

Interpreting the Bible 2 - The Basics of the Bible

What is the Bible?

- * The Bible is God's self-revelation of His character, His relationship to His creation, and His redemptive purpose in His eternal Son Jesus Christ to humankind.

Bible Basics

- * 66 books/writings/letters
- * 40+ authors writing over 1500+ years
- * Composed on 3 different continents (Asia, Africa, Europe)
- * The First books of the Bible (the "Pentateuch" or, the Five Books of Moses) were written around 1400 B.C. The last book of the Old Testament, *Malachi*, was written around 430 B.C. The last book of the New Testament, *Revelation* was written around A.D. 90-95.

The Structure of the Bible

- * The 39 books of the Old Testament (from the Latin word *testamentum*, meaning "covenant") were written in *Hebrew* with some very small sections in *Ezra*, *Daniel*, and *Jeremiah* written in *Aramaic*.
- * The 27 books of the New Testament were written in *Greek*.
- * The 27 books of the New Testament are arranged as **Gospels & Acts** (historical books), **Pauline Epistles**, & **General Epistles & Revelation**.
- * The 39 books of the Old Testament are called the TANAK (meaning the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings). In our English Bibles, the Old Testament is arranged in a 5-12-5-5-12 format by **Law** (Genesis-Deuteronomy), **Historical Books** (Joshua-Esther), **Wisdom Books** (Job-Song of Solomon), **Major Prophets** (Isaiah-Daniel), & **Minor Prophets** (Hosea-Malachi)

Chapter & Verse Divisions

- * Chapter divisions were added Stephen Langton (1150-1228 A.D.), Archbishop of Canterbury in the 13th century.
 - * Old Testament verse divisions were added by Jewish scribes around 900 A.D. (the Ben Asher family)
 - * New Testament verse divisions were added by Robert Estienne in 1551. Estienne was a printer from Paris.
 - * Should we consider the chapter/verse divisions as inspired?
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