

## How to Study the Bible

**2 Tim 2:15** Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. KJV

“**Bible:**” from two Greek words: “ta biblia” meaning “the book.”

- It is impossible to understand the NT without the OT
- The NT contains at least 295 references to the OT
- The NT contains at least 278 verses from the OT
- The NT refers 56 times to God as the author of the OT
- God’s plan for the NT is concealed in the OT
- God’s plan for OT is revealed in the NT

Bible	66 Books	1189 Chapters	31,173 Verses
OT	39 Books	929 Chapters	23,214 Verses
NT	27 Books	260 Chapters	7,959 Verses

Most attribute the OT number system to Rabbi Isaac Nathan ben Kalonymus around 1440 AD, for use with his Hebrew concordance.

Robert Estienne standardized the NT chapter and verse numbers in the 1550s for use with his Greek lexicon.

**The Bible is a divine Book. We must pray for wisdom and revelation when we study it.**

**Eph 1:17** [For I always pray to] the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, that He may grant you a spirit of wisdom and revelation [of insight into mysteries and secrets] in the [deep and intimate] knowledge of Him. AMP

**Always approach the Bible understanding that it is the supernatural Word of God.**

**2 Peter 1:20** Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. KJV

- This means we must always consider how other Christians and the Body of Christ at large views different verses.
- By saying, no "*private interpretation*," 2 Peter 1:20 also means we must consider how other Scriptures may collectively influence how we view individual passages. The principal being

that the pattern is established by the entire weight of Holy Scripture and the total must always be used to interpret individual verses.

**I. The Science of Bible Study is called Hermeneutics** [hur meh NEWT icks] — The principles and methods used to interpret a given passage of Scripture.

- The language in which it was written (OT-Hebrew)
- Historical context
- The identity and purpose of the author
- The situation to which it was originally addressed
- The literary nature of the passage

**A. Two Major questions we should ask of every passage:**

What did it say to the people to whom it was written?

What does it say to us now?

**B. The first Principle of hermeneutics is Context.**

“The primary rule of biblical interpretation is "context." If the Bible student would merely let a passage speak for itself within the context of the paragraph, chapter, or book, the majority of all errors in interpretation would be avoided.” *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*

- We first look at a passage or subject by itself.
- Look at the passage or subject in the context of where in the chapter it is found.
- Look at the chapter before and after your passage.
- Look at the entire book in which it is written.
- Study the subject within the context of the whole Bible.

**C. Different Types of Literature Found in the OT**

1. Historical Narrative

**Ex 40:17** And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up. KJV

2. Prophecy

**Ezek 35:2** Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it, 3 And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. KJV

3. Poetry

**Psa 91:4** He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. KJV

4. Proverbs

**Prov 22:6** Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.  
KJV

## **II. Bibles and reference materials for Bible Study**

- Septuagint Bible (primary OT source of NT writers)
- Latin Vulgate
- Hebrew Bible (Masoretic)
- Received Text (Textus Receptus) & King James Bible
- Modern Bible Translations
- Study Bibles
- Concordances and Word Study
- Commentary
- Bible Handbooks and Dictionaries
- Historic Reference Books and Apocrypha
- Computer Programs (PC Study Bible)

## **III. The Old Testament (OT)**

“*Old Testament*.” is a Christian description of the first 39 books given by God to the Jewish people, traditionally perceived as being primarily related to the “Old Covenant.”

Note: The Jewish Bible (OT) is divided into 24 books and the Christian OT contains the same material divided into 39 books.

### **Traditional Jewish Bible**

The Law/Teaching

The Prophets

The Writings

### **Christian Bible**

Pentateuch

Historical Books

Poetic/Wisdom Books

Major Prophets

Minor Prophets

**Traditional Jewish Bible** (Tanakh, 24 books)

**The Law** (Torah) - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy

**The Prophets** (Nevi'im) - Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and The Twelve (minor prophets)

**The Writings** (Ketuvim) - Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra/Nehemiah and Chronicles

**Note: The NT uses the Jewish order of OT books.**

**Luke 11:51** From the blood of Abel (*Gen 4:8*) unto the blood of Zacharias (*2 Ch 24:20-21*, KJV)

**Christian Bible** (39 books in OT, 27 books in NT)

**Pentateuch** - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy

**Historical Books** - Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther

**Poetic/Wisdom Books** – Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon

**Major Prophets** – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel

**Minor Prophets** – Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi

**Gospels** – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

**Historical** - Acts

**Epistles** – Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 & 3 John and Jude

**Apocalyptic** - Revelation