

## Summary of the 66 books of the Bible: adapted from the Condensed Outline of the Bible

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### THE OLD TESTAMENT

#### A. THE PENTATEUCH or TORA (5 books).

(1) **Genesis.** The book of Origins. The origin of the universe, human race, etc. God begins with Adam, then again with Noah, then again with Abraham. Largely a record of the early history of the chosen people of Israel.

(2) **Exodus.** The slavery, deliverance and beginnings of the history of Israel in their journey to Canaan, under the leadership of Moses.

(3) **Leviticus.** The book of laws concerning morals, cleanliness, food etc. It teaches access to God through obedience and sacrifices.

(4) **Numbers.** The book of the pilgrimages of Israel, the forty years' wandering in the wilderness.

(5) **Deuteronomy.** A repetition of God's laws given shortly before Israel entered the Promised Land of Canaan.

#### B. HISTORICAL BOOKS (13 books).

(1) **Joshua.** A record of the conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua and of the division of the Promised Land among the twelve tribes of Israel.

(2) **Judges.** The history of the six defeats of Israel and of the various deliverances of the land through the fifteen judges.

(3) **Ruth.** A story of Ruth, an ancestress of David and of Joseph, who married Mary the mother of Jesus Christ.

(4,5) **1,2 Samuel.** The history of the prophet Samuel, with the beginning and early years of the monarchy in Israel under the reigns of Saul and David.

(6,7) **1,2 Kings.** The early history of the kingdom of Israel and later of the divided kingdom, north and south. Includes the heroic characters of Elijah and Elisha appear.

(8,9) **1,2 Chronicles.** Largely a record of the reigns of David, Solomon and the southern kings of Judah up to the time of the Captivity in Babylon.

(10) **Ezra.** A record of the return of the Jews from captivity and of the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem.

(11) **Nehemiah.** An account of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the re-establishing of the sacred laws and ceremonies.

(12) **Esther.** The story of Queen Esther's deliverance of the Jews from the plot of Haman, and the establishment of the Feast of Purim.

**(13) Job.** The problem of affliction, showing the malice of Satan, the patience of Job, the vanity of human philosophy, the need for divine wisdom, and the final deliverance of the sufferer.

### **C. POETIC BOOKS** (4 books).

**(1) Psalms.** A collection of one hundred and fifty spiritual songs, poems, and prayers used through the centuries by Jews and by the Church for worship and devotions.

**(2) Proverbs.** A collection of moral and religious maxims and discourses on wisdom, temperance, justice etc.

**(3) Ecclesiastes.** Reflections on the futility of life and on our duties and obligations to God.

**(4) Song of Songs.** A religious poem symbolising the mutual love of God in Christ and the Church.

### **D. PROPHETIC BOOKS** (17 books).

#### **Major Prophets** (5 books).

**(1) Isaiah.** The great prophet of redemption. A book rich in messianic prophecies, mingled with woes pronounced on sinful nations.

**(2) Jeremiah.** The weeping prophet. Lived from the time of Josiah to the Captivity in Babylon. Main theme – the backsliding, bondage, and restoration of the Jews.

**(3) Lamentations.** A series of laments and wailings by Jeremiah, bewailing the afflictions of Israel.

**(4) Ezekiel.** A book of striking prophecies portraying the sad condition of God's people and the way to future exaltation and glory.

**(5) Daniel.** A book of personal biography and prophetic visions concerning events in both secular and sacred history including coming events.

#### **Minor Prophets** (12 books).

**(1) Hosea.** A contemporary of Isaiah and Micah. Central thought – the apostasy of Israel, characterised as spiritual adultery. The book is filled with striking metaphors describing the sins of the people.

**(2) Joel.** A prophet of Judah. Leading topic – national repentance and its blessings. "The day of the Lord", a time of divine judgements, may be transformed into a season of blessing.

**(3) Amos.** The herdsman prophet, a courageous reformer, denouncing selfishness and sin. The book contains a series of five visions.

**(4) Obadiah.** Leading topic – the doom of Edom and final deliverance of Israel.

**(5) Jonah.** The story of the "reluctant missionary", who was taught by bitter experience the lesson of obedience and the depth of divine mercy.

**(6) Micah.** A dark picture of the moral condition of Israel and Judah, but foretelling the establishment of a messianic kingdom in which righteousness will prevail.

**(7) Nahum.** Main theme – the destruction of Nineveh. Judah is promised deliverance from Assyria.

**(8) Habakkuk.** Written in the Babylonian exile period. Main theme – the mysteries of providence. How can a just God allow a wicked nation to oppress Israel?

**(9) Zephaniah.** Sombre in tone, filled with threatenings, but ends in a vision of the future glory of Israel.

**(10) Haggai.** A colleague of Zechariah. He warned the people for slackness in building the second temple, but promised a return of God's glory when the building was completed.

