

30 DAYS TO UNDERSTANDING
THE BIBLE



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

NASHVILLE DALLAS MEXICO CITY RIO DE JANEIRO BEIJING

30 DAYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

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INTRODUCTION

LET'S MAKE A BARGAIN.

If you'll give me fifteen minutes a day for thirty days, I'll give you an understanding of the Bible, the most widely distributed publication in history (approximately four billion copies). In one month, you'll learn the story of the entire Bible...

all the major men and women,

all the major events, and

all the major points of geography.

You will be able to put these people and facts together in their proper chronological order and trace the geographical movement as you think your way through the entire Bible!

Yet the Bible is more than history. It is a treasure-house of important teachings that have been the foundation of Western civilization from the Roman Empire until today, including important and profound ideas which have been embraced by Christians for the last 2,000 years. You will learn about the Ten Great Subjects of the Bible:

Bible

God

Jesus

Holy Spirit

Angels

Man

Sin

Salvation

Church

Future Things

No attempt has been made to interpret the Bible. The information is presented at face value as it is found in Scripture. No previous knowledge is assumed. A beginner will not be overwhelmed, and the established student will find much help organizing and expanding what he or she already knows.

The Bible is an enormous book covering much information and many subjects. It is not possible to learn everything about it in thirty

days. But you can gain a beginning knowledge, an overview, that you can use to build a more complete understanding in the years ahead. In just fifteen minutes a day for thirty days, you can gain a foundational grasp of the most important book ever written.

SECTION ONE

THE STORY OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BIBLE



CHARLES STEINMETZ WAS AN ELECTRICAL ENGINEER OF towering intellect. After he retired, he was asked by a major appliance manufacturer to locate a malfunction in their electrical equipment. None of the manufacturer's experts had been able to locate the problem. Steinmetz spent some time walking around and testing the various parts of the machine complex. Finally, he took out of his pocket a piece of chalk and marked an X on a particular part of one machine. The manufacturer's people disassembled the machine, discovering to their amazement that the defect lay precisely where Steinmetz's chalk mark was located.

Some days later, the manufacturer received a bill from Steinmetz for ten thousand dollars. They protested the amount and asked him to itemize it. He sent back an itemized bill:

Making one chalk mark \$ 1
Knowing where to place it \$ 9,999

If you know where the chalk marks go, the most overwhelming tasks are easily solved. If you don't, even simple tasks can be impossible.

Learning about the Bible can be much the same. If you don't know much about it, it can be like trying to cross the Sahara Desert blindfolded. Yet if you learn where a few of the major chalk marks go, the Bible can be at the very least an interesting and valuable source of information and inspiration.

My own experience bears this out. Many years ago, I decided I was going to master the Bible. I was going to begin with Genesis and read through Revelation, and I wasn't going to put it down

until I understood it. I soon became hopelessly entangled in a jungle of fantastic stories, unpronounceable names, broken plots, unanswered questions, and endless genealogies. I stubbed my toe on Leviticus, sprained my ankle on Job, hit my head on Ecclesiastes, and fell headlong into the mud on Habakkuk.

I was defeated. I threw my Bible down, concluding that the Bible was a series of unrelated stories put together in random order!

Then one day I discovered a key. With this key, the fog that enshrouded my understanding of the Bible began to lift. Not that things came into sharp focus, but at least I began to see shapes on the horizon.

The key: *Learning the structure of the Bible*. If you want to learn architecture, you must first learn how buildings are put together. If you want to learn sailing, you must first learn how ships are put together. And if you want to learn to understand the Bible, you must first learn how the Bible is put together.

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

The Bible has two major divisions: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament begins with creation and tells the story of the Jewish people up to the time of Christ. It is made up of *thirty-nine* individual “books” (the Book of Genesis, the Book of Exodus, etc.) written by twenty-eight different authors and spans a period of over two thousand years.

The New Testament is the record of the birth of Jesus, His life and ministry, and the ministry of His disciples, which was carried on after Jesus was crucified. The New Testament is composed of *twenty-seven* books written by nine different authors and covers a time period of less than one hundred years. The total number of books in the entire Bible is *sixty-six*.

SELF-TEST

How many? _____ books in the Old Testament
 _____ books in the New Testament
 _____ books in the whole Bible

OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

Genesis	2 Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
1 Samuel	Song of Solomon	Habakkuk
2 Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
1 Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
2 Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
1 Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

Matthew	Ephesians	Hebrews
Mark	Philippians	James
Luke	Colossians	1 Peter
John	1 Thessalonians	2 Peter
Acts	2 Thessalonians	1 John
Romans	1 Timothy	2 John
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	3 John
2 Corinthians	Titus	Jude
Galatians	Philemon	Revelation

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Here is the key to understanding the Old Testament. Of the thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, *there are three different kinds of books*: Historical Books, Poetical Books, and Prophetical Books.

What kind of information would you expect to find in the Historical Books?*history!*
 What kind of information would you expect to find in the Poetical Books?.....*poetry!*
 What kind of information would you expect to find in the Prophetical Books?*prophecy!*

If you know what kind of book you are reading, then you will know what kind of information to expect, and you can easily follow the logical flow of the Old Testament!

In the Old Testament:

- . . . the first seventeen books are historical,
- . . . the next five books are poetical, and
- . . . the next seventeen books are prophetic!

THE THREE KINDS OF BOOKS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

<i>Historical</i>	<i>Poetical</i>	<i>Prophetical</i>
Genesis	Job	Isaiah
Exodus	Psalms	Jeremiah
Leviticus	Proverbs	Lamentations
Numbers	Ecclesiastes	Ezekiel
Deuteronomy	Song of Solomon	Daniel
Joshua		Hosea
Judges		Joel
Ruth		Amos
1 Samuel		Obadiah
2 Samuel		Jonah
1 Kings		Micah
2 Kings		Nahum
1 Chronicles		Habakkuk
2 Chronicles		Zephaniah
Ezra		Haggai
Nehemiah		Zechariah
Esther		Malachi

If you want to read the story of the Hebrew nation in the Old Testament, you must read the first seventeen books. These books compose a historical time line for the nation of Israel.

If you want to read the poetry of Israel, you must read the next five books of the Old Testament.

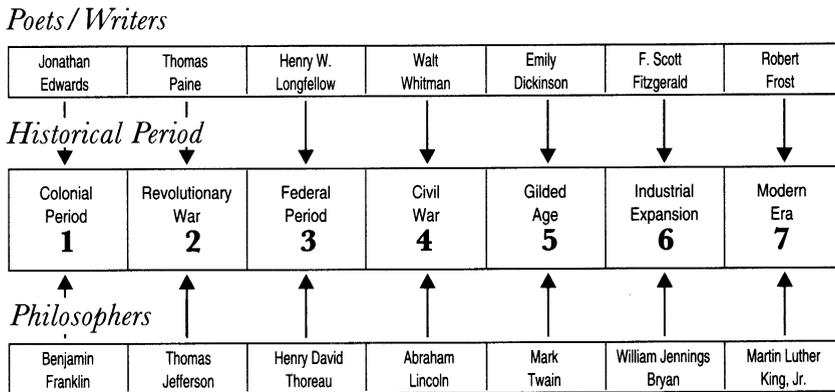
If you want to read about the prophecy of Israel, you must read the final seventeen books.

This is somewhat oversimplified, because there is some poetry in the Historical Books, and some history in the Prophetic Books, etc. The point is, however, that each of the books fits into a primary

As you can see, Job was written during the time period of the Book of Genesis, and Psalms during the time of 2 Samuel, while Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon were written during the time of 1 Kings, and so on.

To use an analogy, we constructed a similar chart for U.S. history. Imagine that you read an American history book for the main story line. The history book would give you the major periods in U.S. history. Some of these periods might be associated with a major poet or writer and a major philosopher. The poets would correspond to the poets of Israel, and the philosophers would correspond to the biblical prophets.

TIME LINE OF U.S. HISTORY



THE NEW TESTAMENT

Of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, *there are also three different kinds of books*: Historical Books, Pauline Epistles, and General Epistles. The Historical Books are the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. The Epistles were letters written to various individuals and church congregations. The Pauline Epistles were letters written by the apostle Paul. The General Epistles were letters written to individuals and congregations by a number of different people, hence the rather generic name General Epistles. The primary content in all the Epistles is instruction on Christian doctrine and lifestyle.

What kind of information would you expect to find in the Historical Books?*history!*
 What kind of information would you expect to find in the Pauline Books?*instruction!*
 What kind of information would you expect to find in the General Epistles?*instruction!*

In the New Testament:

. . . the first five books are Historical Books,

. . . the next thirteen books are Pauline Epistles, and

. . . the next nine books are General Epistles!

THE THREE KINDS OF BOOKS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

<i>Historical</i>	<i>Pauline</i>	<i>General</i>
Matthew	<u>TO CHURCHES:</u>	Hebrews
Mark	Romans	James
Luke	1 Corinthians	1 Peter
John	2 Corinthians	2 Peter
Acts	Galatians	1 John
	Ephesians	2 John
	Philippians	3 John
	Colossians	Jude
	1 Thessalonians	Revelation
	2 Thessalonians	
	<u>TO INDIVIDUALS:</u>	
	1 Timothy	
	2 Timothy	
	Titus	
	Philemon	

If you want to read the story of Jesus and the Church He established, you must read the first five books of the New Testament. These five books form the historical framework for understanding the entire New Testament!

If you want to read the apostle Paul’s instruction to churches and individuals, you must read the next thirteen books.

If you want to read the instruction to churches and individuals by men like the apostles Peter and John, you must read the final nine books of the New Testament.

REFERENCES

To find something in the Bible, you use a standard reference system. This consists of the name of the book of the Bible, the chapter number followed by a colon, and the verse number (each chapter is divided into numbered verses). For example:

Genesis 1:1 = Genesis 1: 1
 (book) (chapter) (verse)

When you see a reference such as Joshua 1:21, you will either have to memorize the books of the Bible to know where Joshua is, or you can look it up in the table of contents. It is well worth the time to memorize the books, and it is easiest to memorize them according to their categories.

For example, you now know that there are three types of books in both the Old Testament (Historical, Poetical, and Prophetical) and the New Testament (Historical, Pauline Epistles, and General Epistles), and how many books are in each section. Memorize the first seventeen Historical Books. Then, when you have these memorized, learn the five Poetical Books, and so on. This system is much easier than attempting to memorize an unbroken list of sixty-six books.

There is no substitute for reading the whole book for yourself, of course, but it is possible to offer a quick overview. To read "The Story of the Bible," turn to the Appendix.

SUMMARY

1. There are 39 books in the Old Testament.
There are 27 books in the New Testament.
There are 66 books in the whole Bible.
2. The Old Testament is the story of God and the Hebrew people, their poets, and prophets.

There are 3 kinds of books in the Old Testament:

- 17 Historical Books,
- 5 Poetical Books, and
- 17 Prophetical Books.

3. The New Testament is the story of Jesus of Nazareth, the Church He founded, and its growth under the leadership of His apostles after His death.

There are 3 kinds of books in the New Testament:

- 5 Historical Books,
- 13 Pauline Epistles, and
- 9 General Epistles.

SELF-TEST

The Bible:

How many?

- _____ books in the Old Testament
- _____ books in the New Testament
- _____ books in the whole Bible

The Old Testament:

The Old Testament is the story of G_____ and the H_____ people, their poets, and prophets.

There are 3 kinds of books in the Old Testament:

- H _____ Books,
- P _____ Books, and
- P _____ Books.

There are _____ Historical Books.

There are _____ Poetical Books.

There are _____ Prophetical Books.

The New Testament:

The New Testament is the story of J_____, the C_____ He founded, and its growth under the leadership of His a_____s after His death.

There are 3 kinds of books in the New Testament:

H _____ Books,
P _____ Epistles, and
P _____ Epistles.

There are _____ Historical Books.

There are _____ Pauline Epistles.

There are _____ General Epistles.

Congratulations! You are off to a fine start. As we move from the general to the specific, you can build your knowledge of the Bible like rows of brick on a house. In twenty-nine more days, your house will be finished.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT



THE SIZE OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM IS BEYOND COMPREHENSION. To get some perspective, imagine you are in the middle of the Bonneville Salt Flats with nothing but tabletop flat ground around you for miles and miles. There you put down a beachball two feet in diameter, which you use to represent the sun. To get a feel for the immensity of the solar system, walk about a city block and put down a mustard seed for the first planet, Mercury. Go another block and for Venus put down an ordinary BB. Mark off yet another block and put down a green pea to represent Earth. A final block from there, put down a mustard seed to represent Mars. Then sprinkle some grass seed around for an asteroid belt.

We have now walked about four blocks, and we have a beachball (sun), mustard seed (Mercury), BB (Venus), pea (Earth), mustard seed (Mars), and grass seed (asteroid belt). Now things begin to stretch out.

