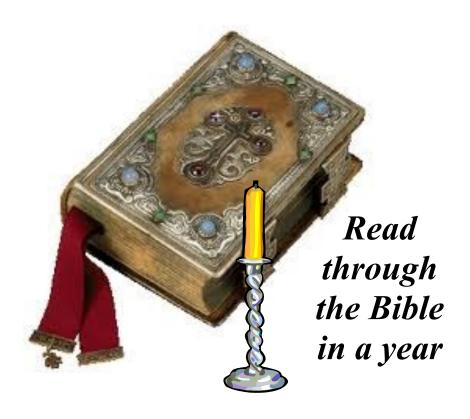
ST. ANDREW ORTHODOX BIBLE READING PLAN

September 1, 2013 - August 31, 2014





St. Andrew Orthodox Christian Church 4700 Canyon Crest Drive Riverside, California 92507

To the Parishioners of St. Andrew Church, Beloved of the Lord,

As we approach the beginning of a new church year I raise my right hand in prayer and trace the sign of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross over each of you asking the Almighty to adorn the coming year with all manner of spiritual growth and an abundance of fruit-bearing and personal transformation into the likeness of the Lord Jesus.

Some time ago I was visiting with an esteemed Father who shared with me that over the course of a year, over 100 of his parishioners had joined him in a common project: reading the Holy Scriptures from beginning to end over the course of a single year. He spoke of the spiritual discipline as transformative - and I did not doubt him.

The Holy Bible is not just a collection of beautiful teachings, but rather the very words of the Holy Trinity. St. Paul says, "The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). When we prayerfully read the Word of God we ourselves are radically altered, changed, and molded.

The Prophet Jeremiah says that God is the potter and we are the clay (ch. 18). Reading the Scriptures is one of the ways that the hands of the Lord shape, mold, poke, stroke, polish and smash our clay.

Elder Aimilianos the Holy Monastery of Simonopetra on Mt. Athos, one of the great contemporary Holy Fathers, says this, "Holy Scripture is the greatest gift which God has given to man...the word of God is like an instrument which punctures the hardness of our heart. It is like a charge of dynamite which blasts our passions to the left and to the right. It purges our heart and fills it with virtues...the Holy Scriptures provide us with spiritual experience...Where God's voice is, there is God, hidden within the

voice. The spiritual book is a mystery, a sacrament...the words and lines of Holy Scripture are the garments of Christ...we know the names of dozens of actors and celebrities by heart, backwards and forwards. The same thing with sports stars...Here's a better idea, let's do something else. When you go home tonight, open up [the Scriptures]."

My dear parishioners I am asking you to commit to a holy project - to read with me a little portion of Holy Scripture each day according to our agreed upon calendar of readings. This will allow us together to read from the beginning to the end of the Holy Bible over the course of one year (September 1, 2013-August 31, 2014).

It will change us all for the better! And it will animate our life together this year in a unique and beautiful way. Please accept my invitation to launch out on this holy project.

With love in the Transfigured Christ,

Father Josiah

How to Read the Bible

Ten Principles of Orthodox Scriptural Exegesis

adapted from Bishop MICHAEL (Dahulich)

- 1. Christ God is real and is incarnate in Jesus Christ; He is the Key to the Scriptures.
- 2. Life One's ability to interpret depends upon one's spiritual state; one must live it in order to fully understand it.
- 3. A Love Letter We read scripture to fall deeper in love with God and put on the Scriptural Mind.
- 4. Theosis We read Scripture to become by grace what God is by nature.
- 5. Tradition Only within the Church and her Tradition (the consensus of the Fathers) is there full and correct interpretation.
- 6. Scripture is a witness to the truth, the pinnacle of Holy Tradition; it is not an exhaustive manual of church life.
- 7. We must interpret the Bible as the Church has handed it, not try to reconstruct the canon of Scripture.
- 8. Personal Ask yourself not only: what does the text mean, but what does it mean for me?
- 9. Humility As many Church Fathers, consider your understanding of difficult texts as provisional.
- 10. Use secondary knowledge (history, literary criticism, archeology) to illuminate our understanding, not redefine dogma.

On reading Holy Scripture

St. John Chrysostom:

I exhort you, and I will not cease to exhort you to pay heed not only to what is said here, but when you are home also you should occupy yourselves attentively with the reading of Holy Scripture. Let no one say to me such cold words-worthy of judgment---as these: 'I am occupied with a trial, I have obligations in the city, I have a wife, I have to feed my children, and it is not my duty to read the Scripture but the duty of those who have renounced everything.' What are you saying?! It is not your duty to read Scripture because you are distracted by innumerable cares? On the contrary, it is your duty more than those others, more than the monks; they do not have such need of help as do you who live in the midst of such cares. You need treatment all the more, because you are constantly under such blows and are wounded so often. The reading of Scripture is a great defense against sin. Ignorance of the Scripture is a great misfortune, a great abyss. Not to know anything from the word of God is a disaster. This is what has given rise to heresies, to immorality; it has turned everything upside down.

Martyrius, The Book of Perfection:

Truly great and mighty is the power of God's word. For the word of God has changed "the offspring of vipers" into children of God. So let us constantly sow it within the hard soil of our heart, waiting for it to soften it so that the wheat-ear of life may sprout up in it. For the word of God is at the same time the seed and the water; and even though we have a heart like stone, it will be softened and split up by the water of the Spirit, so that it can bring forth holy fruit that is pleasing to God.

ORTHODOX BIBLE READING PLAN

Read Through the Bible in a Year

This bible reading plan is designed to be used with a Bible where the Old Testament is based on the Septuagint, the Greek translation that was quoted by Jesus and the Apostles and also used by all the early fathers. It contains roughly 25 percent more content than modern translations because it includes the so-called Deuterocanonical books.

Each day consists of four readings. The first reading is a passage from the Old Testament books of history, wisdom, or the prophets. Passages two and three are from the Psalms and Proverbs, respectively. Passage four is from the New Testament. Psalms and Proverbs are read twice through the year. Doing all four readings will take 15 to 20 minutes each day.

