

2 The Old & New Testaments

This lesson looks at more about the book called The Bible. To do this lesson, make sure you have a Bible with you, so that you can look at what the Bible is.

Open your Bible to the Contents page. You can see that there are two parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. What is a Testament? It is an old English word that means an agreement or contract. Each Testament is an agreement between God and human beings. The Old Testament is mainly about the Jewish people; the New Testament is about Jesus Christ and his teachings.

There are people who laugh at the idea that Adam and Eve were real people, or that Noah built an ark because of a great flood. They don't believe that a big fish swallowed Jonah. But Jesus believed all these things! If you have time, you can look at these verses in the New Testament that show that Jesus knew and believed the Old Testament.

Jesus believed the Old Testament teaching about...

Adam and Eve (Matthew 19:4, 5); Noah and the Flood (Luke 17:26, 27); Lot and his wife (Luke 17:29-32); Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Matthew 8:11); David and Solomon (Matthew 12:3, 42); Jonah and the great fish (Matthew 12:40)

Did you know...?

- The complete Bible took over 2000 years to write.
- It was written on scrolls made of parchment, a very rough type of paper. Every copy had to be written by hand.
- It was written by shepherds, kings, fishermen, a doctor, a tent-maker and others.
- All the writers combine to give us one complete book - the information about God's purpose with men and women.
- Nearly all the writers were Jewish
- Much of the Bible is about the Jewish people.

The Old Testament

Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament. The first book, Genesis which means 'beginnings', tells how God made the earth and all life on it. Later we are told about a man called Abraham. He was the father of the Jewish people. God made some special promises to Abraham, that one day, the earth would have peace and be ruled over by a good king. That good king will be Jesus Christ. You will learn more about this in later lessons.

The Old Testament continues with the history of the children of Abraham - how they lived as slaves in Egypt for 400 years, and how their God brought them to the land we now know as Israel. While they stayed there for many years, they did not follow God's laws. God sent them away from the land.

The Old Testament		
M O S E S	Genesis	
	Exodus	
	Leviticus	
	Numbers	
	Deuteronomy	
H I S T O R I C A L	Joshua	
	Judges	
	Ruth	
	1 Samuel	
	2 Samuel	
	1 Kings	
	2 Kings	
	1 Chronicles	
	2 Chronicles	
	Ezra	
	Nehemiah	
	Esther	
	W I S D O M	Job
		Psalms
Proverbs		
Ecclesiastes		
Song of Solomon		
P R O P H E T S	Isaiah	
	Jeremiah	
	Lamentations	
	Ezekiel	
	Daniel	
	Hosea	
	Joel	
	Amos	
	Obadiah	
	Jonah	
	Micah	
	Nahum	
	Habakkuk	
Zephaniah		
Haggai		
Zechariah		
Malachi		

The middle part of the Old Testament has books of Hebrew poetry and books of wisdom. Some of the poetry in the book of Psalms has been made into songs.

The end of the Old Testament contains books where God tells what will happen in the future. This is called "prophecy".

The New Testament

The New Testament starts with the birth of Jesus Christ, then his life, and his death. But the Bible tells us that Jesus did not stay dead. God, his Father, made him alive again. Jesus is the King who will one day rule the world. There are four books, which are called "The Gospels". These books are called Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Jesus showed us how we should live: to love one another, and to be at peace. He showed us that God wanted to be Father to everyone who would come to him. Although we will all die, those who have followed Jesus will be made alive again when Jesus returns to the earth from heaven.

After the Gospels comes a book called "The Acts of the Apostles". This book tells what happened as the followers of Jesus started to spread his message around the world. Also, we learn about the first Christian churches that were formed, and how the Christians organised themselves.

The rest of the New Testament books are letters written by the followers of Jesus, giving more information about how we should live as followers of Jesus.

The final book is the Revelation, a book of prophecies that take us all the way to God's Kingdom soon to be set up on earth.

We Need a Guide

Wherever we may be, we need a guide. Without the Bible, we lose our way. If we read the Bible, see what it says, and ask God to help us, then God will be our guide through all our life.

The Bible says it is the Word of God. Please read 2 Timothy 3:16 and 17. What do these verses mean?

"All Scripture": "scripture" is an old English word meaning what is written down. When the Bible was written, it was not called the Bible - it was called "The Scriptures".

"God breathed": this means that God wrote the words by talking to people, who wrote it down. We can think of God "breathing out" the words, and the people writing the words down.

The Bible itself says that it is the word of God. We could say, "The Bible is just a history book". But there is more to the Bible than history. As we read it, we can see ourselves in the lives of the Bible people. We can see what they did in different situations. We can see the good advice of Jesus about how we should live, and we find that it works!

We cannot ignore the Bible. It is the word of God - the God who made the world (and us); so it would be good to know what He says. That is why it is important to read the Bible. As you continue on our English programme, we hope that you will learn more about the Bible and what it says.

The New Testament

G O S P E L	Matthew
	Mark
	Luke
	John
	Acts (of the Apostles)
L E T T E R S	Romans
	1 Corinthians
	2 Corinthians
	Galatians
	Ephesians
	Philippians
	Colossians
	1 Thessalonians
	2 Thessalonians
	1 Timothy
	2 Timothy
	Titus
	Philemon
	Hebrews
	James
	1 Peter
	2 Peter
	1 John
	2 John
	3 John
Jude	
	Revelation