lord appointed Moses' brother Aaron and his sons to be the priests.
 3. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)\
 4. Details of the law make it difficult to find practical application.
 - God is holy.
 - Sin is serious.
 - God is forgiving.

Numbers

Basic Information:

1. Author: Moses
2. Numbers gets its name from the census accounts found in the book.
3. Among the Jews, the book goes by the name "In the Wilderness."
4. Numbers chronicles the final days at Mt. Sinai, the rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea, 40 years of wandering the wilderness, and preparation to enter the Holy Land.

Study Tips:

1. Time Frames:
 - Chapters 1-10: 20 Days
 - Chapters 11-14: 70 Days
 - Chapters 15-20: 38 Years
 - Chapters 21-36: 5 Months
2. More Laws
3. God's people continue to sin.
 - Complaining
 - Rebellion
 - Disobedience
 - Lack of Faith
 - Adultery

- Immorality
4. The current generation will pay the price for sin by wandering in the wilderness for 40 years and not being allowed to enter the Promised Land.
 5. But God is faithful to His promises despite sin.

Deuteronomy

1. Author: Moses
2. Deuteronomy means “Second Law.”
3. A New Generation of God’s people will experience the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham.
4. Deuteronomy is the most quoted book in the Bible.

Study Tips:

1. Moses’ Farwell Address
 - Remembering God’s faithfulness in the history of Israel.
 - Renewing a Covenant relationship with God.
 - Reviewing the Law.
2. Moses’ emphasizes a love for God that leads to obedience. (Deut. 6:4-6)
3. The Death of Moses; Joshua becomes Israel’s new leader.

The Next Twelve ...

1. Pre-Monarchy
 - Joshua
 - Judges
 - Ruth (Written during the period of the Judges)
2. Monarchy
 - I & II Samuel (Saul and David)
 - 1 & II Kings (Solomon & the Divided Kingdom)
 - 1 & II Chronicles (David, Solomon, & the Southern Kingdom)
3. Post-Monarchy
 - Ezra (Temple Rebuilt)

- Nehemiah (Wall of Jerusalem Rebuilt)
- Esther (Written during the time of Ezra)

Joshua

Basic Information:

1. Joshua's name literally means "The Lord will save."
2. Continuation of God's promises in Exodus 3:15-17.
 - Out of Egypt
 - Give the Land of Canaan
3. Key People: Joshua
4. Key Places: Jordan River & Canaan.

Study Tips:

1. Chapter 1 establishes Joshua as the Divinely elected leader of Israel.
2. Preparation to enter the land.
 - Spies sent to Jericho.
 - The Memorial Stones and the Crossing of the Jordan.
 - God as commander of the Army (Joshua 5:13-15)
3. Conquest of the Land
 - Central Campaign: Jericho and AI (Joshua 6-8)
 - Southern Campaign
 - Deception of the Gibeonites (Joshua 9)
 - 5 Kings in Southern Canaan Defeated (Joshua 10)
 - Northern Campaign (Joshua 11)
4. Land of Canaan divided among the 12 tribes. (Joshua 12-21)
5. Continued Sinfulness of Man.
6. Joshua's Final Advice (Joshua 22-24)

Judges

Basic Information:

1. Key People: 12 Judges
2. Key Places: Land of Canaan
3. Key Verse: Judges 17:6
4. Traces the period between the death of Joshua and the rise of the monarchy in Israel.
5. Israel as Confederation of 12 Tribes

Study Tips:

1. Israel's failure to conquer the land.
2. Israel's disobedience to the law and worship of false gods.
3. 5 Step Cycle throughout the Book of Judges
 - Israel would stray from God.
 - An enemy nation would oppress them.
 - Israel would cry out for help.
 - God would raise up a deliver.
 - Israel would serve God faithfully for a while before starting the cycle all over again.