	Day	Old Testament	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
<u>Sep.</u> 1	1.	☐ Gn 1–3	1; 2	1:1–5	
2	2.	 Gn 4–7	3; 4	1:6–10	Mt 2
3	3.	Gn 8:1—11:9	<u> </u>	1:11–15	Mt 3
4	4.	Gn 11:10—15:21	□ 6	1:16-19	
5	5.	☐ Gn 16—18	7	1:20–24	☐ Mt 5:1~20
6	6.	Gn 19—21	8	1:25–29	
7	7.	Gn 22—24:49	9:1–17	1:30–35	☐ Mt 6:1–18
8	8.	Gn 24:50—26:35	9:18–39	2:1–5	
9	9.	Gn 27; 28	□ 10; 11	2:6–9	
10	10.	☐ Gn 29; 30	12; 13	2:10–16	
11	11.	☐ Gn 31; 32	14; 15	2:17–23	
12	12.	☐ Gn33—35	<u> </u>	3:1–5	☐ Mt 9:1–17
13	13.	☐ Gn36; 37	□ 17:1–17	3:6–10	Mt 9:18–38
14	14.	☐ Gn 38—40	☐ 17:18–32	3:11–16	
15	15.	☐ Gn 41; 42	☐ 17:33–51	3:17–22	
16	16.	☐ Gn 43—45	□ 18	3:23–27	
17	17.	☐ Gn 46—48	<u> </u>	3:28–32	☐ Mt 12:1–21
18	18.	Gn 49; 50	<u> </u>	3:33–38	☐ Mt 12:22–50
19	19.	☐ Ex 1—3	21:1–19	<u></u> 4:1–8	☐ Mt 13:1–30
20	20.	Ex 4:1—6:27	21:20–32	4:9 – 12	Mt 13:31–58
21	21.	Ex 6:28—9:35	22; 23	4:13–18	☐ Mt 14:1–21
22	22.	Ex 10—12	24:1–11	4:19–23	Mt 14:22–36
23	23.	Ex 13—15	24:12–22	4:24–28	☐ Mt 15:1–20
24	24.	Ex 16—18	25	<u>5:1–6</u>	<u></u> Mt 15:21–39
25	25.	Ex 19—21	26	<u></u> 5:7–14	<u></u> Mt 16
26	26.	Ex 22—24	<u></u> 27	<u></u> 5:15–19	Mt 17
27	27.	Ex 25—27	28	<u></u> 5:20–23	☐ Mt 18:1–20
28	28.	Ex 28; 29	<u> 29</u>	<u></u> 6:1–6	☐ Mt 18:21–35
29	29.	☐ Ex 30—32	<u> </u>	<u></u> 6:7–12	Mt 19
30	30.	Ex 33; 34	30:15–25	<u></u> 6:13–16	☐ Mt 20:1–16
<u>Oct.</u> 1	31.	Ex 35—37	□ 31	6:17–19	☐ Mt 20:17–34
2	32.	☐ Ex 38—40	□ 32:1–12	<u></u> 6:20–25	☐ Mt 21:1–22
3	33.	☐ Lv 1—4	32:13–22	6:26–31	☐ Mt 21:23–46
4	34.	☐ Lv 5:1—7:10	33:1–11	6:32–36	☐ Mt 22:1–22
5	35.	Lv 7:11—9:24	33:12–23	☐ 6:37–40	☐ Mt 22:23–46
6	36.	Lv 10—12	34:1–16	☐ 7:1–6	☐ Mt 23:1–22
7	37.	☐ Lv 13	<u>34:17–28</u>	<u></u> 7:7–12	☐ Mt 23:23–39
8	38.	Lv 14; 15	☐ 35 ☐ 35 1 20	☐ 7:13–20	☐ Mt 24:1–28
9	39.	∐ Lv 16—18	36:1–20	7:21–24	☐ Mt 24:29–51
10	40.	∐ Lv 19—21	36:21–40	7:25–27	Mt 25:1–30
11	41.	Lv 22; 23	37:1–11	<u></u> 8:1–5	☐ Mt 25:31–46

	Day	Old Testament	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
Oct. 12	42.	Lv 24; 25	37:12-23	8:6–10	Mt 26:1-25
13	43.	Lv 26; 27	□ 38	8:11–16	☐ Mt 26:26–46
14	44.	☐ Nm 1; 2	39	8:17-21	☐ Mt 26:47–75
15	45.	☐ Nm 3:1—4:33	40	8:22–26	☐ Mt 27:1–26
16	46.	Nm 4:34—6:26	<u> </u>	8:27–31	Mt 27:27-44
17	47.	Nm 7:1—8:4	43:1-9	8:32–35	Mt 27:45–66
18	48.	Nm 8:5—10:36	43:10-27	9:1-6	☐ Mt 28
19	49.	☐ Nm 11:1—14:10	44 45	9:7–11	☐ Mk 1:1–20
20	50.	☐ Nm 14:11—15:41	<u></u> 45	9:12–15	☐ Mk 1:21–45
21 22	51. 52.	☐ Nm 16:1—18:19 ☐ Nm 18:20—21:9	∐ 46 □ 47	9:16–20 9:21–25	∐ Mk 2 □ Mk 3:1–19
23	53.	Nm 21:10—22:41	48:1–10	10:1-6	☐ Mk 3:20–35
24	54.	□ Nm 23; 24	48:11–21	10:7–11	☐ Mk 4:1–20
25	55.	Nm 25:1—27:11	49:1–15	10:12–16	☐ Mk 4:21–41
26	56.	Nm 27:12—29:39	49:16–23	10:1 <i>7</i> –22	☐ Mk 5:1–20
27	57.	☐ Nm 30; 31	50:1-10	□ 10:23–27	☐ Mk 5:21–43
28	58.	☐ Nm 32; 33	50:11-21	10:28–33	☐ Mk 6:1–29
29	59.	☐ Nm 34—36	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Mk 6:30–56
30	60.	☐ Dt 1; 2	52; 53	11:6–10	☐ Mk 7:1–23
31	61.	☐ Dt 3; 4	54:1–12	11:11-15	☐ Mk 7:24–37
<u>Nov.</u> 1	62.	☐ Dt 5—7	<u>54:13–24</u>	11:16-20	☐ Mk 8:1–21
2	63.	☐ Dt 8—10	55 56	☐ 11:21–25 ☐ 11:26–30	☐ Mk 8:22—9:1 ☐ Mk 9:2–29
3 4	64. 65.	☐ Dt 11—13 ☐ Dt 14—16	56 □ 57	12:1–5	☐ Mk 9:30–50
5	66.	☐ Dt 17—19	☐ 58	12:6–10	☐ Mk 10:1–31
6	67.	☐ Dt 20—22	□ 59	12:11–15	Mk 10:32–52
7	68.	Dt 23—25	☐ 60	12:16–20	☐ Mk 11:1–19
8	69.	Dt 26:1—28:14	☐ 61	12:21–25	☐ Mk 11:20–33
9	70.	Dt 28:15—29:28	<u>62</u>	12:26–31	Mk 12:1–27
10	71.	Dt 30; 31	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Mk 12:28–44
11	72.	Dt 32	<u> </u>	13:6–10	☐ Mk 13:1–23
12	73.	☐ Dt 33; 34	65	13:11–15	☐ Mk 13:24–37
13	74.	Jos 1—3	☐ 66 ☐ 67.1 20	13:16–21	☐ Mk 14:1–31
14 15	75. 76.	Jos 4—6 Jos 7—9	☐ 67:1–20 ☐ 67:21–36	☐ 13:22–2 <i>7</i> ☐ 14:1–5	☐ Mk 14:32–52 ☐ Mk 14:53–72
16	70. 77.	☐ Jos 10; 11	☐ 68:1–20	14:6–10	☐ Mk 15:1–20
17	78.	☐ Jos 12—14	68:21–37	14:11–15	☐ Mk 15:21–47
18	79.	☐ Jos 15—17	69	14:16–20	☐ Mk 16
19	80.	☐ Jos 18—20	70:1–13	14:21–25	Lk 1:1-25
20	81.	Jos 21—22	70:14-24	14:26–30	Lk 1:26–56
21	82.	☐ Jos 23; 24	<u>71</u>	14:31–36	Lk 1:57–80
22	83.	☐ Jdg 1; 2	72:1–14	15:1–5	Lk 2:1–24
23	84.	☐ Jdg 3; 4	72:15–28	15:6–10	Lk 2:25–52
24	85.	☐ Jdg 5:1—6:10	73:1–11	15:11–15	Lk 3:1–20
25	86.	☐ Jdg 6:11—7:25	73:12–23	15:16-20	Lk 3:21–38
26	87.	☐ Jdg 8; 9	<i>□ 74</i> □ <i>7</i> 5	☐ 15:21–26 ☐ 15:27–32	∐ Lk 4:1–30 ☐ Lk 4:31–44
27 28	88. 89.	☐ Jdg 10; 11 ☐ Jdg 12—14	☐ 76:1–10	15:27-32 15:33-38	Lk 5:1–16
29	90.	☐ Jdg 15—17	☐ 76:11-21	☐ 16:1–5	Lk 5:17–39
30	91.	☐ Jdg 18; 19	77:1–17	☐ 16:6 – 10	Lk 6:1–26
Dec. 1	92.	☐ Jdg 20; 21	77:18–37	16:11–15	Lk 6:27–49
2	93.	☐ Ru 1—4	77:38–55	<u> </u>	Lk 7:1–17
3	94.	1Kg 1:1—2:17	77:56–72	<u> </u>	Lk 7:18–50
4	95.	☐ 1Kg 2:18—4:22	<u>78</u>	16:26–31	∐ Lk 8:1–25

