

# *BIBLE BASICS*

*PRESENTED BY OLPH SCRIPTURE STUDY 2026*

# *PREFACE*

- The best-selling book of all time is the Bible. It is impossible to know exactly how many copies have been printed in the roughly 1,500 years since its contents were standardized, but research conducted by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 2021 suggests that the total number probably lies between 5 and 7 billion copies.
- Approximately 100 million Bibles are printed each year.

# *WHY A PRESENTATION ON BIBLE BASICS?*

“Everyone should read the BEST  
SELLER of all time ...”

## ***BUT:***

- “The Bible is intimidating.”
- “I’ve had zero education on the Bible.”
  - Where did it come from?
  - Why is it considered God’s Word?
- “There are so many versions.”
  - Catholic vs. Protestant Bibles
  - Multiple Catholic versions
- I have no idea:
  - How to begin reading the Bible
  - How to look up something in the Bible
  - How to even select which Bible to read!

***The Goal: Get You Comfortable with the Bible***

# *BIBLE: ORIGINS AND AUTHORSHIP*



## **Agenda:**

- Where did the Bible come From?
  - Who wrote it? When? Why?

Starting at the beginning...

...Jewish Scripture...Old Testament

...New Testament...One Bible

...Many Versions

- Reading / Studying the Bible
- “Walk-Through” the Bible
- Q&A
- Additional Resources

# OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS (46)

## Pentateuch

- [Genesis](#)
- [Exodus](#)
- [Leviticus](#)
- [Numbers](#)
- [Deuteronomy](#)

## Historical

- [Joshua](#)
- [Judges](#)
- [Ruth](#)
- [1 Samuel](#)
- [2 Samuel](#)
- [1 Kings](#)
- [2 Kings](#)
- [1 Chronicles](#)
- [2 Chronicles](#)
- [Ezra](#)
- [Nehemiah](#)

## Novellas

- [Tobit](#)
- [Judith](#)
- [Esther](#)
- [1 Maccabees](#)
- [2 Maccabees](#)

## Wisdom

- [Job](#)
- [Psalms](#)
- [Proverbs](#)
- [Ecclesiastes](#)
- [Song of Songs](#)
- [Wisdom](#)
- [Sirach](#)

## Prophetic

- \* [Isaiah](#) \* Major Prophets
- \* [Jeremiah](#)
- [Lamentations](#)
- [Baruch](#)
- \* [Ezekiel](#)
- \* [Daniel](#)
- [Hosea](#)
- [Joel](#)
- [Amos](#)
- [Obadiah](#)
- [Jonah](#)
- [Micah](#)
- [Nahum](#)
- [Habakkuk](#)
- [Zephaniah](#)
- [Haggai](#)
- [Zechariah](#)
- [Malachi](#)

Deuterocanonical Books  
(in Septuagint – Greek OT)

# *AUTHORSHIP OF THE BIBLE – OLD TESTAMENT*

## Historical

- **Patriarchs** – Founding Fathers of Judaism – “Covenant”
  - Abraham – 2000 BC
  - Isaac – 1900 BC
  - Jacob – 1800 BC
- **Jews in Egypt**
  - Jacob’s descendants – 1800-1400 BC
  - Moses and the Exodus – 1400-1360 BC
- **Jews return to Canaan** – 1360 BC

## Biblical

- **Pentateuch** (aka Torah)– First 5 Books (Greek for “five books”)
  - Attributed to Moses
  - Earliest version, 950 BC, Major edit 500’s BC

\*All the dates shown are simplified for ease of general understanding. (Scholars differ on dates)

# *AUTHORSHIP OF THE BIBLE – OLD TESTAMENT*

## Historical

- **Jews in Canaan** – 12 Tribes, 2 kingdoms, 12 Judges – 1360-1000 BC
- **Reign of David** – 1000-960 BC
  - Warrior, King, Musician, Poet
  - Writes the Psalms
- **Reign of Solomon** – 960-930 BC
  - Builds the First Temple
  - Writes Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, others
- **Reign of multiple kings** –930-721 BC

## Biblical

- **Historical Books** – 950 BC
  - Authorship: Joshua, Samuel, Nathan and others
- **Wisdom Books** – 950 BC
  - Authorship: David, Solomon and others

# *AUTHORSHIP OF THE BIBLE – OLD TESTAMENT*

## Historical

- **Collapse of the Kingdoms**
  - Northern Kingdom – Israel – 721 BC (Assyrians)
  - Southern Kingdom – Judah – 586 BC (Babylonians)
- **Return to Judah** (aka Judea)– 538 BC (Persians)
  - Three returning waves
  - Second Temple is constructed