**(11) Zechariah.** A contemporary of Haggai, he helped arouse the Jews to rebuild the temple. He had a series of eight visions and saw the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom.

**(12) Malachi.** A graphic picture of the closing period of Old Testament history, showing the need for reforms before the coming of the Messiah.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

### E. BIOGRAPHICAL BOOKS (4 books)

**(1) Matthew.** Author, one of the twelve apostles. Narrative especially adapted to the Jews, showing that Jesus was the kingly Messiah of Jewish prophecy.

**(2) Mark.** Author, John Mark. A brief, picturesque record, emphasising the supernatural power of Christ over nature, disease and demons. All this divine power exercised for the good of man.

**(3) Luke.** Writer, "the beloved physician". The most complete biography of Jesus, it portrays him as the Son of Man, full of compassion for the sinful and the poor.

**(4) John.** Writer, "the beloved disciple". The narrative reveals Jesus as the Son of God and records his deeper teachings. Two words, "faith" and "eternal life" are emphasised throughout the book.

### F. HISTORICAL BOOKS (1 book).

**The Acts of the Apostles.** Writer, Luke. A sequel to the Gospel of Luke. Main theme – the origin and growth of the early church, from the ascension of Christ to the imprisonment of Paul at Rome.

### G. THE PAULINE LETTERS (13 books).

**(1) Romans.** Addressed to Christians at Rome. Chapters 1-11. A masterful exposition of the need for, and the nature of, the plan of salvation. Chapters 12-16. Largely exhortations relating to spiritual, social, and civic duties.

**(2) 1 Corinthians.** Addressed to the Corinthian church. Leading topics – the cleansing of the church from various evils, together with doctrinal instructions.

**(3) 2 Corinthians.** Leading topics – the characteristics of an apostolic ministry and the vindication of Paul's apostleship.

**(4) Galatians.** Addressed to the church in Galatia. Leading topics – a defence of Paul's apostolic authority and of the doctrine of justification by faith with warnings against false teachers and reversion to Judaism.

**(5) Ephesians.** Written to the church at Ephesus. An exposition of the glorious plan of salvation. Special emphasis is laid on the fact that all barriers between Jews and Gentiles are broken down.

**(6) Philippians.** A love letter to the Philippian church. It reveals the apostle's intense devotion to Christ, his joyful experience in prison, and his deep concern that the church should be steadfast in sound doctrine.

**(7) Colossians.** Written to the church at Colosse. Leading topic – the glory of Christ as the Head of the Church, calling for abandonment of all worldly philosophy and sin.

**(8) 1 Thessalonians.** Written to the church at Thessalonica. It is composed of apostolic commendations, reminiscences, counsels, and exhortations. Special emphasis is laid on the comforting hope of the return of Christ in the last days.

**(9) 2 Thessalonians.** A sequel to the first epistle. Written to enlighten the church concerning the doctrine of Christ's second coming and to warn believers about unrest and social disorders.

**(10) 1 Timothy.** Counsel to a young pastor concerning his conduct and ministerial work.

**(11) 2 Timothy.** Paul's last letter, written shortly before his death, giving instructions and counsel to his "true son in the faith".

**(12) Titus.** An apostolic letter giving counsel and encouragement to a trusted friend, who was pastor at a difficult church. Special emphasis is laid on the church doctrine of good works.

**(13) Philemon.** A private letter written to Philemon asking him to receive and forgive Onesimus, a runaway slave.

#### **H. GENERAL LETTERS (8 books)**

**(1) Hebrews.** Writer uncertain. Leading topic – transcendent glory of Christ and of the blessings of the new covenant, compared with that of the Old Testament.

**(2) James.** Writer probably James, the Lord's brother. Addressed to Jewish converts of the Dispersion. Main theme – practical faith, shown in good works, contrasted with profession of faith alone.

**(3) 1 Peter.** A letter of encouragement written by the apostle Peter to the saints scattered throughout Asia Minor. Leading topic – the privilege of believers, following the example of Christ, to have victory in the midst of trials and to live holy lives in an unholy world.

**(4) 2 Peter.** Largely a warning against false teachers and scoffers.

**(5) 1 John.** A deep spiritual message addressed by the apostle John to different classes of believers in the church. It lays great stress on the privilege of spiritual knowledge, the duty of fellowship, and brotherly love.

**(6) 2 John.** A brief message of John on divine truth and worldly error. Addressed to "the chosen lady and her children". A warning against heresy and false teachers.

**(7) 3 John.** An apostolic letter of commendation written to Gaius, containing character sketches of certain persons in the church.

**(8) Jude.** Writer probably the brother of James. Leading topics – historical examples of apostasy and divine judgements on sinners, with warnings against immoral teachers.

#### **I. PROPHETIC BOOKS (1 book)**

**Revelation.** Writer, the apostle John. Leading topics – mainly a series of apocalyptic visions dealing with events in religious history. A great moral conflict is portrayed between divine and satanic powers, ending in the victory of the Lamb of God.