Continue for another quarter of a mile. Place an orange on the ground for Jupiter. Walk another third of a mile and put down a golf ball for Saturn.

Now lace up your tennis shoes and check their tread. Then step off another mile and, for Uranus, drop a marble. Go another mile and place a cherry there for Neptune. Finally, walk for another two miles and put down another marble for Pluto.

At last, go up in an airplane and look down. On a smooth surface almost ten miles in diameter we have a beach ball, a mustard seed, a BB, a pea, another mustard seed, some grass seed, an orange, a golf ball, a marble, a cherry, and another marble.

To understand our replica of the solar system even better, use another beachball to represent Alpha Centauri, the next-nearest star to

our sun. You would have to go another 6,720 miles and put it down in Japan!

Understanding the size and location of things and the relationships and distances between them gives us perspective. Just as this example gives us perspective about the solar system, a knowledge of geography can give perspective about the events of the Bible. It is helpful to know the names, locations, and relative positions of important places. Otherwise, we skim over information without comprehension or visualization, and this makes the Bible less interesting and less easily understood.

The one who is ignorant of geography cannot know history. The Bible is largely history. So to begin our mastery of the history of the Bible, we must start with the geography of the Bible.

BODIES OF WATER

The primary anchor points for mastering the geography of the Bible are the bodies of water. *(As you read each description, go to the Work Map and insert the name of the body of water beside the matching number.)*

1. The Mediterranean Sea

The land of the Old Testament lies east of this beautiful blue body of water.

2. The Sea of Galilee

To call this body a sea seems to be an overstatement. It is a fresh-water lake that is seven miles wide and fourteen miles long. It lies about thirty-six miles inland from the Mediterranean.

3. The Jordan River

Flowing south out of the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River travels for sixty-five miles, as the crow flies, to empty into the Dead Sea. Many are surprised at how much history has revolved around such a small river.

4. The Dead Sea

Shaped like a giant hot dog with a bite out of the lower third, the Dead Sea lies at the "bottom of the world." It is the lowest point on land, almost three thousand feet below sea level at its

lowest point, so that water flows into it, but no water flows out of it. As a result, the water has a very high concentration of mineral deposits and does not support normal plant or animal life. Hence the name Dead Sea.

5. Nile River

Perhaps the most famous river in the world, the Nile flows through the heart of Egypt, spreads out like so many fingers, and empties into the waiting arms of the Mediterranean.

6. Tigris and (7.) Euphrates Rivers

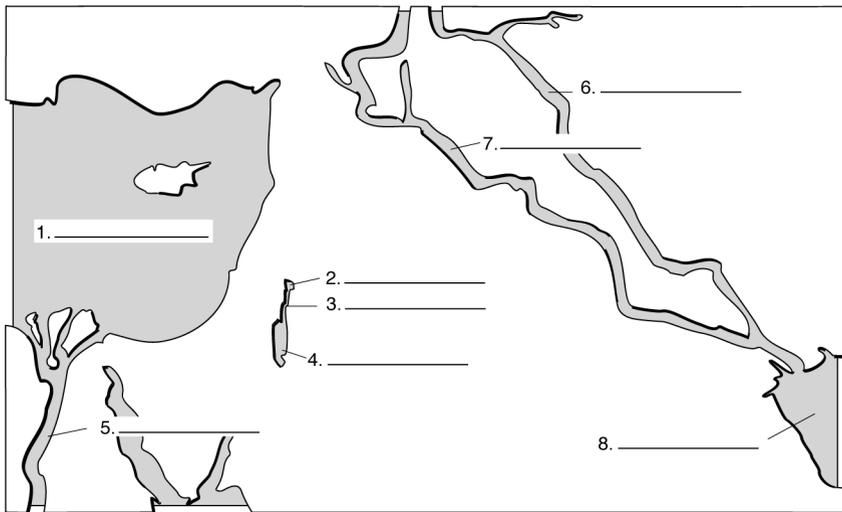
These twin rivers flow for almost a thousand miles each before they join and flow into the Persian Gulf.

8. Persian Gulf

These last three bodies of water, the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Persian Gulf, form the easternmost boundary for the lands of the Old Testament. The Tigris and Euphrates flow through present-day Iraq, while the Persian Gulf separates Iran from Saudi Arabia.

WORK MAP

Bodies of Water of the Old Testament



LOCATIONS

With the geographical framework offered by the bodies of water, we can establish the locations that are relevant to the Old Testament. (As you read the description of each location, insert its name beside the appropriate letter on the Location Work Map that follows.)

A. The Garden of Eden

The exact location of the Garden of Eden, where everything began, is impossible to pinpoint. However, it was near the convergence of four rivers, two of which were the Tigris and Euphrates.

B. Canaan/Israel/Palestine

This smallish piece of real estate, which lies between the Mediterranean coast and the Sea of Galilee-Jordan River-Dead Sea, changes names throughout the Old Testament. In Genesis it is called *Canaan*. After the Hebrew people establish themselves in the land in the Book of Joshua, it becomes known as *Israel*. Thirteen hundred years later, at the beginning of the New Testament, it is called *Palestine*.

C. Jerusalem

Located just off the northwestern shoulder of the Dead Sea, this city, nestled in the central mountains of Israel, is so central to the story of the Old Testament that it must be singled out and identified. It is the capital of the nation of Israel.

D. Egypt

The *grande dame* of ancient civilization, Egypt plays a central role in the history of the Old Testament.

E. Assyria

Located at the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates, this great world power is notable in the Old Testament for conquering the Northern Kingdom of Israel and dispersing her people to the four winds.

F. Babylonia

Another gigantic historical world power, this fabulous, albeit short-lived, nation conquered Assyria. It also conquered the Southern Kingdom of Judah 136 years after Assyria conquered the

Northern Kingdom of Israel. It is found in Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates. (Mesopotamia means “in the middle of” [meso]—“rivers” [potamus].)