## Biblical

- **Prophetic Books** – 740-530 BC
  - Authorship: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekial and others

# *AUTHORSHIP OF THE BIBLE – OLD TESTAMENT*

## Historical

- **Jewish Resettlement** in Judea 538-333 BC
  - Settling into the region
  - Growing conflict with Samaria
- **Greek/Roman Rule**— 333 BC – 136 AD
  - Maccabean Revolt – 167-160 BC
  - Hasmonean Rule – 160-37 BC
  - Herodian Rule – 37 BC-4 AD

## Biblical

- Hebrew Bible, “Tanakh”, takes shape – 500’s BC
  - Torah (Law) – 5 books
  - **Nevi'im** (Prophets) – 8 books
  - **Ketuvim** (Writings) – 11 books
- **Biblical Novellas** – 300-100 BC
  - Authorship: Tobit, Judith and others
- Septuagint - 250 BC?
  - Greek version of Hebrew Bible – “popular” text
  - Favored by early Christians, becomes the Old Testament
- Hebrew Bible Canon - 100’s BC?
  - Masoretic Text - “official” text of Rabbinic Judaism
  - Excludes some books in the Septuagint

**Septuagint and Hebrew Canon was known to Jesus, Paul, and Apostles**

# *NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS (27)*

## Gospels

- [Matthew](#)
- [Mark](#)
- [Luke](#)
- [John](#)
- [Acts of the Apostles](#)

## New Testament Letters

- [Romans](#)
- [1 Corinthians](#)
- [2 Corinthians](#)
- [Galatians](#)
- [Ephesians](#)
- [Philippians](#)
- [Colossians](#)
- [1 Thessalonians](#)
- [2 Thessalonians](#)
- [1 Timothy](#)
- [2 Timothy](#)
- [Titus](#)
- [Philemon](#)
- [Hebrews](#)

## Catholic Letters

- [James](#)
- [1 Peter](#)
- [2 Peter](#)
- [1 John](#)
- [2 John](#)
- [3 John](#)
- [Jude](#)
- [Revelation](#)

# *AUTHORSHIP OF THE BIBLE – **NEW** TESTAMENT*

## Historical

- Jesus – 6 BC-30 AD
- Paul – 6-65 AD
- Apostles Martyred – 44-90 AD
  - excl Judas and John

## Biblical

- Paul's Letters – 54-65 AD
- Catholic Letters – 50-100 AD
- Gospels
  - Mark – John Mark (Peter) – 60's AD?
  - Matthew – Matthew (Apostle) – Pre/post 70 AD?
  - Luke – Luke (Paul) – 80's?
  - John – John (Apostle) – 90's?
- Acts – Luke (Paul) – 80's?
- Revelation – John (Apostle) – 95 AD

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**End of Scriptural Authorship**

# *HISTORY OF THE BIBLE – AFTER AUTHORSHIP*

## Ecclesiastic Events

- Corpus of the New Testament formed – 100-382
- Council of Rome – Canon of the Bible – 382
- St. Jerome translates the Bible, Greek to Latin – 383-405
- Protestant Reformation starts - 1517
  - Luther rejects deuterocanonical books as scripture
  - Luther translates the Bible into German; others follow
- Catholic Bible Canon confirmed by the **Council of Trent in 1546**
- Pope Pius XII (1943), Vatican II (1966 ) promote biblical scholarship, multiple versions

## Bible Version

- **Vulgate**– Official Latin Bible – 405
- Gutenberg Bible (Latin) – 1455
- Douay-Rheims Bible (English) – Catholic Vulgate – 1609
- King James Bible (English) – Protestant Vulgate – 1611 (revised 1885-English Revised Version)
- American Standard Version (Prot) – trans. from original Greek and Hebrew texts – 1901

# *WHERE ARE WE TODAY?*

## *DIFFERING VIEWS, SIMILAR TRANSLATIONS*

- Interpretation Differences
  - Catholic vs Protestant Bible Perspectives
    - Catholics: Scriptural interpretation from the **Magisterium**
    - Protestants: **Individual** interprets and decides
    - (Protestant Bibles exclude 7 OT books, “Apocrypha”)
- Translation Similarities
  - Academic—strict word-for-word translation
  - Faith-Based—modified text to convey meaning
  - Cultural—gender neutral
  - Ease of Understanding—modern word usage
  - Age-Appropriate—child friendly

