

# The Old Testament – An A4 View

<p><b>Torah</b></p> <p><b>Genesis</b> <b>The book of Beginnings</b>  1 - 11 Primeval history: Adam &amp; Eve, Cain &amp; Abel, Noah, Tower of Babel  12 - 50 Patriarchal history: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph <span style="float: right;">2000</span></p> <p><b>Exodus</b> <b>Emergence of a nation – deliverance</b>  1 - 2 Bondage  3-18 Deliverance: Moses, Plagues, Passover, Crossing Red Sea <span style="float: right;">1500</span>  19 - 40 Organisation: Covenant, Law, Tabernacle</p> <p><b>Leviticus</b> <b>Handbook of the priest – communion</b>  1 - 10 Way to God by sacrifice - a privilege : The offerings, The priesthood  11 - 27 Walk with God by sanctification: The practice: Purity, Feasts, Final instructions</p> <p><b>Numbers</b> <b>The wilderness wandering, punishment and preservation</b>  1 - 10 Prep for journey  11 - 14 Disaffection  15 - 19 Interruption of journey  2 - 36 Returning to the journey</p> <p><b>Deuteronomy</b> <b>Word we need – obedience</b>  1 - 4 Reflection on history  5 - 16 Work recalled – modified for new setting  17 - 30 Warnings covenant renewed  31 - 34 Warriors rewarded: song, blessing, death</p> <p><b>Joshua</b> <b>Entering the land Earlier Prophet</b>  1 - 12 Conquest  13 - 22 Occupation and settlement - Canaan  23 - 24 Final sermons - Who will you serve?</p> <p><b>Judges</b> <b>A sad cycle – decline Earlier Prophet</b>  1 - 2 Explanation / intro  3 - 16 History  17 - 21 Illustrative epilogue: Infidelity / immorality</p> <p><b>Ruth</b> <b>Faith amid faithlessness - love</b>  1 - 2 Choice of faith: Love speak its mind - resolve &amp; does its duty - service  3 Venture of faith: Love seeks its lover - request  4 Reward of faith: Love fulfils its hope - joy</p> <p><b>Samuel</b> <b>I Gives us a king Earlier Prophet</b>  1 - 7 Last of judges: Eli and Samuel  8 - 15 First Kings: Samuel and Saul  16 - 31 Gods anointed: Saul, David <span style="float: right;">1000</span></p> <p><b>Samuel II</b> <b>David's 40 year reign - consecration</b>  1 - 10 Triumphs: King over Judah 7 yrs, King over Israel 33 yrs  11 - 24 Troubles: in family, in nation</p> <p><b>Kings I</b> <b>Division of kingdom – disruption Earlier Prophet</b>  1 - 12 Kingdom undivided: David &amp; Solomon (40 yrs)  12 - 22 Kingdom divided: first 8 yrs of two kingdoms, Elijah's ministry , Carmel</p> <p><b>Kings II</b> <b>Downfall of kingdoms – dispersion</b>  1 - 10 Annals of Israel – northern kingdom: Elisha's struggle  11 - 17 Altering annals – both kingdoms: Fall of Israel to Assyrians  18 - 25 Annals of Judah – southern kingdom: Fall of Judah to Babylonians</p> <p><b>Chronicles I</b> <b>House of the Lord – worship History</b>  1 - 9 Israel's main genealogies – its people: Primeval &amp; Patriarchal, National  10 - 29 David's reign – preparation: Anointed Saul/David, Ark, Covenant, Temple</p> <p><b>Chronicles II</b> <b>Temple versus throne – apostasy</b>  1 - 9 The reign of Solomon: Temple rebuilt 7yrs, Throne magnified 14 yrs  1 - 36 The Kings of Judah: Temple destroyed, throne captured</p> <p><b>Northern Kingdom (Israel) deported to Assyria 722</b>  <b>Southern Kingdom (Judah) deported to Babylon 587</b></p> <p><b>Return from Babylon 539 - 536</b></p> <p><b>Ezra</b> <b>A returning remnant – reconstruction History</b>  <i>Following decree of Cyrus</i>  1 - 6 Return under Zerubbabbel the prince: Return, reorganisation  <i>Following