

The Historical Books (Old and New Testament)
St. John's Lenten Bible Study

- Historical books in the Old Testament: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah
- In the New Testament, the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and the book of Acts comprise a history of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the lives of the early apostles, especially Peter and Paul

Timeline (approximates):

Pre History Garden of Eden

Pre History Great Flood/Noah's Ark

2081 BC God's Covenant with Abram (later Abraham)

1440 BC Moses/Ten Plagues on Egypt/Exodus

1406 BC Joshua conquers Jericho and Ai

1010 BC David becomes King of Israel (1-2 Chronicles, 1-2 Samuel)

966 BC Solomon builds Temple (Solomon: 1-2 Chronicles, 1-2 Kings)

730 BC Isaiah

722 BC Israel in Assyrian Captivity

586 BC Jerusalem siege by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, fall of Kingdom of Judah

537 BC Exiles return (Ezra)

445 BC Nehemiah

150-63 BC Maccabees – Jews revolt against Seleucid Empire

5 BC Jesus born

26-30 AD Jesus ministry

30 AD Jesus crucifixion and resurrection

34 AD Saul's conversion (Paul)

42 AD Peter led from prison by angel

46-58 AD Paul's three missionary journeys

70 AD Fall of Jerusalem

95 AD John's Revelation on Patmos

1. There are three "synoptic" Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. They are referred to as synoptic as they share many of the same stories in similar sequence. On the other hand, the Gospel of John is considered largely independent of the synoptic Gospels. Can you see differences between the Gospel of John and the three synoptic Gospels?

2. As evidenced from the timeline, Israel was oppressed many times during the Old Testament. How did these frequent oppressions affect the Jewish people's history and culture?

3. There is debate as to when most of the historical books were written, and to what extent they are historical. Which events in the timeline do you think must be historical? Is this a matter of faith or do you think these events can be demonstrated, partially or fully, by archaeology, historical record and/or common sense?