# *WHERE ARE WE TODAY?*

## *CATHOLIC OPTIONS*

### • Translation Versions

- **NABRE** - New American Bible Revised Edition
  - USCCB Approved, used at Mass, Academic footnotes
- **RSV2CE** - Revised Standard Version 2<sup>nd</sup> Catholic Edition
  - Popular academic translation, no footnotes
- **NRSVCE** - New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition
  - Similar to RSV2CE, but Gender neutral
- **NCB** - New Catholic Bible
  - Similar to NABRE, newer, faith-based footnotes
- **RNJB** - Revised New Jerusalem Bible
  - Preferred by clergy in Europe and Asia
- **DRV** - Douay-Rheims Version Bible
  - Old English, only Catholic Vulgate, last revision:1752

# *READING THE BIBLE*

*...FROM PASSIVE  
LISTENING, TO  
ACTIVE READING*

## "Casual to Purposeful Reading"

- Where to start
  - Join a group study?
  - Reading on your own?
  - Reading beginning to end– Beware!
  - (Start easy: Gospels, Proverbs, Genesis)
- Where to read
  - Home? Church? On the way to work?
- When
  - Whenever the Spirit moves you?
  - Scheduled time/day. Before Mass?
- How long and how fast?
  - Depends on the text
  - How much time to you have?
  - Highlighting or note-taking

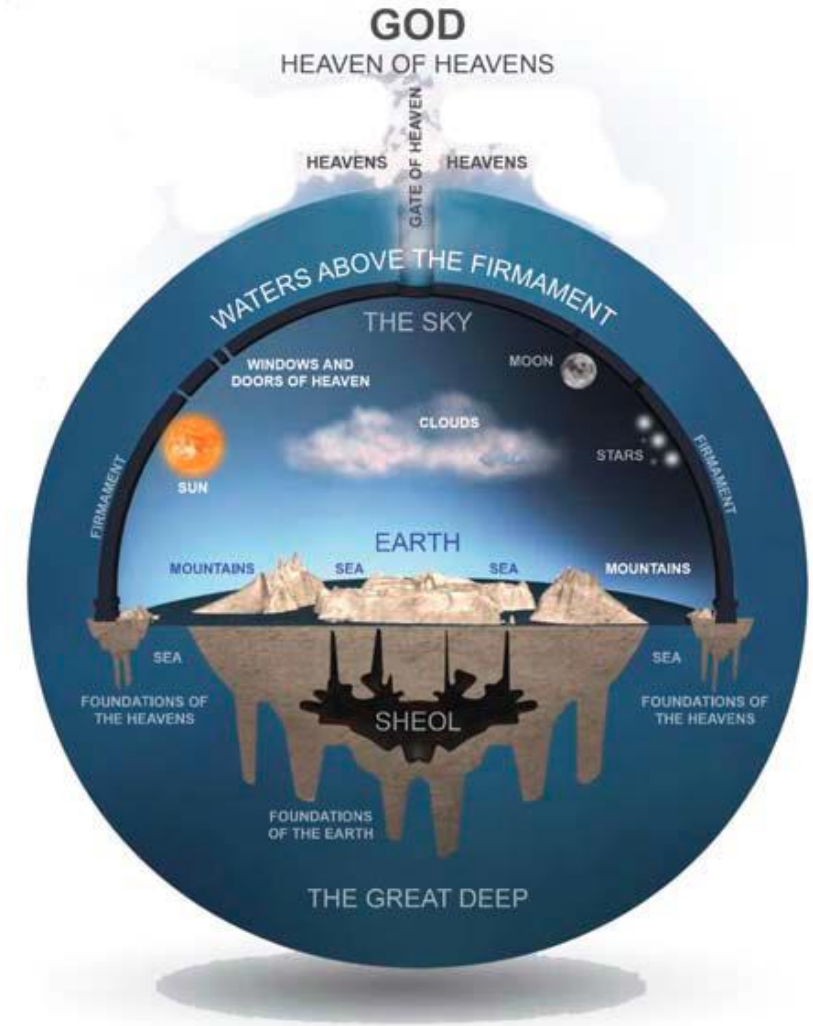


# *STUDYING THE BIBLE*

*...TO DEEPEN  
MY FAITH*

From Casual/Purposeful to Exegetical

- **Incorporating Context**
  - Where in the corpus
  - Time and place of authorship
  - Author's literary purpose – the message – and format
  - Historical (world) context
  - Alterations or edits over time
  - Scholarly Interpretation or conjecture (commentaries)
  - Archeological discoveries and insights
  - Culture and customs
- Catholic Faith and Tradition
- Lectio Divina