Ruth

Basic Information:

1. Key People: Ruth, Naomi, & Boaz
2. Key Places: Moab & Bethlehem
3. Ruth means "Friendship."
4. Set during the period of the Judges.

Study Tips:

1. God's Covenant Love: Kindness, Faithfulness, & loyalty
2. Kinsman Redeemer (Leviticus 25)
3. Boaz as a type of Christ.
4. Key Teachings:
 - God's sovereign, providential, and provisional care.
 - God's grace extends not only to the Israelites but to all.
5. David's Genealogy, which ultimately points to Christ. (Matthew 1:5)

1 & 2 Samuel

Basic Information:

1. Time Frame: From Samuel's birth to the end of King David's reign.
2. Key People: Samuel, Saul, David
3. 1 Samuel: Transition to a King
4. 2 Samuel: Reign of David

Study Tips:

1. The Books of 1 & 2 Samuel describe Israel's transition from loosely organized confederation to a monarchy ruled by a king.
2. Samuel as a Transition Figure: Judge/Prophet
3. Israel rejected God as their king, demanded an earthly king.
4. Saul was selected as Israel's first king but was later rejected because of disobedience to God and the law.
5. David was selected as Israel's second king. David was considered a man after God's own heart despite his struggle with sin.
6. Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 17)

1 & 2 Kings

Basic Information:

1. Contains over 400 years of history.
2. 1 Kings covers the reign of Solomon and the reigns of the first few kings of the Divided Kingdom.
3. 2 Kings covers the reigns of the remaining kings of the Divided Kingdom until Israel is scattered by the Assyrians in 722 BC and Judah is taken captive to Babylon in 586 BC.
4. Basic Structure
 - United Kingdom 1 Kings 1-11
 - Divided Kingdom 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17
 - Captive Kingdom 2 Kings 18-25

Study Tips:

1. Major Themes:
 - The Rejection of Israel as God's people.
 - The Rise of the Prophets
2. The temple is constructed during the reign of Solomon.
3. Israel is divided into two kingdoms after the death of Solomon.
 - The Southern Kingdom (Judah): The tribes of Judah and Benjamin
 - The Northern Kingdom (Israel, Ephraim): Remaining 10 Tribes
4. 39 Kings of the Divided Kingdom
 - 0 of 19 Northern Kings were good.
 - 8 of 20 Southern Kings were good.
5. The Divided Kingdom was characterized by disobedience to the law and apostasy.
6. Revivals occurred during the reigns of Josiah & Hezekiah. Revivals were short lived; the nation would return to sin and apostasy.
7. The ministries of Elijah and Elisha.

1 & 2 Chronicles

Basic Information:

1. Final book of the Hebrew Bible.
2. Likely author is Ezra.
3. Focuses only on the reigns of David, Solomon, and the kings of the Southern Kingdom.
4. Written after the return from Babylon.

Study Tips:

1. Watch out for the extensive genealogies.
2. The purpose of the book is to reconnect the people of Israel to their identity as the people of God.
3. Themes:
 - Connecting God's people to their past.
 - Continuing the Line of David.
 - The temple and its rituals focus on God.
 - Importance of music in worshipping God.
 - Invincibility of God's people when they obey.
 - Punishment comes with disobedience.

Ezra-Nehemiah

Basic Information:

1. One book in the Hebrew Bible.
2. The end of the Old Testament story.
3. Key People: Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah
4. Ezra tells the story of the remnant returning to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple.

5. Nehemiah tells the story of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

Study Tips:

1. Continuity of God's People: The returning exiles experience a "New Exodus" and remain part of God's redemptive plan.
2. Holiness: It was important for God's people to separate themselves and remain pure in matters of doctrine, ethics, and practice.
3. The centrality of the law is reaffirmed in the life and practice of the Israelite community.
4. Covenant Renewal (Nehemiah 8-10)
5. Nehemiah's reforms due to disobedience to the law.

Esther

Basic Information:

1. The story takes place before or during the time of Ezra.
2. God's providence is unmistakable despite God's name never appearing in the book.
3. Key People: King Xerxes, Haman, Mordecai, Esther

Study Tips:

1. The plot to destroy the Jews.
2. Examples of God's Providence:
 - Esther being chosen as queen.
 - Mordecai discovering a plot to save the king's life.
 - The king welcomes Esther after months of ignoring her.
 - The king's deep concern for Esther.
3. The Key Verse: Esther 4:14

Job

Basic Information:

1. Written during the Patriarchal Period. Some consider Job to be the first written book of the Old Testament.
2. Job was possibly a contemporary of Abraham.
3. Job was a real man. (Ez. 14:14-20, James 5:11)
4. It's a book on human suffering.
5. Structure:
 - Prologue (Job 1:1-2:13)
 - Speeches in Poetic Form (Job 2:14-42:6)
 - Epilogue (Job 42:7-17)

Study Tips:

1. Job's Tragedy.
 - Children
 - Wealth
 - Possession
 - Health
2. Main Question: Why do the righteous suffer?
3. The Issue of Character
 - Job is described as a man of character and believes his conduct to be above reproach.
 - No one is totally pure. (Job 15:14-15, 25:4-5)
4. The Three Friends: Eliphaz, Bildad, & Zophar
5. Job questioned God and wanted his day in court.
6. God's Response: Who are we to question Him? Job never receives the answer to His why.

Psalms

Basic Information

1. Psalm: A poem sung to musical accompaniment.
2. The hymnal of the Old Testament.
3. Written by many authors from the time of the Exodus to after the Exile.

Study Tips:

1. Five Divisions
 - Book 1 (1-41)
 - Book 2 (42-72)
 - Book 3 (73-89)
 - Book 4 (90-106)
 - Book 5 (107-150)
2. Types of Psalms
 - Praise
 - Lament
 - Confession
 - Wisdom
 - Royal
3. Key Psalms:
 - Psalm 22: The Crucified Savior
 - Psalm 23: The Lord is my Shepherd
 - Psalm 119: The Emphasis on the Word
4. The Songs of Life: The human perspective on how God is dealing with the individual and the nation.

Proverbs

Basic Information:

1. Solomon wrote a majority of proverbs.
2. Foundational Passage: Proverbs 1:1-7
3. Structure:
 - Preface (1:1-7)
 - Introduction (1:8-9:18)
 - Proverbs of Solomon I (10:1-22:16)
 - Sayings of the Wise (22:17-24:34)
 - Proverbs of Solomon II (25:1-29:27)
 - Sayings of Agur (30:1-33)
 - Sayings of Lemuel (31:1-31)
4. Proverbs is written in Hebrew poetry. It is very figurative, and generally the second line complements on contrasts the first line.

Study Tips:

1. Major Themes:
 - Attain wisdom; reject folly.
 - Walk in righteousness; avoid evil.
2. The goal of proverbs is to apply the Word to practical living.
3. Connection between Wisdom and God
 - Both prescribe obedience & morality; both promise success and eternal life.
 - God is the source of inspired, Godly advice.
 - God is the one who guarantees what wisdom promises.

Ecclesiastes

Basic Information:

1. Author is likely Solomon. (Teacher)
 - Author identified himself as David's son and king over Israel. (1:1,12)
 - 12:9 links the author to the book of Proverbs.
2. Wisdom Literature: Concerned with helping readers cope with the practical and philosophical issues of life.

3. Key Words: man, labor, under the sun, meaningless, wisdom, evil.

Study Tips:

1. Major Themes:

- God is creator of all.
- God's ways are not always understandable.
- Life is unexpected.

2. Practical Application:

- Enjoy the blessings of God today.
- Fear God
- Obey God's Word.