	Day	Old Testament	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
Dec. 5	96.	☐ 1Kg 5—7	☐ 79	☐ 17:1–5	Lk 8:26-56
6	97.	☐ 1Kg 8:1—10:16	80	<u> </u>	Lk 9:1–17
7	98.	☐ 1Kg 10:17—13:22	<u>81</u>	<u> </u>	Lk 9:18–36
8	99.	1Kg 14:1—15:9	<u>82</u>	17:16–20	Lk 9:37–62
9	100.	1Kg 15:10—17:30	83	17:21-25	Lk 10:1–24
10	101.	1Kg 18—21:1	□ 84	17:26–30	Lk 10:25–42
11 12	102.	☐ 1Kg 21:2—23:28	85	18:1–5 18:6–11	∐ Lk 11:1–28 ☐ Lk 11:29–54
13	103. 104.	☐ 1Kg 24; 25 ☐ 1Kg 26—28	86 87	18:11–17	Lk 12:1–34
14	105.	☐ 1Kg 29—31	88:1–19	18:18–23	Lk 12:35–59
15	106.	☐ 2Kg 1; 2	88:20–38	19:1–6	Lk 13:1–21
16	107.	☐ 2Kg 3; 4	88:39–53	19:7–12	Lk 13:22–35
17	108.	☐ 2Kg 5—7	□ 89	<u> </u>	Lk 14:1–24
18	109.	☐ 2Kg 8—11	90	19:19–24	Lk 14:25–35
19	110.	2Kg 12; 13	<u> </u>	19:25–29	Lk 15:1–10
20	111.	2Kg 14; 15	92	20:1–5	Lk 15:11–32
21	112.	☐ 2Kg 16—18:18	93:1–15	20:6–10	∐ Lk 16
22	113.	2Kg 18:19—19:44	93:16–23	20:11–15 20:16–20	∐ Lk 17:1–19 ☐ Lk 17:20–37
23 24	114. 115.	☐ 2Kg 20; 21 ☐ 2Kg 22:1—23:7	94 95	20:21–25	Lk 18:1–17
25	116.	☐ 2Kg 23:8—24:25	☐ 96	21:1-5	Lk 18:18–43
26	117.	3Kg 1:1—2:25	97; 98	21:6–10	Lk 19:1–27
27	118.	☐ 3Kg 2:26—3:27	99; 100	21:11–15	Lk 19:28-48
28	119.	☐ 3Kg 4—6	101:1–15	21:16–20	Lk 20:1-26
29	120.	☐ 3Kg 7:1—8:52	101:16–29	21:21–25	Lk 20:27–47
30	121.	3Kg 8:53—10:33	102:1–12	<u></u> 21:26–30	Lk 21:1–19
31	122.	☐ 3Kg 11:1—12:25	102:13-22	22:1-5	Lk 21:20–38
<u>Jan.</u> 1	123.	☐ 3Kg 12:26—13:34	103:1-18	☐ 22:6–10	☐ Lk 22:1–23 ☐ Lk 22:24–46
2 3	124. 125.	☐ 3Kg 14—16 ☐ 3Kg 17:1—19:9	☐ 103:19–35 ☐ 104:1–15	22:11–15 22:16–20	Lk 22:47–71
4	126.	☐ 3Kg 17:1—19:9	104:16-27	22:21–26	Lk 23:1–25
5	127.	☐ 3Kg 21:23—22:50	104:28-45	22:27–31	Lk 23:26–56
6	128.	☐ 4Kg 1—3	☐ 105:1–15	23:1–5	Lk 24:1–35
7	129.	☐ 4Kg 4; 5	105:16–31	23:6–12	Lk 24:36–53
8	130.	4Kg 6:1—8:6	<u> </u>	23:13–18	Jn 1:1–28
9	131.	4Kg 8:7—9:37	106:1–14	23:19–23	☐ Jn 1: 29–51
10	132.	☐ 4Kg 10; 11	106:15-30	23:24–27	∐Jn 2
11	133.	☐ 4Kg 12—14 ☐ 4Kg 15:1—17:23	☐ 106:31–43 ☐ 107	☐ 23:28–32 ☐ 23:33–36	☐ Jn 3:1–21 ☐ Jn 3:22–36
12 13	134. 135.	☐ 4Kg 17:24—18:37	108:1–20	24:1-6	☐ Jn 4:1–26
14	136.	4Kg 19; 20	108:21–31	24:7–12	☐ Jn 4:27–54
15	137.	☐ 4Kg 21:1—23:20	☐ 109; 110	24:13–18	☐ Jn 5:1–15
16	138.	4Kg 23:21—25:30	□ 111; 112	24:19–23	☐ Jn 5:16–47
17	139.	☐ 1Ch 1—3	□ 113:1–11	24:24–27	☐ Jn 6:1–21
18	140.	1Ch 4:1—6:33	113:12–26	24:28–34	Jn 6:22–50
19	141.	1Ch 6:34—8:40	114	<u> 24:35–39</u>	☐ Jn 6:51–71
20	142.	☐ 1Ch 9:1—11:9	115; 116	25:1-5	☐ Jn 7:1–36 ☐ Jn 7:37—8:2
21	143.	1Ch 11:10—13:14 1Ch 14:1—16:35	117:1–16 117:17–29	25:6–11 25:12–16	☐ Jn 8:3–30
22 23	144. 145.	1Ch 16:36—19:19	118:1–16	25:17-21	☐ Jn 8:31–59
24	146.	☐ 1Ch 20—22	118:17–32	25:22–26	☐ Jn 9:1–12
25	147.	☐ 1Ch 23—25	118:33–48	25:2 <i>7</i> –31	☐ Jn 9:13–41
26	148.	1Ch 26; 27	118:49–64	<u>26:1–5</u>	☐ Jn 10:1–21
27	149.	1Ch 28; 29	<u> </u>	26:6–9	Jn 10:22–42

	Day	Old Tostoment	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
	Day	Old Testament			
<u>Jan.</u> 28	150.	2Ch 1—4	118:81–96	26:10–13	☐ Jn 11:1–37
29	151.	☐ 2Ch 5; 6	118:97–112	<u> 26:14–17</u>	☐ Jn 11:38–57
30	152.	☐ 2Ch 7—9	118:113–128	26:18–23	☐ Jn 12:1–28
31	153.	2Ch 10—13	118:129–144	26:24–29	☐ Jn 12:29–50
<u>Feb.</u> 1	154.	2Ch 14—17	118:145–160	<u></u> 27:1–6	∐ Jn 13:1–17
2	155.	2Ch 18—20	118:161–176	<u> </u>	∐ Jn 13:18–38
3	156.	2Ch 21:1—24:14	119; 120	27:13–18	∐ Jn 14
4	157.	2Ch 24:15—26:23	121; 122	<u></u> 27:19–24	Jn 15
5	158.	2Ch 27—29	<u> </u>	27:25–29	Jn 16
6	159.	2Ch 30—32	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	∐ Jn 17
7	160.	2Ch 33; 34	<u> </u>	28:6–11	Jn 18:1–27
8	161.	2Ch 35; 36	129; 130	28:12–15	Jn 18:28—19:4
9	162.	☐ 1Ez 1:1—2:11	<u> </u>	28:16–20	Jn 19:5–24
10	163.	☐ 1Ez 2:12—4:42	<u> </u>	28:21–25	Jn 19:25–42
11	164.	☐ 1Ez 4:43—5:45	134:1–1–12	28:26–30	Jn 20
12	165.	1Ez 5:46—7:15	134:13–21	29:1–6	Jn 21
13	166.	☐ 1Ez 8:1–70	<u> </u>	29:7–12	Ac 1
14	167.	1Ez 8:71—9:55	<u> </u>	29:13–18	Ac 2:1–21
15	168.	2Ez 1—3	<u> </u>	29:19–23	Ac 2:22–47
16	169.	2Ez 4:1—6:14	138:1–12	<u> 29:24–28</u>	☐ Ac 3
17	170.	2Ez 6:15—8:30	138:13–24	30:1–5	Ac 4:1–22
18	171.	2Ez 8:31—10:44	139	□ 30:6–10	Ac 4:23–37
19	172.	☐ Neh 1—3	140	30:11–15	Ac 5:1–16
20	173.	Neh 4:1—7:3	<u> 141</u>	30:16–21	☐ Ac 5:17–42
21	174.	☐ Neh 7:4—8:18	142	30:22-25	☐ Ac 6
22	175.	☐ Neh 9—11	143	30:26–30	☐ Ac 7:1–21 ☐ Ac 7:22–43
23 24	176.	☐ Neh 12; 13	☐ 144:1–9 ☐ 144:10–21	☐ 30:31–35 ☐ 31:1–5	☐ Ac 7:44–60
25	177.	☐ Tb 1—3	144:10-21	31:6-9	Ac 8:1–25
26	178. 179.	Tb 4—6 Tb <i>7</i> —11	145 146; 147	31:10–15	☐ Ac 8:26–40
27	180.	☐ Tb 12—14	148	31:16-20	☐ Ac 9:1–18
28	181.	☐ Jdt 1—4	149	31:21–25	Ac 9:19–43
Mar. 1	182.	☐ Jdt 5—7	150; 151	31:26–30	Ac 10:1–23
2	183.	☐ Jdt 8—10	1; 2	1:1–5	Ac 10:24–48
3	184.	☐ Jdt 11—13	3; 4	1:6–10	☐ Ac 11
4	185.	☐ Jdt 14—16	5	1:11–15	☐ Ac 12
5	186.	☐ Est 1; 2	☐ 6	1:16–19	☐ Ac 13:1–25
6	187.	☐ Est 3; 4	7	1:20–24	Ac 13:26–52
7	188.	Est 5:1—8:12	8	1:25-29	☐ Ac 14
8	189.	Est 8:12a—10:3k	9:1-17	1:30-35	☐ Ac 15:1–21
9	190.	☐ 1Mc 1:1—2:14	9:18–39	2:1–5	Ac 15:22-41
10	191.	☐ 1Mc 2:15—3:41	□ 10; 11	2:6–9	☐ Ac 16:1–18
11	192.	☐ 1Mc 3:42—4:61	☐ 12; 13	2:10–16	☐ Ac 16:19–40
12	193.	☐ 1Mc 5:1—6:17	☐ 14; 15	2:17–23	Ac 17:1–15
13	194.	☐ 1Mc 6:18—7:50	□ 16	3:1–5	Ac 17:16–34
14	195.	☐ 1Mc 8:1—9:53	<u> </u>	3:6–10	Ac 18
15	196.	1Mc 9:54—10:58	<u> </u>	3:11–16	☐ Ac 19:1–22
16	197.	1Mc 10:59—11:53	17:33–51	□ 3:17–22	☐ Ac 19:23–41
17	198.	☐ 1Mc 11:54—13:11	<u>18</u>	3:23–27	Ac 20:1–16
18	199.	☐ 1Mc 13:12—14:24	☐ 19	3:28–32	Ac 20:17–38
19	200.	☐ 1Mc 14:25—16:24	☐ 20 ☐ 21.1.10	3:33–38	☐ Ac 21:1–16
20	201.	☐ 2Mc 1; 2	21:1–19	4:1-8	Ac 21:17–40
21	202.	2Mc 3:1—4:29	21:20–32	☐ 4:9–12 ☐ 4:12 18	Ac 21:1–29
22	203.	2Mc 4:30—6:31	22; 23	4:13–18	Ac 22:30—23:11