# *STUDY AIDS – HELP WITH CONTEXT*

- Video Resources
  - **Bible Project** (see “Helpful Links” in Appendix)
  - Movies
    - **The Chosen**
    - Hollywood (Ten Commandments, Passion of the Christ, etc)
    - Formed (Catholic film site)
- Audio Resources
  - **Bible in a Year** – Schmitz Podcast (see Helpful Links)
  - Assorted podcasts (Peterson, Barron, Cavins, others)
  - Audio Bible: **Bible Gateway, USCCB** (see Helpful Links)
- Media
  - **Word on Fire**, EWTN, Relevant Radio, Shalom World, etc.
- Books
  - **Study Bibles** – (Ignatius Press and others)
  - **Commentaries** (numerous)
  - Bible Dictionaries
  - Bible Companion books - Amazon, Library, Catholic bookstores
- Bible Studies – text combined w/ videos
  - **Ascension Press**, Little Rock, Ignatian Press, Threshold, etc,
  - **Parish Scripture Study – OLPH and others**
- Small-group discussions!

# *A QUICK “WALK- THROUGH”*

## *OPEN YOUR BIBLE!*

### Past the Table of Contents

- Multiple “Introductions”
  - “Learning about...” and general intro
  - Timelines

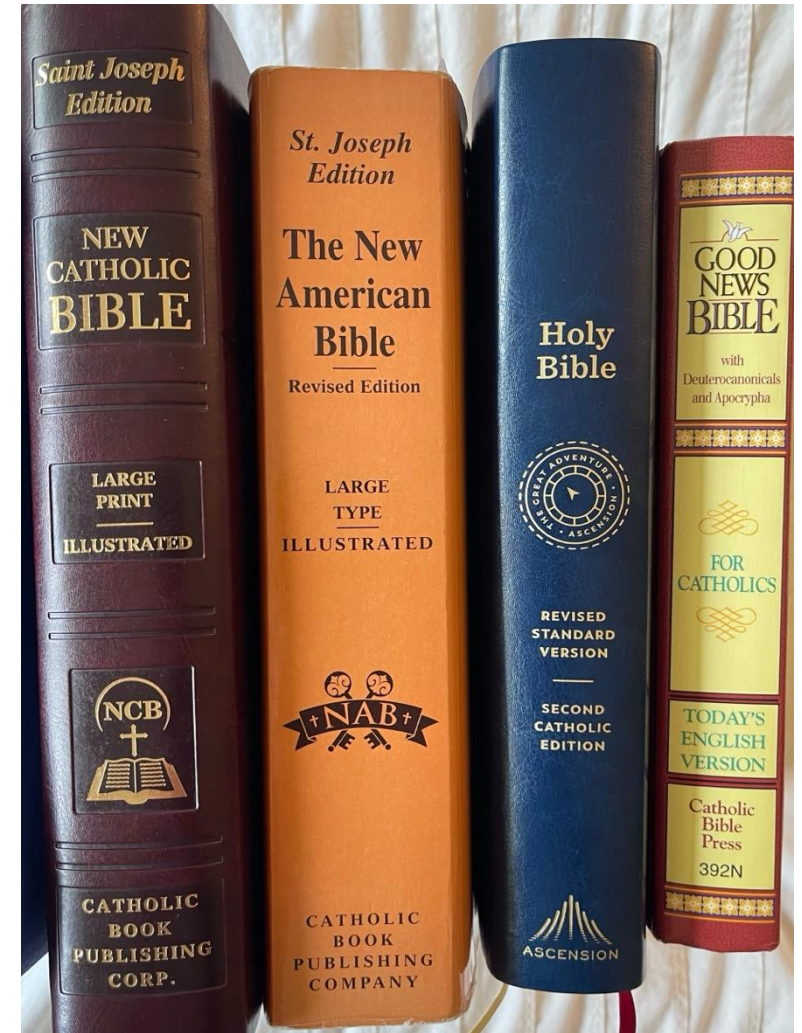
### Commentaries — (reviews of text)

- Front of the Bible
- Start of each book
- footnotes on each page (NABRE)

### Maps, Photos, Art

### Miscellaneous

- Dictionaries, cross references, charts, other indexes



# *CONCLUSION:*

*BIBLE –  
GREATEST  
LITERARY  
WORK...EVER*

- The Word of God
  - Reverence and Respect
  - Etiquette
- Attitude/Mindset
- Openness/Emptiness
- Prayer before Study

Questions?