3. Solomon's Epitaph (12:9-14)

Song of Songs

Basic Information:

1. The author is Solomon.

2. Like Esther, the Song of Songs never mentions the name of God.

3. The main purpose of the book is to celebrate the goodness and beauty of romantic love.

Study Tips:

1. Key People:

- The Woman: "Beloved"
- The Man: "Lover"
- Friends: "Daughters of Jerusalem"

2. Possibilities for Interpretation:

- Literal: A man and a woman.
- Historical: God and His people Israel
- Typical – Christ and His church

Isaiah

Basic Information:

1. Isaiah means “the Lord saves.”
2. Time Period: 740 BC – 680 BC
3. Historical Setting: Isaiah prophesied the destruction of Israel by Assyria and the exile in Babylon.
4. Contested Authorship
5. Isaiah prophesied to the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel.

Study Tips:

1. Two Sections:
 - Present Judgment (1-39)
 - Future Hope (40-66)
2. A Simple Message
 - God’s people had sinned & rebelled against the One who had made them and redeemed them.
 - God’s people need to reform their ways and practice obedience.
 - God’s people would face judgment because of their sins.
 - God would restore a remnant.
3. Major Ideas
 - God is the Holy One of Israel (30 Times)
 - Israel is the Lord’s Holy people.
 - Jerusalem is the Lord’s Holy city.
 - The Lord is calling the Gentiles to worship Him.
4. A Picture of Christ
 - His birth (7:14)
 - His life (61:1-2)
 - His death (52-13-53-12)
 - His Resurrection (55:3)

Jeremiah

Basic Information:

1. Jeremiah means “the Lord appoints.”
2. Time Period: 626-586 BC
3. Historical Setting: The book of Jeremiah takes place during the last 40 years of Judah’s history.
4. Longest book in the Old Testament prophecies.
5. Jeremiah’s life is more fully described than any other writing prophet.
6. Jeremiah prophesied to the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

Study Tips:

1. Key Chapters
 - Chapter 7: Temple Address
 - Chapter 31: New Covenant
2. Overall Structure
 - Personal: God’s call to Jeremiah (1)
 - National: Message to Judah (2-33)
 - Personal: Jeremiah’s suffering (34-45)
 - International: Message to the Nations (46-51)
3. Object Lessons:
 - Potter’s Clay (18)
 - Clay Pots (19)
 - Basket of Figs (24)
4. Theme: The people of Judah felt immune to any threat of divine judgment, but Jeremiah repeatedly warned them about the vanity of relying on ritual and external religion.

Lamentations

Basic Information:

1. Lamentations means “funeral poems.”
2. Time Period: 586-585 BC
3. Historical Setting: The fall of Jerusalem at the hands of Babylon.
4. Author: Jeremiah
5. Jeremiah as the Weeping Prophet

Study Tips:

1. Overall Structure
 - Lament over Jerusalem (1)
 - Lament over Judgment (2)
 - Hope through God’s Mercies (3)
 - Lament over the Terrors of War (4)
 - Prayer for Restoration (5)
2. Feel the emotions of God’s judgment.
3. Key Passage: Lamentations 3:22-24

Ezekiel

Basic Information:

1. Ezekiel means “God’s strength.”
2. Time Period: 592-570 BC
3. Historical Setting: Ezekiel prophesied to the Jews held captive in Babylon.
4. Purpose:
 - Repentance and Faith
 - Hope and Trust

Study Tips:

1. Overall Structure
 - Introduction: God calls Ezekiel. (1-3)
 - Judgment against Judah (4-24)
 - Judgment against the Nations (25-32)
 - Restoration of God's people (33-48)
2. The book is filled with symbolic actions, visions, & allegorical pictures.
3. Emphasize the glory of God in His temple.
4. Ezekiel lived out his prophecy.
 - Played war.
 - Laid on his side a certain number of days.
 - Shaved his hair and beard.
 - Acted someone fleeing from war.
 - Sat and Sighed
 - Endured the death of his wife.
5. Six Theological Statements Affirmed on Behalf of Israel:
 - The Lord will re-gather His scattered people.
 - The Lord will bring the nation back to their land and cleanse them from defilement.
 - The Lord will give His people a new heart and spirit so they might walk in His ways.
 - The Lord will restore the Davidic line.
 - The Lord will bless Israel with prosperity and security in their land.
 - The Lord will re-establish his resident in the midst of Israel.