	Day	Old Testament	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
Mar. 23	204.	☐ 2Mc 7:1—8:20	24:1–11	4:19–23	Ac 23:12–35
24	205.	☐ 2Mc 8:21—10:23	24:12-22	4:4:24–28	Ac 24
25	206.	☐ 2Mc 10:24—12:16	25	5:1-6	☐ Ac 25
26	207.	☐ 2Mc 10:24—12:10 ☐ 2Mc 12:17—14:17	☐ 26	5:7–14	Ac 26
27	208.	☐ 2Mc 14:18—15:39	□ 27	5:15–19	Ac 27:1–20
28	209.	☐ 3Mc 1; 2	28	5:20–23	Ac 27:21–44
29	210.	☐ 3Mc 3; 4	☐ 29	6:1-6	Ac 28
30	211.	☐ 3Mc 5	30:1–14	6:7–12	Rom 1
31	212.	3Mc 6; 7	30:15–25	6:13–16	Rom 2
<u>Apr.</u> 1	213.	☐ Job 1; 2	31	6:17–19	Rom 3
<u>Apr. 1</u>	214.	☐ Job 3; 4	32:1–12	6:20–25	Rom 4
3	215.	☐ Job 5; 6	32:13–22	6:26–31	Rom 5
4	216.	☐ Job 7; 8	33:1–11	6:32–36	Rom 6
5	217.	☐ Job 9; 10	33:12–23	6:37–40	Rom 7
6	218.	☐ Job 3, 10	34:1–16	7:1–6	Rom 8:1–17
7	219.	☐ Job 14; 15	34:17–28	7:7–12	Rom 8:18–39
8	220.	☐ Job 16—18	35	7:13–20	Rom 9:1–13
9	221.	☐ Job 10—10	36:1–20	7:21–24	Rom 9:14–33
10	222.	☐ Job 13, 20 ☐ Job 21; 22	36:21–40	7:25–27	Rom 10
11	223.	☐ Job 23—25	37:1–11	8:1-5	Rom 11:1–15
12	224.	☐ Job 26—28	37:12–23	8:6–10	Rom 11:16–36
13	225.	☐ Job 29; 30	38	8:11–16	Rom 12
14	226.	☐ Job 31; 32	□ 39	8:17–21	Rom 13
15	227.	☐ Job 33:1—34:9	☐ 40	8:22–26	Rom 14
16	228.	☐ Job 34:10—35:16	41; 42	8:27–31	Rom 15:1–21
17	229.	Job 36; 37	43:1–9	8:32–35	Rom 15:22–33
18	230.	☐ Job 38	43:10–27	9:1-6	Rom 16
19	231.	☐ Job 39; 40	44	9:7–11	☐ 1Co 1
20	232.	☐ Job 41; 42	45	9:12–15	☐ 1Co 2
21	233.	☐ Ecc 1; 2	46	9:16–20	☐ 1Co 3
22	234.	☐ Ecc 3:1—5:6	47	9:21–25	1Co 4
23	235.	☐ Ecc 5:7—7:29	48:1–10	10:1–6	☐ 1Co 5
24	236.	Ecc 8:1—10:10	48:11–21	10:7–11	1Co 6
25	237.	☐ Ecc 10:11—12:14	49:1–15	10:12–16	1Co 7:1-24
26	238.	SS 1; 2	49:16–23	10:17–22	1Co 7:25-40
27	239.	SS 3; 4	50:1–10	10:23–27	☐ 1Co 8
28	240.	SS 5; 6	50:11–21	10:28–33	☐ 1Co 9
29	241.	SS 7; 8	<u></u> 51	11:1-5	☐ 1Co 10:1–13
30	242.	☐ WSol 1; 2	52;53	11:6–10	☐ 1Co 10:14—11:1
May. 1	243.	☐ WSol 3; 4	54:1-12	11:11–15	☐ 1Co 11:2–16
2	244.	WSol 5; 6	54:13-24	11:16–20	☐ 1Co 11:17–34
3	245.	☐ WSol 7; 8	55	11:21-25	☐ 1Co 12:1–30
4	246.	☐ WSol 9; 10	<u>56</u>	11:26-30	☐ 1Co 12:31—13:13
5	247.	WSol 11:1—12:11	57	12:1-5	☐ 1Co 14:1–25
6	248.	☐ WSol 12:12—13:19	58	12:6–10	☐ 1Co 14:26–40
7	249.	☐ WSol 14	<u>59</u>	12:11–15	☐ 1Co 15:1–34
8	250.	☐ WSol 15:1—16:14	<u> </u>	12:16–20	☐ 1Co 15:35–58
9	251.	☐ WSol 16:15—18:4	61	12:21–25	☐ 1Co 16
10	252.	☐ WSol 18:5—19:22	62	12:26–31	2Co 1:1-22
11	253.		63	☐ 13:1–5	2Co 1:23—2:17
12	254.		64	13:6–10	2Co 3
13	255.	☐ WSir 5; 6	☐ 65	□ 13:11–15	2Co 4
14	256.		<u>66</u>	13:16–21	☐ 2Co 5
15	257.		67:1–20	13:22–27	☐ 2Co 6

