

The Structure of the Bible

Overview: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable ... 2 Tim 3:16

A. Organization of the Bible

1. Old Testament (OT) – 39 books.
 - a) Pentateuch (Torah) (also historical):
 - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.
 - b) Historical – Genesis through Esther.
 - c) Poetry and Wisdom books:
 - Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs (Solomon).
 - d) Prophetic – Major:
 - Isaiah through Daniel.
 - e) Prophetic – Minor:
 - Minor means shorter, not less important.
 - Hosea through Malachi.
2. New Testament (NT) – 27 books:
 - a) Gospels – Life and ministry of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.
 - b) Acts – recording of the ministry of the early church.
 - Does not end with “Amen” since the work of the church still continues.
 - c) Epistles – letters to the church (some also prophetic):
 - Romans through Jude.
 - d) Prophetic – Revelation.

B. The Bible for the New/Young Believer

1. Understand different perspectives of the 4 Gospels:
 - a) Matthew – primarily the story of Jesus as a Jewish prophet.
 - b) Mark – primarily the story of Jesus as Son of Man, Spirit-filled, led by the Word and the Spirit.
 - c) Luke – primarily the story of Jesus as Son of God.
 - d) John – primarily the story of Jesus as God.
2. Begin reading the Bible with Mark, not John. Study: Mark 11:24
3. Study Acts, for we are still living and writing this book. Note: Acts 3:16

C. The Bible for the Intermediate Believer

1. Expand your reading and study to the Gospel of Luke.
2. Note: Luke 1:37; James 1:2; and Matt 7:24-27.
3. Focus on the New Testament.
 - a) God’s manual for mankind. Heb 11:6
 - b) Epistles written to believers. Phil 2:9-11

D. The Bible for the Mature Believer

1. Continue in the Word of God. John 8:31-32
2. Abide in the Word of God. John 15:7
3. Be rooted and grounded in love. Eph 3:17
4. Read and study the Book of John, then Matthew.
5. Read the Book of Revelation – special blessing. Rev 1:3
6. Then the Old Testament (build on knowledge of God & His ways). 2 Pet 1:2
7. Read the entire Bible (Gen. to Rev.) out loud—it takes only 70 hours.

Recommendation: Study to show yourself approved unto God...rightly dividing the Word of Truth.
2 Tim 2:15

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Attachment

Facts and Statistics of the Bible

1. Still and always the best-selling book. Thirty million copies per year.
2. The first book ever printed in 1454 A.D. by Johannes Gutenberg.
3. System of chapters introduced in 1238 A.D.
4. Verse notations added in 1551 A.D. after the advent of printing.
5. Translated into somewhere between 1,000 – 2,000 languages.
6. Longest book is Psalms with 150 chapters.
7. Shortest book with 1 chapter each is 2 John (verses) or 3 John (words).
8. Longest chapter is Psalm 119 with 176 verses.
9. Shortest chapter is Psalm 117 with 2 verses
10. Longest verse is Esther 8:9 with 78 words.
11. Shortest verse is John 11:35 with 2 words.
12. The middle of the Bible:
 - by chapters is Psalm 117 being 595 of 1,189 (OT has 929 and NT has 260)
 - by books is Micah and Nahum or between both (i.e., books 33 & 34 of 66)
 - by verses is Psalm 103:2,3 or verses 15,551 and 15,552 of 31,102 total verses.
(There are 23,145 verses in the OT and 7,957 in the NT.)

Overview of the History of the Writing of the Bible

The Bible was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

1. over a 1500-year span (from 1400 B.C to A.D. 100).
2. over 40 generations.
3. over 40 authors from many walks of life (i.e., kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, scholars).
4. in different places (i.e., wilderness, dungeon, palaces).
5. at different times (i.e., war, peace).
6. in different moods (i.e., heights of joy, depths of despair).
7. on three continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe).
8. in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek).