

TLCBiblical.com Video Series

109 The Bible From 30,000 Feet

1. Introduction

In this video we'll take a look at the Bible from a high level to gain a perspective of the scriptures as a whole. Once we have that defined we can focus on the details but its important to have a sense of the overall structure of the Bible. So stay with me as we take a look at the Bible from 30,000 feet.

In preparation for a detailed examination of the Bible its important that we know how the various books add to the big picture. By doing this we'll better understand the history given in the Bible and create a framework in which the spiritual laws given by God can be understood. As we discussed in the last video these are crucial elements in establishing the context and will serve to help us comprehend the Bible.

2. The major divisions

As we look down from our high altitude we can see that the Bible appears to be a single book. Getting closer we find that there are two main divisions. These are the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT). These represent not only a division in time but also a difference in the spiritual law as well. We'll cover these differences in more depth as the study progresses. Let's take a look at each of these divisions.

3. The Old Testament - OT

The Old Testament consists of 39 books. The majority of these were written in the Hebrew language with the exception of some copies of Daniel and portions of the book of Ezekiel which were written in Aramaic. The OT was also translated into Greek by 70 scholars around the 4th century BC which is often referred to as the Septuagint, a name derived from the Greek word for seventy. It is frequently referred to in study Bibles and marginal notes with the Roman numerals LXX for the number seventy as well. The Old Testament begins with the account of creation and ends with the book of Malachi in the standard arrangement of the scriptures. These books are not arranged in a strict chronological order so there is a need to define a timeline which we'll do in a later video. The book of Malachi is believed to have been the last of the prophetic books written before a gap of 400 years between the events recorded in the Old Testament come to an end and the beginning of the New Testament.

4. The New Testament - NT

The New Testament contains 27 books. These were written in koiné Greek which was a common language spoken in the Roman world of the first century. While there are numerous writers who contributed to the Old Testament scriptures we can identify 8 that recorded the message of the New Testament. These are Matthew, Mark, Luke John, Peter, Paul, James and Jude. These books were all written before the end of the first century.

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5. The Bible as a library

The Bible as we can see is a collection of 66 books that form a spiritual library. As we continue in this study we'll identify how these books are connected and contribute to the unified message of the scriptures.

6. The Apocrypha

Before moving on we need to make a note about some books that appear in certain editions of the Bible and are referred to as the apocrypha. There are up to 12 books that are included in some Bibles between the Old and New Testaments. We won't be covering these books in this study but it's appropriate at this point to provide some information about them. The apocryphal books originated during the 400 year gap between the last prophet Malachi, and the events recorded in the Gospels about the life of Christ. Although these books have been included in some Bibles and over the centuries may have been read or used in church services there are some problems with this. Let's take a look at these so we can better understand why these books are excluded.

- a. None of the books internally claim to be divinely inspired nor is there any evidence to support such a claim
- b. Jewish philosophers, teachers and historians who wrote during this period and afterward quoted the Old Testament scriptures extensively but there are no quotations taken from any of the apocryphal books.
- c. No other divinely inspired writings were being produced during this time period and there is no evidence of prophets during this time as well. The book of Malachi indicates that no other prophecy would come from God until certain events took place which are later fulfilled in the appearance of John the baptizer.
- d. The apocryphal books have historical value as they contain information about events not recorded in the Bible but there are inconsistencies and contradictions between some of these suggesting that they are somewhat unreliable.
- e. traditional lists of the Old Testament books do not contain the apocryphal books.
- f. Historical evidence suggests that the Jews rejected these books as not inspired or non-canonical
- g. Numerous quotations from the Old Testament can be found in the New Testament but there are no quotations from the apocrypha, nor are they mentioned.

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Given these factors we can conclude that the apocryphal books are the product of human invention and therefore are not relevant to a study of the Bible.

7. Next

In our next video we'll examine an overview of the Old Testament