	Day	Old Testament	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
May. 16	258.	☐ WSir 11; 12	67:21–36	14:1–5	☐ 2Co 7
17	259.	☐ WSir 13; 14	68:1–20	14:6–10	2Co 8
18	260.	☐ WSir 15; 16	68:21-37	☐ 14:11–15	2Co 9
19	261.	☐ WSir 17; 18	☐ 69	14:16–20	2Co 10
20	262.	☐ WSir 19; 20	70:1–13	14:21–25	2Co 11:1–15
21	263.	☐ WSir 21; 22	70:14-24	14:26–30	2Co 11:16-33
22	264.	☐ WSir 23:1—24:18	7 1	14:31–36	2Co 12
23	265.	WSir 24:19—25:25	72:1-14	15:1–5	2Co 13
24	266.		72:15–28	15:6–10	Gal 1
25	267.		73:1–11	15:11–15	Gal 2
26	268.		73:12–23	<u> </u>	Gal 3
27	269.	☐ WSir 32; 33	74	15:21–26	Gal 4
28	270.	☐ WSir 34; 35	<i>7</i> 5	15:27–32	Gal 5
29	271.	☐ WSir 36; 37	76:1–10	<u> </u>	Gal 6
30	272.	☐ WSir 38:1—39:11	76:11–21	☐ 16:1–5	Eph 1
31	273.	☐ WSir 39:12—40:30	77:1–17	<u> </u>	Eph 2
<u>Jun.</u> 1	274.		77:18–37	<u> </u>	Eph 3
2	275.	☐ WSir 43:1—44:18	77:38–55	16:16–20	Eph 4:1–24
3	276.		77:56–72	<u> </u>	Eph 4:25—5:14
4	277.		☐ 78	<u> </u>	Eph 5:15–33
5	278.	☐ WSir 48; 49	☐ 79	<u> </u>	Eph 6
6	279.	☐ WSir 50	80	17:6–10	Php 1
7	280.	☐ WSir 51	81	17:11–15	Php 2
8	281.	☐ Hos 1; 2	☐ 82	<u> </u>	Php 3:1—4:1
9	282.	☐ Hos 3—5	83	<u> </u>	☐ Php 4:2–23
10	283.	☐ Hos 6; 7	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Col 1
11	284.	☐ Hos 8; 9	<u>85</u>	18:1–5	Col 2
12	285.	☐ Hos 10:1—12:7	86	18:6–11	Col 3:1—4:1
13	286.	Hos 12:8—14:10	87	18:12–17	Col 4:2–18
14	287.	Am 1:1—5:3	<u> </u>	18:18–23	1Th 1
15	288.	Am 5:4—9:15	88:20–38	<u> </u>	1Th 2
16	289.	☐ Mic 1—4	88:39–53	□ 19:7–12	1Th 3
17	290.	☐ Mic 5—7	89	<u></u> 19:13–18	1Th 4
18	291.	☐ Joel 1—4	<u> </u>	19:19–24	☐ 1Th 5
19	292.	∐ Ob	☐ 91	19:25–29	2Th 1
20	293.	☐ Jon 1—4	92	20:1–5	2Th 2
21	294.	☐ Nah 1—3	93:1-15	20:6–10	☐ 2Th 3
22	295.	☐ Hab 1—3	93:16–23	20:11–15	∐ 1Ti 1
23	296.	Zep 1—3	<u></u> 94	20:16–20	☐ 1Ti 2
24	297.	☐ Hag 1; 2	95	20:21–25	☐ 1Ti 3
25	298.	Zec 1—5	☐ 96	☐ 21:1-5 ☐ 21:6-10	☐ 1Ti 4 ☐ 1Ti 5
26	299.	Zec 6—9	97; 98	☐ 21:6–10	☐ 1Ti 6
27 28	300.	Zec 10—14	99; 100	☐ 21:11–15 ☐ 21:16–20	□ 2Ti 1
	301.	☐ Mal 1—3	101:1-15	21:21-25	☐ 2Ti 2
29	302.	☐ Is 1—4	101:16-29	21:26–30	□ 2Ti 3
30 Jul 1	303.	☐ Is 5—9	☐ 102:1–12 ☐ 102:13–22	22:1–5	☐ 2Ti 4
<u>Jul.</u> 1	304.	☐ Is 10—14 ☐ Is 15—21	102:13-22	22:6–10	☐ Tts 1
2	305.	☐ Is 15—21 ☐ Is 22—26	103:19–35	22:11–15	Tts 2
3	306.	☐ Is 22—26 ☐ Is 27—30	103.19=33	22:16–20	☐ Tts 3
4 5	307. 308.	☐ Is 27—30 ☐ Is 31—36	104:16-27	22:21–26	Phm
6	309.	☐ Is 37—40	104:18-45	22:27–31	Heb 1
7	310.	☐ Is 41—43	105:1–15	23:1-5	Heb 2
8	311.	☐ Is 44—47	105:16–31	23:6–12	Heb 3
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	Day	Old Testament	Psalms	Proverbs	New Testament
<u>Jul.</u> 9	312.	☐ Is 48—51	105:32–48	23:13–18	☐ Heb 4
10	313.	☐ Is 52—57	106:1–14	23:19–23	Heb 5
11	314.	☐ Is 58—62	106:15–30	23:24–27	Heb 6
12	315.	☐ Is 63—66	106:31–43	23:28–32	Heb 7
13	316.	☐ Jer 1—3	100.51-45	23:33–36	Heb 8
14	317.		108:1–20	24:1-6	Heb 9
15	318.	☐ Jer 4—6 ☐ Jer 7—9	108:21–31	24:7–12	Heb 10:1–18
16		=		24:13–18	Heb 10:19–39
	319.	☐ Jer 10—13	109; 110		
17 18	320. 321.	☐ Jer 14—16	☐ 111; 112 ☐ 113:1–11	24:19–23 24:24–27	☐ Heb 11:1–22 ☐ Heb 11:23–40
	321.	☐ Jer 17—19 ☐ Jer 20—22			☐ Heb 11:23—40
19			113:12–26	24:28–34	_
20	323.	☐ Jer 23—26	114	24:35–39	Heb 12:28—13:25
21	324.	☐ Jer 27; 28	115; 116	25:1-5	☐ Jas 1
22	325.	☐ Jer 29—31	117:1-16	25:6-11	∐ Jas 2
23	326.	☐ Jer 32—35	117:17-29	☐ 25:12–16	∐ Jas 3
24	327.	☐ Jer 36—38	118:1–16	25:17-21	∐ Jas 4
25	328.	☐ Jer 39—41	118:17–32	25:22–26	☐ Jas 5
26	329.	☐ Jer 42—44	118:33-48	25:27–31	☐ 1Pt 1
27	330. 331.	☐ Jer 45—48	118:49-64	☐ 26:1–5 ☐ 26:6 0	☐ 1Pt 2
28 29	332.	☐ Jer 49—52 ☐ Bar 1; 2	118:65-80	26:6–9 26:10–13	☐ 1Pt 3 ☐ 1Pt 4
30	333.	☐ Bar 3—5	118:81–96	26:14–17	1Pt 5
31	334.		118:97–112 118:113–128	26:18–23	
Aug. 1	335.	☐ EJer ☐ Lam 1	118:129–144	26:24–29	☐ 2Pt 1 ☐ 2Pt 2
	336.	Lam 2	118:145–160	27:1-5	2Pt 3
2 3	337.	Lam 3	118:161–176	27:6–10	☐ 1Jn 1:1—2:1
4	338.	Lam 4	119; 120	27:11–15	1Jn 2:2–27
5	339.	Lam 5	121; 122	27:16-20	1Jn 2:28—3:24
6	340.	☐ Ezk 1—3	123; 124	27:21–24	1Jn 4:1–19
7	341.	☐ Ezk 4—7	125; 126	27:25–29	1Jn 4:20—5:21
8	342.	☐ Ezk 8—11	127; 128	28:1–5	2Jn
9	343.	☐ Ezk 12—14	129; 130	28:6–11	☐ 3Jn
10	344.	☐ Ezk 15; 16	□ 131	28:12–15	Jude
11	345.	☐ Ezk 17—19	□ 132; 133	28:16–20	Rev 1
12	346.	Ezk 20; 21	134:1–12	28:21–25	Rev 2
13	347.	Ezk 22; 23	134:13–21	28:26–30	Rev 3
14	348.	☐ Ezk 24—26	☐ 135:1–15	29:1–6	Rev 4; 5
15	349.	Ezk 27—29	135:16-26	29:7–12	Rev 6
16	350.	Ezk 30-32	136 ; 137	29:13-18	Rev 7
17	351.	Ezk 33—35	☐ 138:1–12	29:19-23	Rev 8
18	352.	Ezk 36; 37	☐ 138:13–24	29:24–28	Rev 9
19	353.	Ezk 38:1—40:23	139	30:1-5	Rev 10
20	354.	Ezk 40:24—41:26	140	30:6–10	Rev 11
21	355.	Ezk 42; 43	<u>141</u>	30:11–15	Rev 12
22	356.	☐ Ezk 44—46	142	30:16–21	Rev 13
23	357.	☐ Ezk 47; 48	143	30:22-25	Rev 14
24	358.	☐ Dan Sus 1—Dan 1:21	144:1–9	30:26–30	Rev 15:1—16:7
25	359.	☐ Dan 2:1—3:24	<u> </u>	30:31–35	Rev 16:8—21
26	360.	☐ Dan 3:25–66	☐ 145	31:1-5	Rev 17
27	361.	☐ Dan 3:67—4:18	<u>146</u>	31:6–9	Rev 18
28	362.	Dan 4:19—6:29	<u> </u>	31:10–15	Rev 19
29	363.	☐ Dan 7; 8	<u>148</u>	31:16–20	Rev 20
30	364.	Dan 9:1—11:28	<u>149</u>	31:21–25	Rev 21
31	365.	☐ Dan 11:29—Bel 42	<u> </u>	31:26–30	Rev 22

