

UNDERSTANDING THE OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT.

A. There are five major sections of the OT:

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| 1. The Law (Pentateuch). | 4. The Major Prophets. |
| 2. History. | 5. The Minor Prophets. |
| 3. Poetry. | |

B. The books of the Law (Pentateuch):

1. Genesis. Creation and the founding of the Hebrew nation; Abraham, Isaac, Joseph
2. Exodus. The covenant with the Hebrew nation; the Decalogue; the tabernacle
3. Leviticus. The laws for the priests and the Hebrew nation
4. Numbers. Numbering of those in the exodus and the journey to the Promised Land
5. Deuteronomy. The Law repeated and summary of God's dealings with Israel

C. The books of History:

1. Joshua. The Conquest of the Land of Canaan; land areas divided
2. Judges. The first 300 years in the land; 15 judges--9 are written about in detail
3. Ruth. The beginning of the Messianic family of David
4. First Samuel. Organization of the kingdom and the reign of Saul
5. Second Samuel. The reign of David as Israel's second king
6. First Kings. The reign of Solomon and the division of the kingdom after him
7. Second Kings. History of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah
8. First Chronicles. The reign of David retold; same events as 2Samuel with genealogies
9. Second Chronicles. History of the southern kingdom of Judah ending in captivity
10. Ezra. The return of the Jews to Jerusalem under Ezra's leadership
11. Nehemiah. The rebuilding of the walls and city under Nehemiah's leadership
12. Esther. An escape from extermination by the Persians before Ezra & Nehemiah

D. The books of Poetry:

1. Job. The Problem of Human Suffering
2. Psalms. The National Hymn book of Israel--man speaking to God
3. Proverbs. The Wisdom of Solomon
4. Ecclesiastes. The Vanity of an Earthly Life without God
5. Song of Solomon. The Glorification of Wedded Love

E. The books of the Major Prophets:

1. Isaiah. The Messianic Prophet
2. Jeremiah. The Last Effort to Save Judah by God's Weeping Prophet
3. Lamentations. A Dirge Over the Desolation of Jerusalem
4. Ezekiel. A prophet of Captivity--"They Shall Know that I Am God"
5. Daniel. God's Prophet at Babylon; he viewed the earthly kingdoms to come

F. The books of the Minor Prophets:

1. Hosea. The Apostasy of Israel before the Assyrian Annihilation
2. Joel. The prophet of Pentecost--predicting the locust plague and the HS
3. Amos. The Apostasy, Wickedness and Doom of Israel--David's Future Kingdom
4. Obadiah. The Destruction of Edom due to Pride
5. Jonah. The Autobiography of the Prophet as He Reluctantly goes to Nineveh
6. Micah. Bethlehem to be the Birthplace of Christ; the Imminent Fall of Israel & Judah

7. Nahum. The Destruction of Ninevah
8. Habakkuk. Understanding God's Providence; "The just shall live by faith"
9. Zephaniah. "The Day of Jehovah"--The Wrath of God on Judah and the Nations
10. Haggai. Rebuild the Temple; a more glorious one is yet to come
11. Zechariah. Rebuild the Temple; Visions of the Coming Messiah and His Kingdom
12. Malachi. A Final Message to the Disobedient Priests and All the People

II. SEVEN REASONS WHY WE SHOULD STUDY THE OT.

- A. First, *to gain wisdom and equipment for every good work.*
2Timothy 3:16,17 the context is of the OT scriptures; see 3:14,15
- B. Second, *it is the background of the NT.*
(It is quoted 700 times in the NT. The books of Mt., Rom., Heb., and Rev., are extremely difficult to understand without the OT.)
- C. Third, *the OT points to Christ.*
John 5:39 Jesus said that the OT testified of Him; to properly read OT see how it tells of Christ
Acts 3:22-24 All of the prophets announced the first century events--not later
Acts 8:35 You can begin anywhere in the OT and teach the Christ to come
- D. Fourth, *it is the only reliable history of that known time.*
(Ingersoll doubted the Bible's Hittite people until the remains were found.)
- E. Fifth, *to gain both good and bad examples.*
1Corinthians 10:1-11 (bad) they fell through disobedience--an example to us
Hebrews 11:1-39 (good) The roll call of faith or Hall of Faith
- F. Sixth, *for our learning, patience, comfort and hope.*
Romans 15:4 four great blessings from reading the OT
- G. Seventh, *it is better than an eyewitness, a light for a dark day.*
2Peter 1:15-21 Eyewitnesses can disagree about things, but the Bible it is better than

III. THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- A. There are five major sections of the NT:
 1. The Gospels.
 2. History.
 3. The Letters of Paul.
 4. The General Epistles.
 5. Prophecy.
- B. The books of the Gospels:
 1. Matthew. Jewish readers; Jesus the fulfillment of prophecy; the gospel of the kingdom
 2. Mark. Roman readers; Jesus the powerful and wonderful
 3. Luke. Gentile readers; Jesus the Son of Man--the chronological account
 4. John. For unbelievers; Jesus the Son of God (20:30,31)--non-synoptic
- C. The book of History:
 1. Acts. Formation and history of the Early church seen in the ministries of Peter & Paul
- D. The Letters of Paul:
 1. Romans. Great Treatise to the Christian faith; the nature of Christ's work
 2. First Corinthians. Various church problems; love is the answer
 3. Second Corinthians. Paul's Defense of His Apostleship
 4. Galatians. By Grace and not by Law; a miniature Romans
 5. Ephesians. The Unity of the Church; The church as the body of Christ
 6. Philippians. Rejoice in the Lord always
 7. Colossians. The Deity of Christ; all-sufficient; and the head of the church

8. First Thessalonians. A general letter of encouragement; Christ's Second Coming
 9. Second Thessalonians. Christ's Second Coming
 10. First Timothy. Instructions to Timothy, preacher at the church in Ephesus
 11. Second Timothy. More instruction to Timothy; Paul's Final Words
 12. Titus. Instructions to Titus and his ministry to the churches on the island of Crete
 13. Philemon. The Conversion of a Runaway Slave and how his Master is to Treat Him
 14. Hebrews. Christ the Mediator of a better Covenant; the Superior Covenant
- E. The General Epistles:
1. James. A true faith means good works; a practical book
 2. First Peter. To a Persecuted church; how to expect and handle persecution
 3. Second Peter. Against false teachers/teaching; a prediction of apostasy
 4. First John. Love
 5. Second John. A caution against false teachers
 6. Third John. The rejection of John's helpers
 7. Jude. The doctrine once of all delivered; beware of false teachers
- F. The book of Prophecy:
1. Revelation. The ultimate triumph of Christ and His church over all the forces of evil

IV. **COMPARING THE TESTAMENTS.**

- A. See 2Corinthians 3:5-11 and notice the following about the Law:
1. It was given because of transgressions, and to make man aware of his sin.
Galatians 3:19 given by the angels to men to help man see his need for a savior
 2. Paul spoke of the Law doing three things:
Colossians 2:14 the death of Christ accomplished many things
 - a. A certificate of death.
 - b. It consisted of decrees against us.
 - c. It was hostile to us.
 3. The Law brings about wrath, because with Law there is violation.
Romans 4:13-15 man has always been under a law (Patriarchal, Mosaic, Christian)
 4. The Law is our tutor or schoolmaster to lead us to Christ.
Galatians 3:24 literally a bus driver that brings us and drops us off at the feet of Christ
- B. Within the same text we see the greatness of the NT:
- 2Corinthians 3:5-11 the letter (OT) kills and the Spirit (NT) gives life
1. It is a different covenant than the old one.
Jeremiah 31:31-34 the great prophecy of the new covenant to come and forgiveness
 2. Christ is the end of the Law.
Romans 10:4 The logical end of the law is Christ; it is fulfilled in Him
 3. What the Law could not do (forgive sin), God did in the NT.
Romans 8:3,4 "God did" are two powerful words, like "but God..."
 4. Jesus fulfilled the Law, therefore no condemnation.
Matthew 5:17-20 to violate or annul the Law is to sin; the Law establishes Christ
Romans 8:1,2 We are saved by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ from sin and death

V. MATCHING TEST.

Based on this lesson and the scriptures discussed match the following phrase or central idea on the left with the appropriate Scripture reference on the right. You may wish to review all the Scriptures listed in the above lesson before taking the test.

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| <u>G</u> | 1. Decrees hostile and against us. | A. 2Tim. 3:16,17 |
| <u>C</u> | 2. The Scriptures testify of Christ. | B. Acts 3:22-27 |
| <u>J</u> | 3. What the Law couldn't do, God did! | C. John 5:39 |
| <u>B</u> | 4. All the prophets spoke of these days. | D. Rom. 15:4 |
| <u>F</u> | 5. Law was given because of transgression. | E. 2Pet. 1:15-21 |
| <u>E</u> | 6. A lamp shining in a dark place. | F. Gal. 3:19 |
| <u>A</u> | 7. Equipment for every good work. | G. Col. 2:14 |
| <u>I</u> | 8. Christ is the end of the Law. | H. Rom. 4:13-15 |
| <u>D</u> | 9. Read for patience, comfort and hope. | I. Rom. 10:4 |
| <u>H</u> | 10. With the Law, comes violation and sin. | J. Rom. 8:3,4 |

VI. NEXT LESSON.

The next lesson is entitled, "The Coming of the Kingdom." In preparation take time to look up the word 'kingdom' in your concordance and study through the various references in the NT.

VII. NOTES.
