

Overview of the Old Testament Up to the Time of Kings

The Law: The first five books of the Bible tell the beginning of the Jewish (Israelite) nation and the beginning of Creation of all mankind.

- Genesis:** This book describes Creation, the first rebellions against God, and God's choosing of Abraham and his family as God's people – the Israelites.
- Exodus:** God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and led them to the wilderness of Sinai. There, He gave Moses the laws to govern the new nation.
- Leviticus:** God set up laws for the Israelites. Many of the laws were about being holy and worshiping God.
- Numbers:** Because of their rebellion and disobedience, the Israelites had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years before entering the promised land.
- Deuteronomy:** Just before his death, Moses made three emotional farewell speeches, recalling the history of the Israelites and warning them about disobeying.

Books of History: The next twelve books continue the history of the Israelites: They moved into the land of Canaan and established a kingdom that lasted almost 500 years.

- Joshua:** After Moses' death, Joshua commanded the armies that conquered much of the territory in the promised land of Canaan.
- Judges:** The new nation had a series of failures. God established leaders called "judges" to help rule the people and bring them back to God.
- Ruth:** This story of love and loyalty between two widows shines out brightly in an otherwise dark period of the time of judges.
- 1 Samuel:** Samuel became a leader between the time of the judges and the time of the kings. He appointed Israel's first king – Saul. After his own failure, Saul tried to prevent God's next king, David, from taking the throne.
- 2 Samuel:** David, a man after God's own heart, brought the nation together. But after committing adultery and murder, he suffered family and national failures.
- 1 Kings:** Solomon became the next king. At his death, a civil war tore apart the nation. Later kings were mostly evil. The prophet Elijah had dramatic confrontations with evil king Ahab.
- 2 Kings:** This book continues the record of the rulers of the divided kingdom. None of the northern kings followed God the way He wanted, and eventually was destroyed by another nation. The southern kingdom of Judah lasted longer, but finally Babylon conquered Judah and took away the people because of disobedience and not wanting to have a loving relationship with God.
- 1 Chronicles:** This book opens with the most complete genealogical record in the Bible, then adds many events from the life of David (Similar to 2 Samuel).
- 2 Chronicles:** Often similar to 1 and 2 Kings, this book records the history of the rulers of Judah, emphasizing the good kings.