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

By the Rt. Rev. Bishop BASIL, Bishop of the Diocese of Wichita and Mid America

THE OLD TESTAMENT

This introduction is a brief description of each of the forty-nine books of the Old Testament. It is helpful to keep in mind that, like the earliest Christian community, the Orthodox Church of today continues using the Greek version of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint (LXX) The Septuagint—referencing the seventy finest Jewish scholars, from all twelve Jewish tribes, who made the translation from the Hebrew in Greek—became the universally accepted version of the Old Testament since the time of its appearance some three centuries before the birth of Christ. Our Lord Jesus Christ, together with His apostles and evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and also Peter and Paul, used this Greek version when quoting the Old Testament in their gospels and epistles. These inspired Old Testament Books tell the story of God's dealings with ancient Israel, from approximately 2000 BC until the time of Jesus.

A study of the Old Testament in the light of the authentic apostolic tradition will lead the reader to Him Who fulfilled the Law and the Prophets as He promised: our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ. This collection of forty-nine Old Testament books is traditionally subdivided into four sections: 1) the five books of the Law; 2) the books of history; 3) the books of wisdom, and; 4) the books of prophecy.

The Five Books of the Law

First there are the books of the Law: *Genesis*, meaning "beginning", since it recounts the beginning of God's creation; *Exodus*, which means "exit" or "departure", referring to the journey of the Hebrews from out of slavery in Egypt; *Leviticus*, a book detailing worship as led by the priests ordained from the tribe of Levi; *Numbers*, whose title is derived from the book's opening account of the census or numbering of the people of Israel; *Deuteronomy*, whose meaning "second law", since it gives a detailed listing of the additional laws given by God through Moses.

These first five books of the Old Testament, known jointly as the Pentateuch (*penta* means "five" in Greek) describe God's creation of the world, the rebellion of Adam and Eve and the fall of man, and the history of God's people from the days of Abraham, about 2000 BC, through the days of Moses, dated by many scholars at approximately 1250 BC.

The Books of History

The second section of the LXX Old Testament is known as the historical books. This group begins with the book of *Joshua*, the leader of the children of Israel following the death of Moses, who brings God's people into the promised land after their forty years of wandering in the wilderness. *Judges*, relates to the traditions of the various Hebrew tribes and the exploits of their own particular heroes, the Judges of whom the title speaks, who ruled the nation. The book of *Ruth* is the charming and heroic account of a Gentile woman who placed herself under the protection of the one true God, and in the process became an ancestor of King David, and of his descendent, Jesus Christ the Messiah of Israel.

First and Second Kingdoms (First and Second Samuel), whose principal characters are Samuel the faithful prophet, Saul the first king to rule over God's people, and David, Saul's successor and the first king of Judah in the south of Palestine, and Israel to the north. The books of *Third and Fourth Kingdoms* (First and Second Kings) opens with the enthronement of David's son Solomon and ends with the fall of the kingdom, including the destruction of its capital city of Jerusalem, and the exile of God's people from Palestine to Babylon.

First and Second Chronicles (First and Second Paraleipomenon) expand on the history recorded in *Third and Fourth Kingdoms*. The word Paraleipomenon is transliterated from the Greek and means "that which is omitted" in the two preceding books. The books of First and Second Ezra and Nehemiah continue this chronicle of divine history, focusing on the Jewish religious community after its return to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon.

The final books in the historical section of the Old Testament reveal the stories of people who lived heroic and God-directed lives under foreign domination and during the exile: *Tobit*, who was taken into captivity by the Assyrians; *Judith*, the pious and beautiful widow who saved her people from massacre by the invading Assyrian general; *Esther*, the Jewish queen of Persia who achieved the revocation of Haman's decree that would have allowed the persecution and mass murder of God's people; and the *Maccabees*, the family of the Hasmoneans and their followers, the faithful people who began the revolt and fought the wars of independence against foreign armies occupying their land.

The Books of Wisdom

The third section of the Old Testament is known as the books of Wisdom. The magnificent *Psalms* is the hymnal of both ancient Israel and of the

Church. The book of *Job*, which in the canonical Greek LXX comes between *Psalms* and *Proverbs*, probes the depths of a man's unshakable faith in the face of tragedy and innocent suffering. *Proverbs* is a collection of moral and religious instruction taught to young people after their return from exile in Babylon. *Ecclesiastes* tells of the preacher who philosophically seeks to understand the meaning of human existence that the good man can find in this life. The moving *Song of Songs* by Solomon is a collection of Lyric Poems, written in the language of human love and courtship, which also speaks prophetically of God's love for His beloved Bride, His Church. The *Wisdom of Solomon* promises reward and immortality to the righteous, praises wisdom and condemns the folly of idolatry. The *Wisdom of Sirach* consists of lectures to young people on ethical and religious themes.

These seven books of Wisdom literature—Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom of Solomon, and Wisdom of Sirach—proclaim that happiness (or "blessedness" in the language of the Bible) is possible only through faith in and obedience to the one true God.

The Books of Prophecy

The fourth and final section of the LXX Old Testament includes the books of prophecy, which appear in an order different from the Hebrew and Vulgate collections.

Hosea gives a message of God's own redeeming love for His chosen people, even when they spurn Him and prostitute themselves to false gods. Amos is the simple shepherd called by God to denounce a self-satisfied nation for its grave social injustice, abhorrent immorality and its shallow and meaningless piety. Micah foretells the day when nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. He speaks of peace reigning over all who do justice, who love kindness, and who walk humbly with God. Joel is the prophet who foretells the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. Obadiah prophesies the return of the exiles from Babylon. Jonah unwillingly accepts God's command to preach His mercy and forgiveness to a foreign nation.