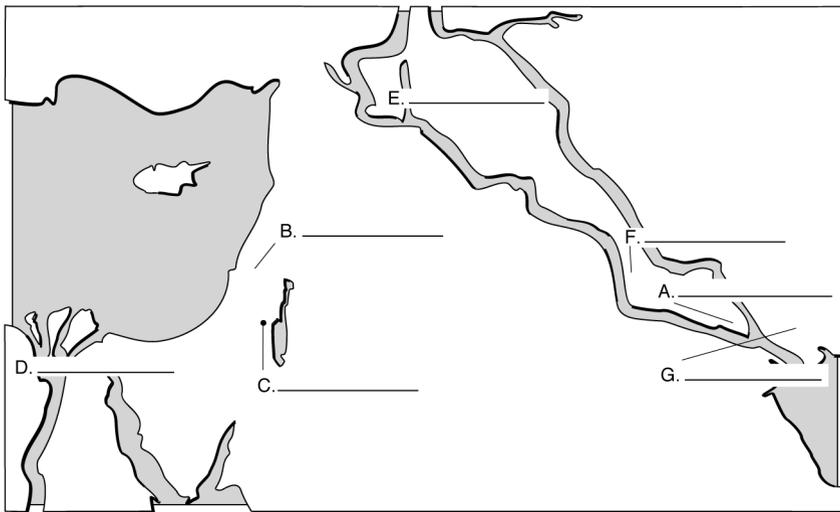
G. Persia

The final historical superpower of the Old Testament is located at the north bank of the Persian Gulf. Persia comes into play by conquering Babylonia and by allowing the Hebrews to return from captivity in Babylonia to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and reinstate temple worship.

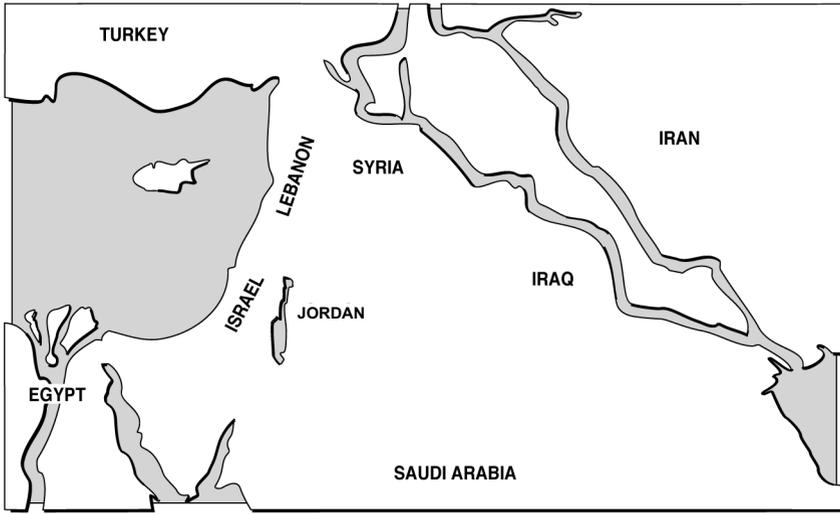
If these historical notes are foreign to you, don’t worry about it now. Instead, content yourself with learning these locations so that, as the story unfolds, the names of these locations will mean something to you.

LOCATION WORK MAP

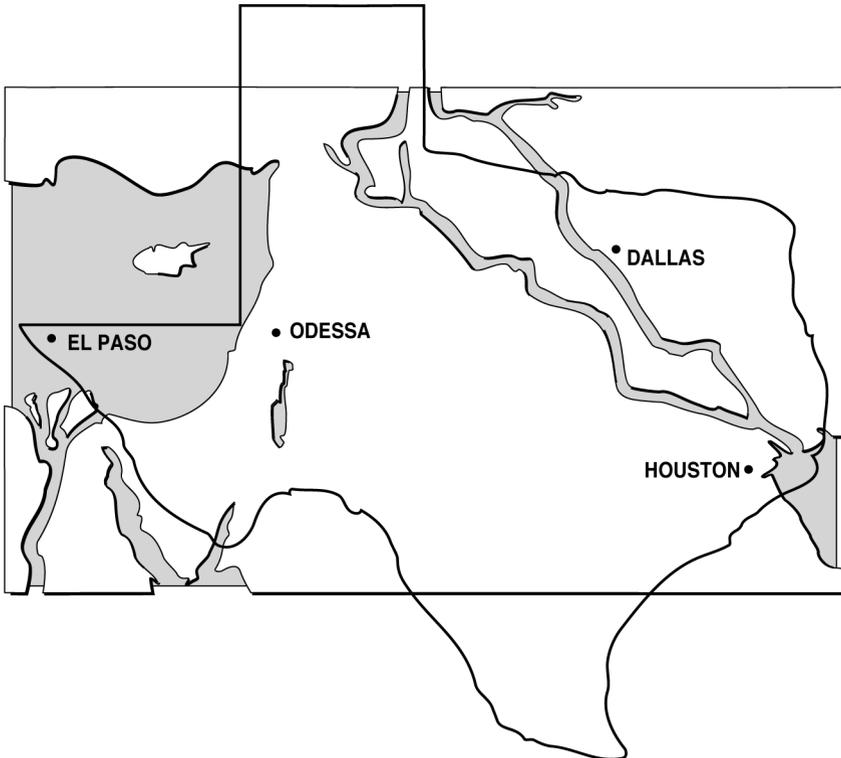
Locations of the Old Testament



Now compare the ancient map you have just filled in with the following contemporary map of the same region.



It might also help to get this Old Testament information into perspective by seeing how the map of the Old Testament compares with an overlay of a map of the state of Texas.

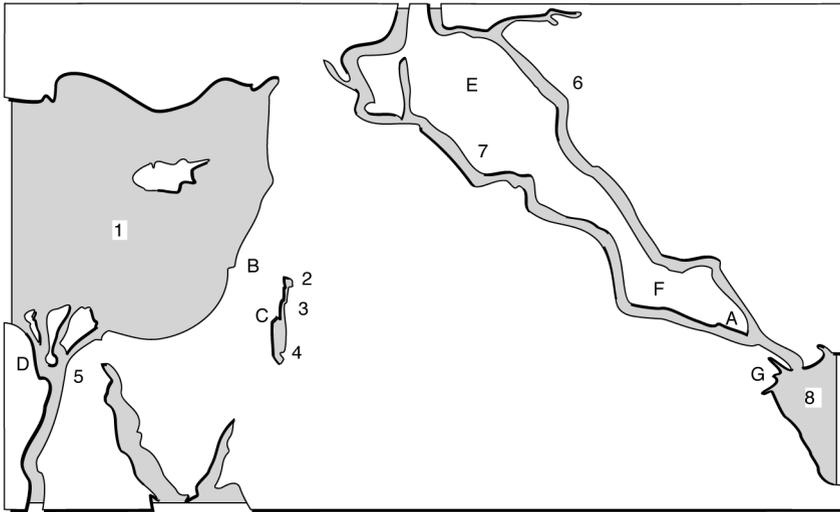


THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The entire land of the Old Testament is approximately the same size as the state of Texas. Traveling from the Persian Gulf to Israel would be like going from Houston to Odessa. Traveling from Israel to Egypt would be like going from Odessa to El Paso. If you keep this in mind as the story of the Bible unfolds, it will help you keep geographical perspective.