Daniel

Basic Information:

1. Daniel means "God is my Judge."
2. Time Period: 605-535 BC
3. Historical Setting: Daniel has been deported to Babylon and served in two kingdoms: Babylon & Persia.
4. Written in both Hebrew and Aramaic.
5. Key Characters: Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Nebuchadnezzar, & Darius.

Study Tips:

1. Overall Structure:

- Six Stories (1-6)
- Six Prophecies (7-12)

2. Daniel's prophecies cover the time from captivity in Babylon to the return of Christ.

3. Theme: God is sovereign over kings, nations, and history.

Hosea

1. Hosea means "Salvation."

2. Time Period: 758-722 BC

3. Historical Setting: Hosea prophesies to the Northern Kingdom prior to their defeat by Assyria.

4. Theme: God's faithful love to an unfaithful people.

Joel

1. Joel means "Yahweh is God."

2. Time Period: 586-539 BC

3. Historical Setting: Joel prophesies to Judah during Babylonian Captivity.

4. The Three R's

- Remember
- Repent
- Restoration (Day of the Lord)

Amos

1. Amos means "Burden".

2. Time Period: 765-750 BC (2 Kings 14:23-15:7)

3. Historical Setting: Amos prophesied during a time of prosperity 25 years before the Northern Kingdom's fall.
4. Theme: God had rejected Israel's religious and social practices.

Obadiah

1. Obadiah means "servant of God."
2. Time Period: 586 BC
3. Historical Setting: Prophecy of judgment against Edom because of their sins against God's people.
4. Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament.

Jonah

1. Time Period: 780-750 BC
2. Historical Setting: A time when Assyria was a cruel, barbaric people hated by the people of Israel.
3. Theme: God's people are reluctant to realize the passion that God has for reaching the nations.

Micah

1. Micah means "Who is like Yahweh?"
2. Time Period: 740-686 BC
3. Historical Setting: Micah prophesied to both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.
4. Themes: Judgment and Restoration.

Nahum

1. Nahum means "comfort."
2. Time Period: 663-612 BC
3. Historical Setting: Assyria had defeated the Northern Kingdom. Kingdom was Assyria's vassal.

4. Theme: Assyria will fall.

Habakkuk

1. Habakkuk means “to embrace.”

2. Time Period: 630-605 BC

3. Historical Setting: The time period leading up to Babylon’s destruction of Judah.

4. Theme: Why do people get away with evil while God seems to do nothing?

Zephaniah

1. Zephaniah was the great grandson of King Hezekiah.

2. Time Period: 640-609 BC (2 Kings 22-23)

3. Historical Setting: Zephaniah prophesied to Judah during the reign of Josiah.

4. Typical Prophetic Outline:

- Warning of Judgment
- Call to Repentance
- Promise of Restoration

Haggai

1. Time Period: 520 BC

2. Historical Setting: Jews had returned home from captivity in Babylon.

3. The Message of Haggai:

- God’s people had selfishly built homes instead of rebuilding the temple.
- God’s people need to look forward not behind.
- God’s people need to remain pure.

Zechariah

1. Zechariah means “the Lord remembers.”

2. Time Period: 520 BC

3. Historical Setting: Jews had returned home from captivity in Babylon.

4. Theme:

- God's restoration of Israel.
- God's promise of the Messiah.

Malachi

1. Malachi means "My Messenger."

2. Time Period: 460-400 BC

3. Historical Setting: The time of Ezra and Nehemiah

4. Theme: God is faithful to His covenant and requires faithfulness from his covenant people.