

# International Conversation Cafe

Bible Topic: Old and New Testament Introduction

## Old Testament Introduction

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy were written by Moses and are a historical account of beginnings.

Joshua through Second Chronicles tells the story of Israel from when they entered the “promised land” and divided into the northern and southern kingdoms as a result of a civil war. It also includes the conquest of the kingdoms by the Assyrians and Babylonians empires.

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther are the stories of Israel’s return to the “promised land.”

Job is an account of a man who lived before Abraham. It is a classic story about why bad things happen to good people.

Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs are poetical and wisdom books.

Isaiah through Malachi are the prophetic books. They were written to warn Israel about disobeying God and to remind them of God’s love and plan for them. Some of them were written before Israel was taken into captivity (Isaiah, 745-727 B.C.). Some were written while they were in captivity (Daniel, 530 B.C.). And some were written after they returned to their homeland (Malachi, 433 B.C.).

## Approximate Timeline of the Old Testament

1. God creates the heavens, the earth, and every living thing.
2. Adam and Eve disobey God by eating the fruit.
3. Noah obeys God and builds a large boat, which saves him and his family from a worldwide flood.
4. God gives Abraham promises that he would become the father of a great nation.
5. Abraham’s grandson, Jacob, has 12 sons, which become the head of 12 tribes, or family units.
6. The Jews live 400 years in Egypt.
7. Moses leads the nation Israel out of Egypt in 1446 B.C.
8. The nation grows strong in the land (see map below) with kings like David, 1025 B.C. and Solomon.
9. Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, was a greedy king who reigned around 930 B.C. As a result of his pride, ten northern tribes divided from the two southern tribes becoming the northern and southern kingdom. The northern tribes were known as “Israel,” and the southern tribes were known as “Judah.”
10. Both kingdoms eventually stopped obeying God’s laws by worshiping idols and obstructing justice. Prophets were sent to warn of punishment but also to give hope for the future.
11. Israel was invaded by Assyria in 724 B.C. and taken as slaves to Assyria.
12. Judah was invaded by Babylon in 598 B.C. and taken as slaves to Babylon.
13. Some Jews returned to Israel to rebuild the temple around 539 B.C.

## **Major Themes of the Old Testament**

1. God creates man and woman to have a wonderful relationship with him.
2. People sin by disobeying God's laws.
3. God still loves people and wants them to return to him.
4. God has a plan to bring all people to himself.
5. This plan has to do with the promises given to Abraham, Moses, and David of a coming King.

## **Major Themes of the New Testament**

1. God sends Jesus in fulfillment of the promises made to the nation of Israel.
2. Jesus was a man but also God, as seen in his ability to do miracles, such as raising people from the dead.
3. Though many follow Jesus, he is rejected by the Jewish leadership and crucified on a cross.
4. Jesus rose from the dead physically, showed himself to hundreds of people, and returned to heaven.
5. The church announced forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus' death and resurrection on the behalf of the every person.
6. The church spread its message around the world.
7. Jesus has promised to return to earth as the king of all.

## **New Testament Introduction**

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John are books about the life of Jesus. Sometimes they tell the same stories with different sets of details. Sometimes they tell stories that the others do not. They each end with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. These books were written between late 50-70 A.D.

Acts is the history of the early church. Acts was written around 63 A.D.

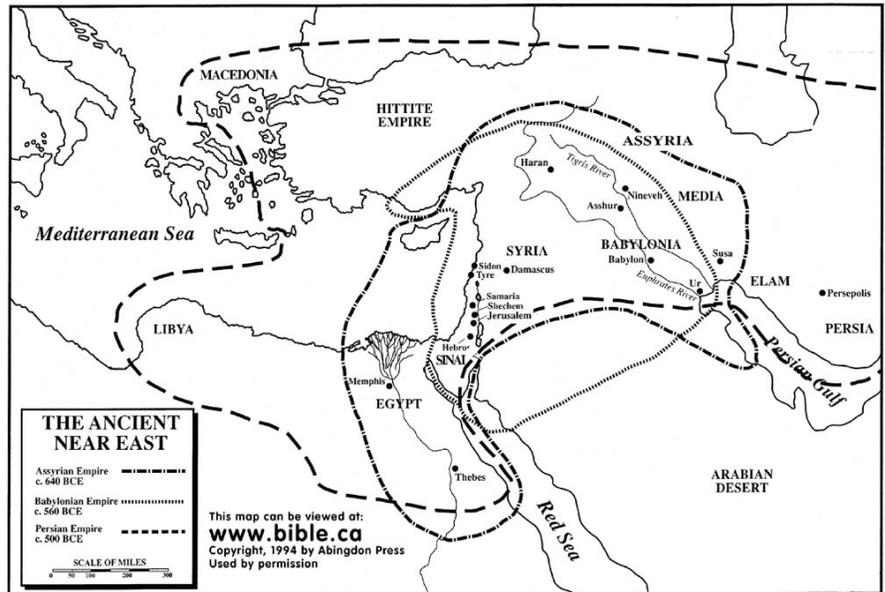
Romans through Jude are letters written to individuals and churches. Paul is the main author. The names of the books are the names of the cities where churches were, like Rome, Philippi, and Ephesus. Books like Peter, Jude, and Timothy are either the names of the writer or the person it is written to. They usually are words of encouragement and warning. Paul's letters and Hebrews were written between 50- 68 A.D. John's letters were written between 85-95 A.D.

Revelation is written to tell about future events and was written by the apostle John around 95 A.D.

The early church collected the writings of the Old and New Testament. These were in circulation by the end of the first century. In 397 A.D., the books of the New Testament were officially recognized as inspired by God by the church at the Council of Carthage.

The suggested dates were taken from the NIV Study Bible. The information about the New Testament canon was from Wikipedia,  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Development\\_of\\_the\\_New\\_Testament\\_canon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Development_of_the_New_Testament_canon)

Map of Israel in times of exile.



Map of Israel in Jesus' time.

