



Adult Learning Opportunity  
**Next Steps with the Bible: Going Deeper and Growing Stronger**

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**September 25:**

**Understanding the Big Story: The Bible from Genesis to Revelation**

**1. Review of Week 1: Any questions or comments about Bible translations?**

[Optional Assignment: Reading through Jude in different translations and noticing differences.]

**2. Getting a Handle on the Books of the Bible (Analysis)**

• In one sense the Bible is a book, but more accurately this "book" is an *anthology* of books collected by Israel and the church over a period of roughly 1500 years.

• Two Testaments, one Bible (39+27=66 books)

– Old and New Testaments (but "old" may imply worn out or antiquated)

- How about First and Second, Former and Latter, or Promise and Fulfillment Testaments?

• Chronology: a timeline of the writing of the Bible may be found in the *NLTISB A18-A27*

– the books of the OT were written over a period of around 1000 years, from roughly 1400-400 BCE.

– the books of the NT were written over a period of only 50 years, from roughly 50-100 CE.

• Christians commonly think of the books of the Bible under the following categories:

– **Historical** (narrative) Books

- Old Testament: Pentateuch (*Gen, Exod, Lev, Num, Deut*), *Josh, Jdg, Ruth, 1-2 Sam, 1-2 Kgs, 1-2 Chron, Ezra, Neh, Esth*

- New Testament: *Matt, Mark, Luke, John, Acts*

– **Poetic** Books

- *Pss, Lam*

– **Wisdom** Books

- *Job, Prov, Eccl, Song*

– **Letters** (epistles)

- *Rom, 1-2 Cor, Gal, Eph, Phil, Col, 1-2 Thess, 1-2 Tim, Tit, Phile, Heb, Jas, 1-2 Pet; 1-2-3 John, Jude*

– **Prophetic** Books

- Old Testament

Major Prophets: *Isa, Jer, Ezek, Dan*

Minor prophets: *Hos, Joel, Amos, Obad, Jon, Mic, Nah, Hab, Zeph, Hag, Zech, Mal*

- New Testament

*Rev*

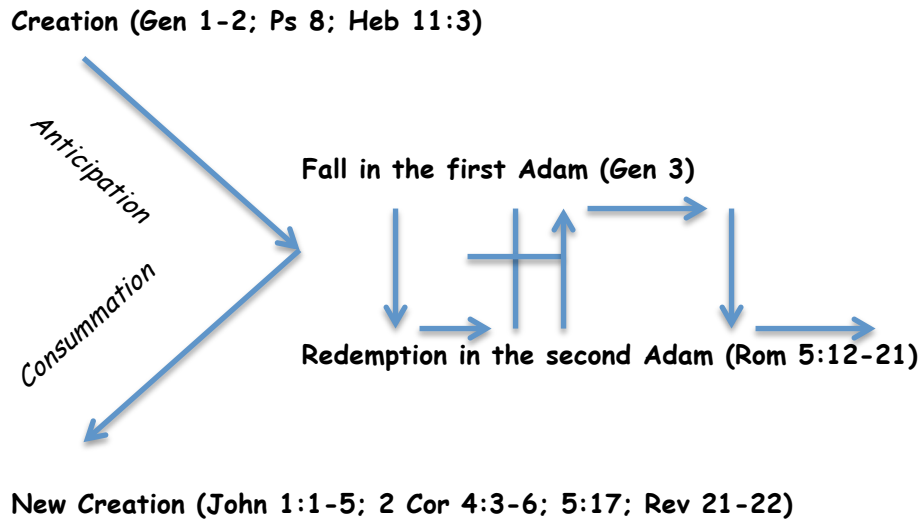
• In Jewish tradition the Bible (Old Testament) is divided into three sections, the *Torah* (law), *Nebiim* (prophets), and *Ketuvim* (writings, cf. Luke 24:27, 44). The acronym *Tanak* is commonly used for the Bible as a whole in Jewish circles.

• The 66 books above constitute the protestant **canon**, which resulted from a process in which the churches considered *content*, *authorship*, and early *attestation* by the churches. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox canons include several other ancient books regarded by protestants as non-canonical, although worthy of study and respect. Such books are called the *Apocrypha* ("hidden").

Other ancient books not regarded as canonical by any major branch of the church are called the *Pseudepigrapha* ("falsely attributed"). See further *ESVSB* 2577-83).

### 3. Getting a Handle on the Message of the Bible (Synthesis)

- God's plan to redeem a people for himself is central to the Bible. The messiah and the cross are at the heart of the biblical message, **promised** in the Old Testament and **fulfilled** in the New.
- The Jewish people are central to this plan according to *Genesis* 12; *John* 4, *Romans*, 11, and *Ephesians* 2.
- The biblical message of salvation through Jesus the Messiah can be visualized as follows:

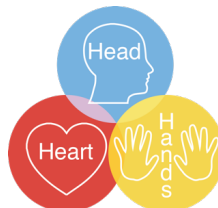


### 4. So What?

- How does all this impact our heads, hearts, and hands?



- We are richly blessed to *understand* how God graciously summons us to participate in his plan to renew his fallen creation through the Lord Messiah Jesus.
- Our feeble, frustrating, personal stories take on meaning as they are integrated into God's mega-story. *We need something bigger than us*, something that transcends our myopia, to empower us to take on life's complexities.
- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit invite us to join their mission of world renewal through the gospel. *We need to allow this information to transform our minds so that it can transform our families, our careers, and our churches.*



*Sanctify them through your truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)*

## OVERVIEW OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

The following is a common way of organizing the books of the Bible. The categories are flexible and overlap in some cases. Some books could be categorized differently. For example, much of the prophetic and wisdom books are written in poetry. 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings are about the ministry of prophets. The OT wisdom books are very different from each other but focus in common on skillful living. In the NT, Hebrews and 1 John are probably sermons or homilies, not letters.

	<b>Narrative</b> (history, biography)	<b>Prophecy</b> (preaching and promises)	<b>Poetry</b>	<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Letter</b>
<b>Old Testament</b>	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy  Joshua Judges Ruth 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings 1-2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel Daniel  Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	Psalms Lamentations	Job Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs	
<b>New Testament</b>	Matthew Mark Luke John  Acts	Revelation			Romans 1-2 Corinthians Galatians  Epesians Philippians Colossians Philemon  1-2 Thessalonian  1-2 Timothy Titus  Hebrews James 1-2 Peter 1-2-3 John Jude