REVIEW

The Geography of the Old Testament



Review the eight bodies of water and the seven locations by placing the numbers and letters by the appropriate names below.

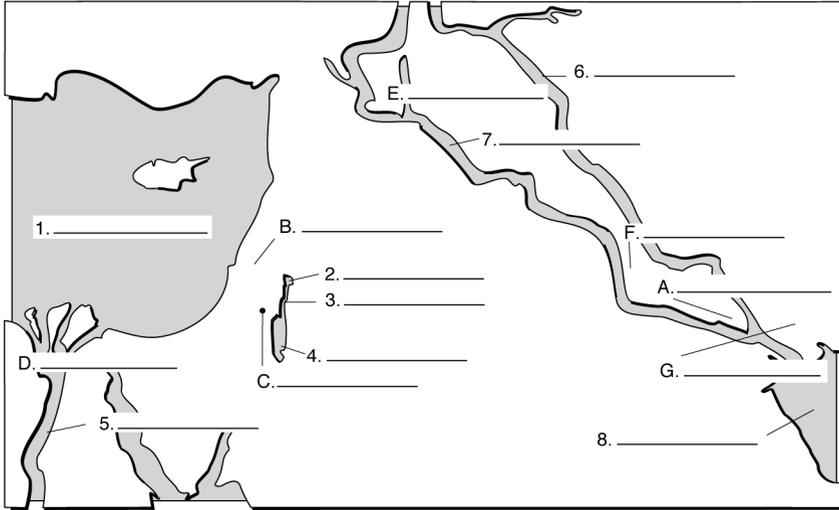
- BODIES OF WATER**
- _____ Mediterranean Sea
 - _____ Sea of Galilee
 - _____ Jordan River
 - _____ Dead Sea
 - _____ Nile River
 - _____ Tigris River
 - _____ Euphrates River
 - _____ Persian Gulf

- LOCATIONS**
- _____ Eden
 - _____ Israel
 - _____ Jerusalem
 - _____ Egypt
 - _____ Assyria
 - _____ Babylonia
 - _____ Persia

SELF-TEST

The Geography of the Old Testament

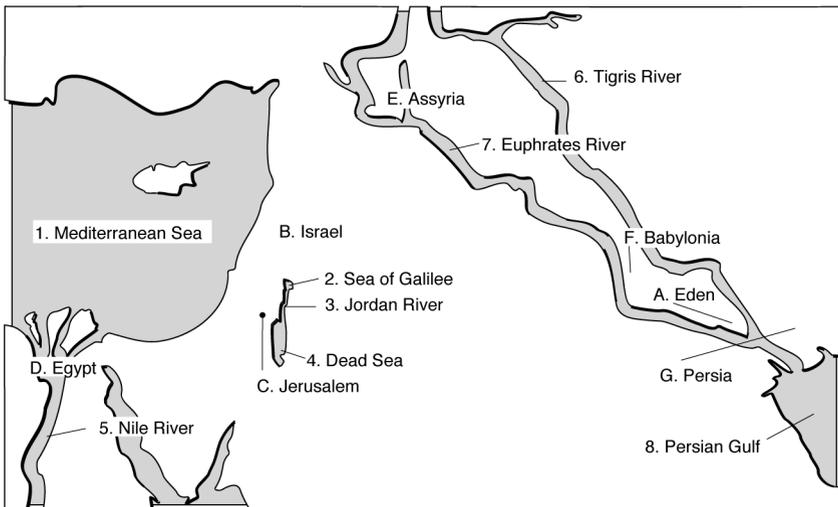
As the final exercise, fill in the blanks from memory. (Remember, the blanks with numbers are bodies of water, and the blanks with letters are locations.)



Excellent! Your knowledge of the geography of the Old Testament will enable you to understand and envision the history that unfolds from it. You have just mastered an important section.

ANSWERS

The Geography of the Old Testament



THE HISTORICAL BOOKS



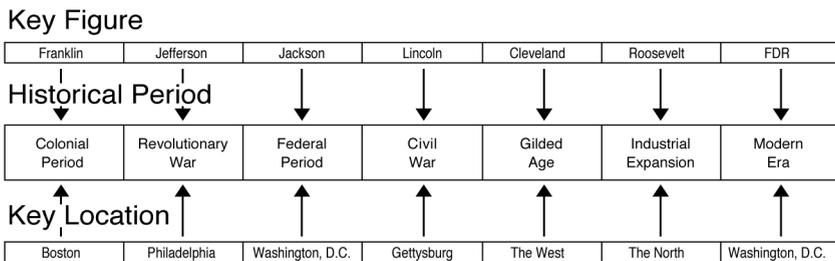
ON THE FLIGHT FROM LOS ANGELES TO PORTLAND, ONE FLIES over the entire length of the Cascade Mountains. From thirty-five thousand feet it is difficult to get the perspective to determine which are the higher mountain peaks.

One day in late October as I was making that flight, the air was crisp and clear after a light snowfall and the puzzle of how to differentiate the higher from the lower peaks was answered. The snow only fell on elevations of about seven thousand feet and higher. As we flew over them, regardless of how close or far away they were, the highest peaks were easy to determine: they were the ones with snow on them.

As we begin to look into the stories of the Old Testament, we will only look at the highest peaks, the ones with snow on them.

To do so, it will be helpful to continue the analogy with the story of the United States. If you were going to condense just the story of the United States, omitting the poets and philosophers, you would take the main periods of history, link them with the central historic figure of the era, and add the primary location. In chart form, it might look like this:

TIME LINE OF U.S. HISTORY



Include a brief story line summary of the era, and the story of the United States could be overviewed in a chart, such as the following:

STORY OF THE UNITED STATES

KEY ERA	KEY FIGURE	LOCATION	STORY LINE
<i>Colonial</i>	<i>Franklin</i>	<i>Boston</i>	As the thirteen colonies long for independence, Franklin leads in the formulation of necessary strategy.
<i>Revolution</i>	<i>Jefferson</i>	<i>Philadelphia</i>	Jefferson writes the Declaration of Independence.
<i>Etc.</i>	<i>Etc.</i>	<i>Etc.</i>	Etc.

This same approach can be used in condensing the story of the Bible, charting the main periods (or eras), the central figures, the main locations, and a summary story line. The story line of the Bible can be divided into twelve main eras, with a central figure and main location for each era. Nine of the eras are found in the Old Testament, and three are found in the New Testament.