Nahum prophesies the defeat of the powerful Assyrian enemy. Habakkuk deals with the perennial question, "How long, O Lord, shall I cry out to You, and You will not hear me?" (Hab 1:2). Zephaniah prophesies the dark days of Judah's destruction, but promises comfort and conciliation to those who wait patiently for the Lord and serve Him. Haggai, following the return of the exiles, exhorts them to rebuild the destroyed temple in order to unify their disrupted religious life and, more importantly, to

prepare for the coming of the long awaited Messiah.

Zachariah prophesies the image of the messianic Prince of Peace, the Good Shepherd who would lay down His life for the flock. *Malachi* exhorts God's people to faithfulness and asserts the fatherhood of God over all nations. He foretells that God will appoint a forerunner, similar to the ancient prophet Elijah who will appear before the Messiah and prepare the world for the coming Day of the Lord.

Isaiah exhorts the people of God to place their confidence in the Lord, and to lead private and public lives which manifest this reliance. From Isaiah, we hear the prophecies of a Son to be born of a virgin, and of the Suffering Servant—the Messiah—who would be led as an innocent sheep to the slaughter, and by whose stripes we would be healed. Jeremiah severely criticizes God's people for abandoning the one true God and turning instead to the worship of idols. Baruch was appointed to be read on feast days as a confession of sins. In Lamentations, the author Jeremiah mourns the destruction of the holy city of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. The Epistle of Jeremiah is addressed to those about to be carried off into exile in Babylon.

Ezekiel, the prophet of the exiles, assures his hearers of the abiding presence of God amongst them, even in exile and servitude. Finally, Daniel writes an apocalyptic or mystical end-time prophecy which is filled with difficult and often obscure signs and symbols. In the Greek LXX, Daniel begins with the heroic story of Susanna and ends with the fascinating account of Bel and the Serpent.

These forty-nine God-inspired Old Testament books divided into four sections—books of the Law, of History, of Wisdom, and of Prophecy—which serve as an introduction to John the Baptist's preparation of the world for the coming of the Messiah, who is Isaiah's Suffering Servant, Zachariah's Prince of Peace, and the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the flock.

THE NEW TESTAMENT The Four Gospels

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John recall the events in the life of Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Man. The first three are called the Synoptic Gospels, in that they set forth a "common viewpoint" of the chronology of events and the massage of Christ in His life and ministry. Matthew addresses his gospel primarily to fellow Jews. Mark is likely the first Gospel to be written, and speaks of Christ as servant of all (Mk 10:45). Luke, himself a physician, reveals the Incarnate Christ and His earthly

ancestry. This Son of Man saves and heals the fallen race. *John,* the last of the four gospels to be written, emphasizes the divinity of Christ, the eternal Son and Word of God, who became Man. John's gospel further reveals seven miracles of Christ, not all of them in chronological order.

Acts

Written by St. Luke, these are the *Acts* (accomplishments) *of the Apostles*, but mainly of Peter (ch 1-12) and Paul (ch 13-28). Acts chronicles the earliest history of the Church from Pentecost to approximately AD 65.

The Letters (or Epistles) of St. Paul

The first nine of Paul's letters are written to churches. *Romans* was the only letter Paul wrote to a community he had not previously visited. Thus, the implication is that much of what he wrote to the Church at Rome he preached in other places.

Corinth was a center of commerce, immorality and false religion. *First Corinthians* is therefore a corrective epistle calling for unity, virtue, forbearance, Eucharistic order and proper use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In contrast *Second Corinthians* recognizes the repentence within the church on the part of many, and St. Paul defends his apostolic authority.

In *Galatians*, Paul addresses several churches in Asia Minor, defending his apostleship and calling the faithful to live their lives in the strength of the Holy Spirit instead of in submission to the laws of the old covenant. *Ephesians* is a marvelous discourse on how the Church should conduct itself. This community is rich in dedication to Christ, yet just a few decades later, the Lord tells them, "you have left your first love" (Rev 2:4).

Philippians is the epistle of joy. Paul writes from a Roman prison, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say rejoice!" (Php 4:4). *Colossians* presents Christ as "the head of the body, the church..." (Col 1:18), preeminent in all things.

First Thessalonians, the first letter St. Paul penned, was a letter of encouragement written about AD 51, shortly after he planted that Church. Second Thessalonians acknowledges persecution and warns of lawlessness urging the Christians to "stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught…" (2Th 2:15).

Next, Paul addresses letters to individuals. In *First Timothy*, the aging apostle speaks to his youthful understudy about effective oversight of the church. In *Second Timothy*, the last letter Paul wrote, he encourages Timothy to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Ti 2:1). Paul

is already in prison in Rome (1:8) awaiting martyrdom.

Titus is sent by Paul to Crete to set the church "in order" and "appoint elders in every city" (Tts 1:5). If this sounds like the work of a bishop, it is (Tts 1:7,8), and Titus is consistently named in early Church records as the Bishop of Crete. *Philemon* is a Christian slave-holder, and Paul writes him to receive back Onesimus (Phm 10-16), his runaway slave, who has become a Christian with Paul in Rome.

Hebrews is the last of the epistles attributed to St. Paul, but with little evidence it was actually written by Paul. It is a general letter to Jewish believers in Christ to continue on in the Faith. It assures them that Christ, the great High Priest in the heavens (Heb 8:1), is their once for all sacrifice for sin (Heb 10:10) and victor over death (Heb 12:1,2).

The General Epistles

James, the brother of the Lord and first bishop of Jerusalem, writes to fellow Jews, "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (Jam 1:1). His message? "Faith without works is dead" (Jam 1:20).

First Peter, written by the first among the apostles, urges obedience to God and man, willingness to suffer for Christ's sake, and effective pastoring of the flock. In Second Peter, he discusses divine power for the faithful (deification), divine judgment for false teachers and the Day of the Lord.

Next, John the Theologian offers three general epistles. *First John* is a stirring personal testimonial to God's forgiveness, love for His children and gift of eternal life. In *Second John*, he addresses an "elect lady and her children" (v1), urging them to obey the Lord's commands and beware of deceivers. *Third John* Commends Gaius and Demetrius and warns against Diotrephes.

Finally, Jude, the Lord's brother, writes a short letter exhorting the faithful to contend for the truth and beware of the devil's servant. He finishes with a stunning benediction.

Revelation

Written by St. John the Theologian, he entitles it "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1). What the book of *Daniel* is to the Old Testament, *Revelation* is to the New Testament. Another title is the *Apocalypse*, a transliteration of the Greek word for "revelation". The book speaks prophetically both to current and future events, to judgment and salvation and ends with the glorious New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven "as a bride adorned for her husband" (21:2).