decree of Artaxerxes (60 yrs later)</i>  7 - 10 Return under Ezra the scribe: Return, reformation, people consecrated</p> <p><b>Nehemiah</b> <b>Rebuilding the walls History</b>  1 - 7 The walls rebuilt: Construction in face of opposition  8 - 10 The Law read: revival through instruction  11 - 13 The work consolidated: settlement and reformation</p> <p><b>Esther</b> <b>God in the shadows</b>  1 - 4 The grave danger to the Jews: Crisis anticipated  5 - 10 The great deliverance of the Jews: Crisis overruled</p> <p><b>Wisdom Literature</b></p> <p><b>Job</b> <b>Problem of pain</b>  1 - 2 Prologue, prose – Job's disasters: God &amp; Satan, mtgs – evil under God  3 - 42 Dialogue, poetic drama – Job debates: Friends, intervention, revelation  42 Epilogue, prose – Job's deliverance: Resolution and controversy</p> <p><b>Psalms</b> <b>Hymnbook – know the Lord</b>  Book 1 1 - 41 God our saviour: to be trusted by faith  Book 2 42 - 72 God our king: to be obeyed as we submit to him  Book 3 73 - 89 God our guide: to be appealed to in hope  Book 4 90 - 106 God the eternal: to be worshiped and loved  Book 5 107 - 150 God the wonder worker: to be praised with joy</p> <p><b>Proverbs</b> <b>Practical wisdom – conduct</b>  1 - 9 Instruction on wisdom – fifteen sonnets  10 - 24 First collection of proverbs: Practical morality, statements gathered by Solomon, sayings from Egypt and Babylon  25 - 29 Second collection of proverbs: Practical morality, word pictures gathered by Hezekiah's men 200 yrs later</p>	<p>30 - 31 Appendix: sayings of Agur (Arabic), sayings of King Lemuel (Easterner)  Acrostic poem on the perfect wife.</p> <p><b>Ecclesiastes</b> <b>The emptiness of materialism – pessimism</b>  1 Problem stated  1 - 8 Problem studied – evidence gathered: Experiment, observation, morality  9 - 12 Problem solved – effects revealed: Review, conclusion- trust and obey</p> <p><b>Songs of Songs (Solomon)</b> <b>The fulfilment of love – communion</b>  1:1 - 2:7 Wedding day - humble  2:8 - 3:5 Courtship days recalled – hesitating  3:6 - 5:1 Betrothal remembered – happy  5:2 - 6:3 Troubled dream – half hearted  6:4 - 7:10 Healing of Praise - help  7:11 - 8:4 Need to go back to go forward – home  8:5 - 8:14 Renewed love at Lebanon – harmony</p> <p><b>Isaiah</b> <b>The Lord is King – holiness and salvation Later Prophet</b>  1 - 39 Before the fall of Jerusalem – foretelling:  1 - 35 Condemnation of Judah &amp; nations  36 - 39 Historical interludes, looking backwards, looking  40 - 66 After the fall of Jerusalem – foretelling: forwards: Comfort when idols have gone, saviour has come, God's people are righteous</p> <p><b>Jeremiah</b> <b>The Lord is Judge – faithfulness (to Judah) Later Prophet</b>  1 - 39 Before the fall of Jerusalem: Call, ministry, messages  40 - 25 After the fall of Jerusalem: Messages, historical postscript</p> <p><b>Lamentations</b> <b>The fall of Jerusalem – weeping (acrostic songs to Judah)</b>  1 The Solitary City: Jerusalem  2 Sources of her sorrows: Lord's anger described  3 The prophet's identification: Jeremiah's grief  4 Desolation: The Lord's anger defended  5 Appeal of out of sorrow: Jerusalem's prayer</p> <p><b>Ezekiel</b> – <b>The Lord give hope – Glory Later Prophet</b>  1 - 3 Call and commission  4 - 24 Present judgement on Judah  25 - 32 Judgement on the nations  33 - 48 Restoration of Israel</p> <p><b>Daniel</b> <b>The Lord in charge History</b>  1 - 6 Historic: Daniel under - Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius  7 - 12 Prophetic: In time of – Belshazzar, Darius, Cyrus</p> <p><b>Minor Prophets</b></p> <p><b>Hosea</b> <b>Decline and fall of Israel – spiritual adultery</b>  1 - 3 The training of the prophet: Personal affliction, faithless wife  4 - 14 The teaching of the prophet: God is holy, just, love</p> <p><b>Joel</b> <b>The day of the Lord – judgement</b>  1 - 2:11 An alarm – day of the Lord: Plague of locusts, desolation  2:12 - 27 An appeal eleventh hour hope  2:28 - 3:21 An Anticipation: the 'after days', deliverance</p> <p><b>Amos</b> <b>Accountability for abused privilege – Justice</b>  1 - 2 Eight burdens: Exposing and sentencing sin  3 - 6 Three Sermons: revealing social corruption  7 - 9 Five visions: show reaction of God  9:11 - 15 Final promise of restoration</p> <p><b>Obadiah</b> <b>Principle of poetic justice – retribution</b>  1 - 10 God's judgement on Edom: Doom and destruction  11 - 16 Edom's sin against God: Betrayal  17 - 21 God's blessing on his people: Deliverance</p> <p><b>Jonah</b> <b>Condemnation of exclusiveness – mission</b>  1 Jonah and the storm: Fleeing from God  2 Jonah and the fish: Praying to God  3 Jonah and the city: Speaking for God  4 Jonah and the Lord: Learning from God</p> <p><b>Micah</b> <b>Warning under the shadow of the storm – return</b>  1 - 3 Condemnation imminent – judgement to nations and leaders  4 - 5 Consolation – ultimate blessing promised: promise of restoration  6 - 7 Controversy – present repentance called: Lord will save, repentance</p> <p><b>Nahum</b> <b>The end of a cruel nation – sentence</b>  1 Verdict of vengeance – declared  2 Vision of vengeance – described: Fall of Nineveh  3 Vindication of vengeance – deserved</p> <p><b>Habakkuk</b> <b>From fear to faith – dialogue (to Judah)</b>  1 Faith grapples with problems – sighing: Protests, prophets troubled  2 Faith grasps the solution – seeing and silenced: Prophet taught  3 Faith glories in solution – singing: Prophet triumphant</p> <p><b>Zephaniah</b> <b>Through judgement to blessing – vindication</b>  1 - 2:3 Look within – wrath coming on Judah: Declaration of retribution  2:4 - 3:8 Look around – wrath on all nations: 5 nations exhort to repent, Lord's day  3:9 - 20 Look beyond – after wrath, healing: Promise of redemption</p> <p><b>Haggai</b> <b>Give God first place – consider</b>  1 God's call to work - word of reproach: To arouse - 1<sup>st</sup> day of 6<sup>th</sup> month  2:1 - 9 God's call to hope - word of support: To encourage - 21<sup>st</sup> day of 7<sup>th</sup> month  2:10-19 God's call to thought - word of blessing: To confirm - 24<sup>th</sup> day of 9<sup>th</sup> month</p> <p><b>Zechariah</b> <b>Old Testament apocalypse – consummation</b>  1 - 8 Chosen people and the temple: Temple being built, visions, fasting, feast  9 - 14 Messianic king and the kingdom: after temple is built</p> <p><b>Malachi</b> <b>Press on to the goal – apostasy</b>  1:1 - 5 Fundamental affirmation – God's unchanging love  1:6 - 2 Formal accusation – humanities unfaithful conduct:  Religious decline, Social debasement  3 - 4 Final announcement – God's unchanging character.  Coming day to judge guilty and bless godly</p>
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Headings from Colin Sinclair's *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Bible* ISBN 978 1 85424 84 1