In this chapter, we will deal with only the Old Testament and will complete only the first three aspects of the chart: the main eras, the central figures, and the main locations. The summary story line and the New Testament events will be added in the following chapters.

THE NINE MAIN ERAS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. Creation

The *creation* of the world and man, and early events.

2. Patriarch

The birth of the Hebrew people through a family of *patriarchs*, covering a period of two hundred years.

3. Exodus

The *exodus* of the Hebrew people as they are delivered out of four hundred years of slavery in Egypt.

4. Conquest

The *conquest* of the Promised Land by the Hebrew people upon their return from Egypt.

5. Judges

A four-hundred-year period during which Israel is governed by rulers called *judges*.

6. Kingdom

An additional four-hundred-year period during which Israel becomes a full-fledged nation ruled by a *monarchy*.

7. Exile

A seventy-year period during which Israel's leaders live in *exile*, having been conquered by foreign countries.

8. Return

The *return* of exiled Jews to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple.

9. Silence

A final four-hundred-year period between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament.

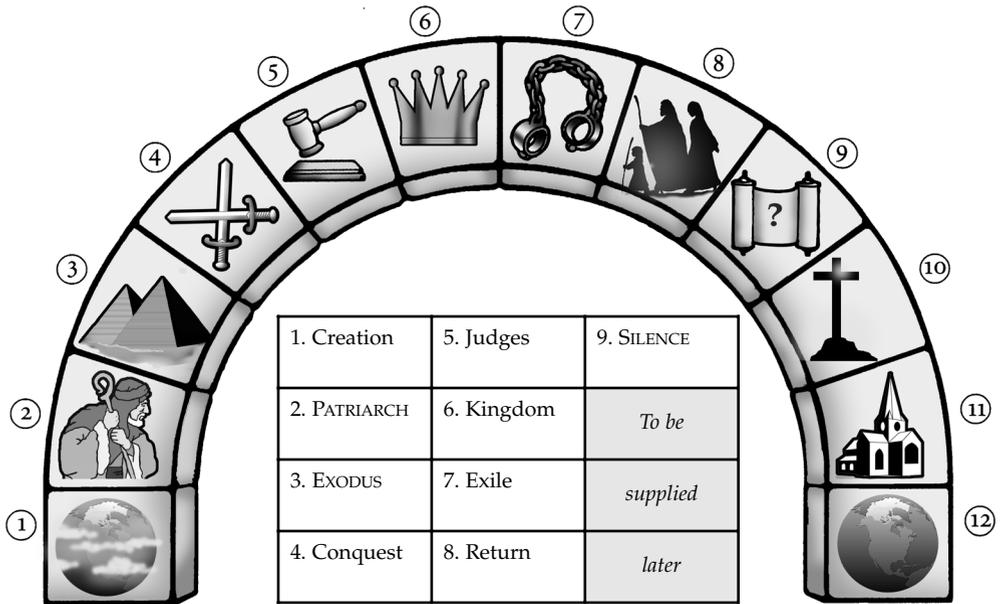
Following the pattern of the chart for the Story of the United States, let's begin to chart the Story of the Old Testament.

STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORY LINE
<i>Creation</i> <i>Patriarch</i> <i>Exodus</i> <i>Conquest</i> <i>Judges</i> <i>Kingdom</i> <i>Exile</i> <i>Return</i> <i>Silence</i>	<p>To be supplied later</p>	<p>To be supplied later</p>	<p>To be supplied later</p>

Another way to help us remember the historical story line of the Bible is to visualize the main eras with symbols, such as in the Arc of Bible History.

ARC OF BIBLE HISTORY



REVIEW

Write in the correct era on the line matching the description.

OPTIONS:	ERA:	DESCRIPTION:
Exile	_____	The <i>creation</i> of the world and man, and early events
Judges	_____	
Creation	_____	The birth of the Hebrew people through a family of <i>patriarchs</i> , covering a period of two hundred years
Kingdom	_____	
Patriarch	_____	
Conquest	_____	
Return	_____	The <i>exodus</i> of the Hebrew people as they are delivered out of four hundred years of slavery in Egypt
Silence	_____	
Exodus	_____	

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

OPTIONS:	ERA:	DESCRIPTION:
	_____	The <i>conquest</i> of the Promised Land by the Hebrew people upon their return from Egypt
	_____	A four-hundred-year period during which Israel is governed by rulers called <i>judges</i>
	_____	An additional four-hundred-year period during which Israel becomes a full-fledged nation ruled by a <i>monarchy</i>
	_____	A seventy-year period during which Israel's leaders live in <i>exile</i> , having been conquered by foreign countries
	_____	The <i>return</i> of the exiled Jews to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple
	_____	A final four-hundred-year period between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament

THE NINE CENTRAL FIGURES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA:	FIGURE:	DESCRIPTION:
Creation	Adam	The first <i>man</i>
Patriarch	Abraham	The first <i>patriarch</i>
Exodus	Moses	The leader of the <i>exodus</i>
Conquest	Joshua	The leader of Israel's <i>army</i>
Judges	Samson	The most famous <i>judge</i>
Kingdom	David	The most well-known Israelite <i>king</i>
Exile	Daniel	The major exilic <i>prophet</i>
Return	Ezra	The central <i>return</i> leader
Silence	Pharisees	The <i>religious</i> leaders

REVIEW

(Fill in the blank.)

ERA:	FIGURE:	DESCRIPTION:
Creation	Adam	The first _____
Patriarch	Abraham	The first _____
Exodus	Moses	The leader of the _____
Conquest	Joshua	The leader of Israel's _____
Judges	Samson	The most famous _____
Kingdom	David	The most well-known Israelite _____
Exile	Daniel	The major exilic _____
Return	Ezra	The central _____ leader
Silence	Pharisees	The _____ leaders

(Match the era with the key figure.)

ERA:	FIGURE:	OPTIONS:
Creation	_____	<i>Moses</i>
Patriarch	_____	<i>Daniel</i>
Exodus	_____	<i>Abraham</i>
Conquest	_____	<i>Joshua</i>
Judges	_____	<i>Pharisees</i>
Kingdom	_____	<i>Ezra</i>
Exile	_____	<i>David</i>
Return	_____	<i>Samson</i>
Silence	_____	<i>Adam</i>

Now we will add the central figure to our story line chart.

STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORY LINE
<i>Creation</i>	Adam		
<i>Patriarch</i>	Abraham		
<i>Exodus</i>	Moses		
<i>Conquest</i>	Joshua	To be	To be
<i>Judges</i>	Samson	supplied	supplied
<i>Kingdom</i>	David	later	later
<i>Exile</i>	Daniel		
<i>Return</i>	Ezra		
<i>Silence</i>	Pharisees		

Our final task is to identify the general or primary geographic location of the events of the main eras of the Old Testament. Beginning with Creation and Adam, as an exercise in memory, write in the name of each main era and its central historical figure as you read the description of the location of each of the eras.

THE NINE MAIN LOCATIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA:	FIGURE:	LOCATION:	DESCRIPTION:
1. _____	_____	Eden	The garden of Eden, where Adam is created. Near the convergence of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.
2. _____	_____	Canaan	Abraham migrates from Ur, near Eden, to Canaan, where he and the other patriarchs live until the time of slavery in Egypt.
3. _____	_____	Egypt	During a severe famine, the Israelites migrate to Egypt and are enslaved four hundred years before their exodus to freedom.
4. _____	_____	Canaan	Joshua leads the conquest of the Promised Land in Canaan.
5. _____	_____	Canaan	The Israelites live in Canaan under a loose tribal system ruled by judges for the next four hundred years.
6. _____	_____	Israel	With the formation of a formal monarchy, the land is now referred to by the national name of <i>Israel</i> .

7. _____ _____ Babylonia Because of judgment for national moral corruption, Israel is conquered by foreign nations, finally forcing her leaders into seventy years of exile in Babylonia.

8. _____ _____ Jerusalem The exiled Israelites are allowed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and temple, though they remain under the dominion of Persia.

9. _____ _____ Jerusalem Though dominion of the land changes from Persia to Greece to Rome, Israel is allowed to worship in Jerusalem without disruption for the next four hundred years of "silence."

Along with the main era and the central figure, we are now able to add the main location to our chart.

STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORY LINE
<i>Creation</i>	Adam	Eden	To be supplied later
<i>Patriarch</i>	Abraham	Canaan	
<i>Exodus</i>	Moses	Egypt	
<i>Conquest</i>	Joshua	Canaan	
<i>Judges</i>	Samson	Canaan	
<i>Kingdom</i>	David	Israel	
<i>Exile</i>	Daniel	Babylonia	
<i>Return</i>	Ezra	Jerusalem	
<i>Silence</i>	Pharisees	Jerusalem	

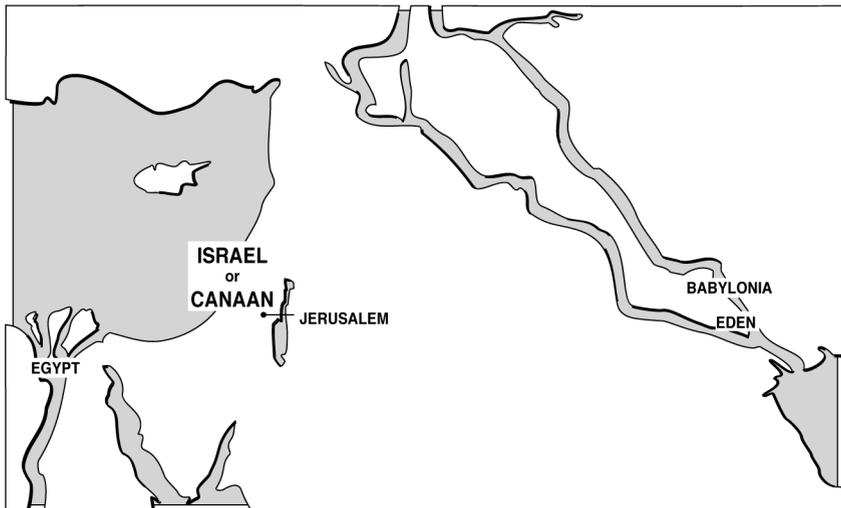
ARC OF BIBLE HISTORY

(Fill in the names of the eras. To check your answers, see the Appendix.)

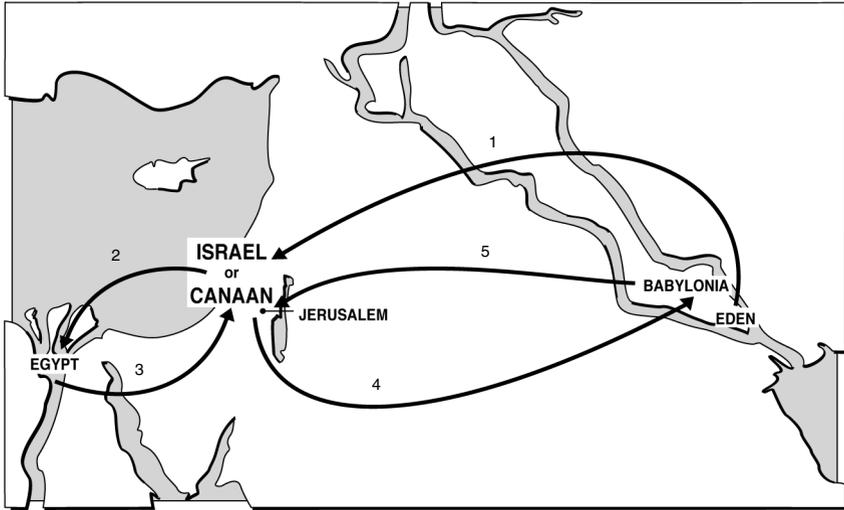
1. C _____	5. J _____	9. S _____
2. P _____	6. K _____	10.
3. E _____	7. E _____	11.
4. C _____	8. R _____	12.

REVIEW

On the following map draw arrows to show the movement during the major Eras of the Old Testament that we have just learned. Begin at Eden and draw an arrow to the next location as it changes: Eden to Canaan, to Egypt, to Canaan, to Babylonia, to Jerusalem.



In its most basic form, your map should look something like this:



From the options given, fill in the blanks in the following chart, matching the location to the era and central figure. (A location may be used more than once.)

- Babylonia
- Canaan
- Eden
- Egypt
- Israel
- Jerusalem

STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORY LINE
<i>Creation</i>	Adam	_____	To be supplied later
<i>Patriarch</i>	Abraham	_____	
<i>Exodus</i>	Moses	_____	
<i>Conquest</i>	Joshua	_____	
<i>Judges</i>	Samson	_____	
<i>Kingdom</i>	David	_____	
<i>Exile</i>	Daniel	_____	
<i>Return</i>	Ezra	_____	
<i>Silence</i>	Pharisees	_____	

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

You are now ready to begin final mastery of a very critical chart. Once you master this chart, you have come a long way in understanding the overview of the Old Testament. Fill in the blanks.

STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORY LINE
<i>Creation</i>	Adam	_____	To be supplied later
<i>Patriarch</i>	_____	Canaan	
_____	Moses	Egypt	
<i>Conquest</i>	Joshua	_____	
<i>Judges</i>	_____	Canaan	
_____	David	Israel	
<i>Exile</i>	Daniel	_____	
<i>Return</i>	_____	Jerusalem	
_____	Pharisees	Jerusalem	

SELF-TEST

Finally, fill in the following chart from memory. It might be easiest to fill in the eras, then go back and fill in the central figures and main locations. (*To check your answers see the Appendix for a completed Story of the Bible chart.*)

STORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

ERA	FIGURE	LOCATION	STORY LINE
_____	_____	_____	To be supplied later
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	

Congratulations! You have just taken a major step toward mastering an overview of the Old Testament. From now on, we will become more and more specific, but you have laid a good foundation that can be built upon in successive chapters.

A P P E N D I X

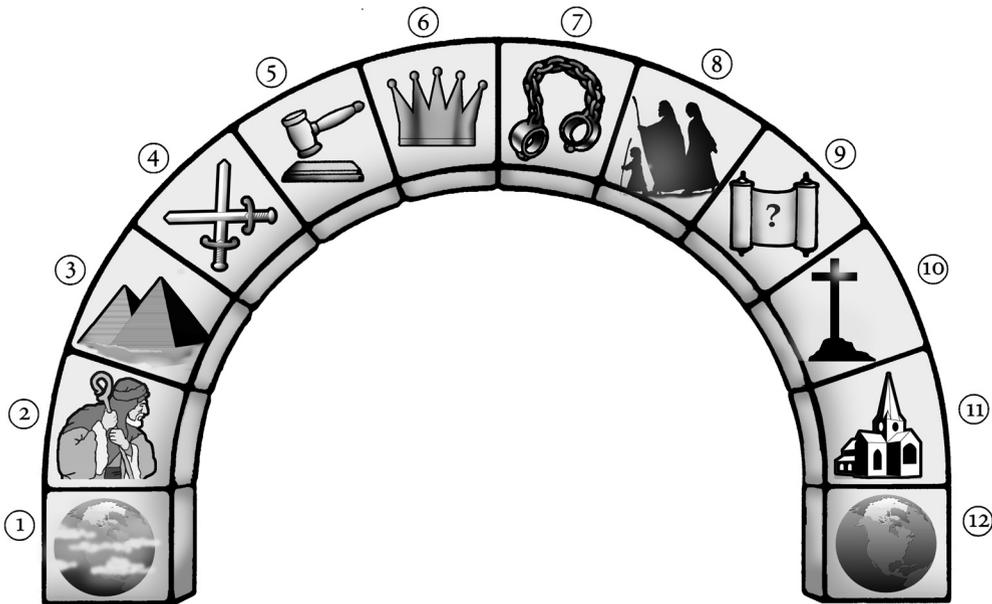
STORY OF THE BIBLE

ERA	FIGURE		STORY LINE SUMMARY
<i>Creation</i>	<i>Adam</i>	<i>Eden</i>	Adam is created by God, but he <i>sins</i> and <i>destroys</i> God's original <i>plan</i> for man.
<i>Patriarch</i>	<i>Abraham</i>	<i>Canaan</i>	Abraham is <i>chosen</i> by God to "father" a <i>people</i> to represent God to the world.
<i>Exodus</i>	<i>Moses</i>	<i>Egypt</i>	Through Moses God <i>delivers</i> the Hebrew people from <i>slavery</i> in Egypt and then gives them the <i>Law</i> .
<i>Conquest</i>	<i>Joshua</i>	<i>Canaan</i>	Joshua leads the <i>conquest</i> of the <i>Promised Land</i> .
<i>Judges</i>	<i>Samson</i>	<i>Canaan</i>	Samson and others were chosen as <i>judges</i> to <i>govern</i> the people for <i>four hundred</i> rebellious years.
<i>Kingdom</i>	<i>David</i>	<i>Israel</i>	David, the greatest king in the new <i>monarchy</i> , is followed by a succession of mostly <i>unrighteous</i> kings, and God eventually <i>judges</i> Israel for her sin, sending her into exile.
<i>Exile</i>	<i>Daniel</i>	<i>Babylonia</i>	Daniel gives <i>leadership</i> and encourages <i>faithfulness</i> among the <i>exiles</i> for the next seventy years.
<i>Return</i>	<i>Ezra</i>	<i>Jerusalem</i>	Ezra <i>leads</i> the people back from <i>exile</i> to rebuild <i>Jerusalem</i> .
<i>Silence</i>	<i>Pharisees</i>	<i>Jerusalem</i>	Pharisees and others <i>entomb</i> the <i>Israelites</i> in <i>legalism</i> for the next <i>four hundred</i> years.

30 DAYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

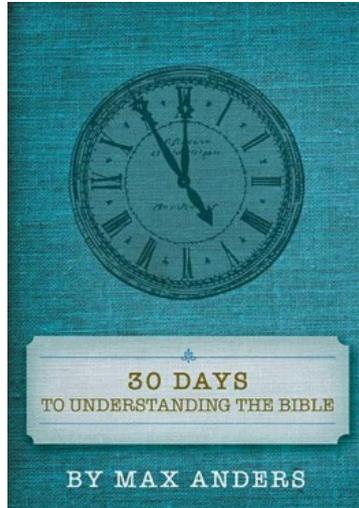
ERA	FIGURE		STORY LINE SUMMARY
<i>Gospels</i>	<i>Jesus</i>	<i>Palestine</i>	Jesus comes in fulfillment of the Old Testament <i>prophecies</i> of a savior and offers <i>salvation</i> and the true kingdom of God. While some accept Him, most <i>reject</i> Him, and He is crucified, buried, and resurrected.
<i>Church</i>	<i>Peter</i>	<i>Jerusalem</i>	Peter, shortly after the <i>Ascension</i> of Jesus, is used by God to <i>establish</i> the <i>church</i> , God's next major plan for man.
<i>Missions</i>	<i>Paul</i>	<i>Roman Empire</i>	Paul <i>expands</i> the church into the <i>Roman Empire</i> during the next two <i>decades</i> .

ARC OF BIBLE HISTORY



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