# *APPENDIX*

# HELPFUL LINKS

Link	Description
<a href="#">Basic Assertions of the Bible</a>	18 Basic tenants/beliefs of OLPH's Catholic Bible Study
<a href="#">Bible Project*: Old Testament</a>	YouTube overview of Old Testament (~12 min video overview)
<a href="#">Bible Project*: New Testament</a>	YouTube overview of New Testament (~8 min video overview)
<a href="#">Bible Gateway</a>	Website provides >50 English translations of Bible for comparison plus other tools
<a href="#">Blue Bible Maps</a>	Online maps relevant for Old Testament readings
<a href="#">USCCB</a>	Official United States Conference of Catholic Bishops site; several Bible tools
<a href="#">Catechism</a>	USCCB's "up to date" Catechism of the Catholic Church
<a href="#">Bible in a Year</a>	Fr. Mike Schmitz Podcast
<a href="#">Great Adventure Bible Timeline</a>	Link to purchase Bible timeline by Jeff Cavins and Sarah Christmyer

\* Bible Project is a Protestant-sourced Bible study aid that uses short cartoons.

# SELECTING A BIBLE – 5 STEP PROCESS



1. Catholic Bible
2. Translation
  - **NABRE** – *New American Bible, Revised Edition* (St. Joseph Edition)
    - official Mass readings, USCCB approved
    - Academic commentary - footnotes
  - **RSV2CE** – *Revised Standard Version-2<sup>nd</sup> Catholic Edition* (Great Adventure Bible)
    - Most popular academic translation, audio versions
    - No commentary footnotes
  - **NRSVCE** – *New Revised Standard Version-Catholic Edition* (Multiple publishers)
    - Same as above
    - Culturally oriented – gender neutral
  - **NCB** – (St. Joseph Edition of *New Catholic Bible*)
    - Easier to read version of NABRE
    - Commentary footnotes are more faith-based
3. Hard Copy
  - Text size, print size, use of color
  - Paper weight, tabbing, margins for notes
4. “Feel”
5. Budget – (see Amazon)

# BIBLICAL COMMENTARY: JOHN 6:55-56

New American Bible Revised Edition (Catholic)	English Standard Version (Protestant)
<p><sup>55</sup> For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. <sup>56</sup> Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.</p>	<p><sup>55</sup> For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. <sup>56</sup> Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.</p>
<p>6:54-58 <i>Eats</i>: the verb used in these verses is not the classical Greek verb used of human eating, but that of animal eating: "munch," "gnaw." This may be part of John's emphasis on the reality of the flesh and blood of Jesus, but the same verb eventually became the ordinary verb in the Greek meaning "eat." NABRE</p>	<p>...transubstantiation (professed by the Catholic and Orthodox churches), ignore Jesus' statement that "the flesh counts for nothing" (John 6:63). The majority of Protestants understand that Jesus was speaking metaphorically about His flesh and blood and hold that the bread and wine are symbolic of the spiritual bond created with Christ through faith. <a href="https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-eat-flesh-drink-blood.html">https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-eat-flesh-drink-blood.html</a></p>

# *NEW TESTAMENT TIMELINE*

- The first listing of the New Testament canon of 27 books was in Athanasius's Easter Letter (367 AD)
- Council of Rome – Canon of the Bible – 382
- Chapter system introduced in the early 1200s
- First printed Bibles (Gutenberg Bible) were produced in 1455
- Protestant Reformation started in 1517
- Catholic Bible canon confirmed by the Council of Trent in 1546
- Verse divisions in 1551 for NT; Geneva Bible of 1560 included verses in OT & NT

# OLD TESTAMENT DATES\*

Dates*	Events	Timeframe*	Authorship
2000 BC	Abraham		
1900 BC	Isaac		
1800 BC	Jacob		
1800-1400 BC	Egyptian Occupation/Captivity		
1400 BC	Moses		
1360 BC	Jewish Exodus from Egypt, Re-settlement in Canaan		
1000 BC	David - Unites Northern and Southern Tribes		
		950-500 BC	Pentateuch - First 5 books - Moses (and others)
		950-165 BC	Wisdom Books - David, Solomon (and others)
960 BC	Solomon - Builds the Temple	950-400 BC	Historical Books - Samuel (and others)
930 BC	Kingdom splits - North (Israel) and South (Judah)		
		740-530 BC	Prophets - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekial (and others)
721 BC	Northern Kingdom destroyed by Assyrians		
586 BC	Southern Kingdom destroyed by Babylonians		
538 BC	Cyrus frees Jews, return home, build the 2nd Temple		
		300-100 BC	Novellas - Tobit, Judith, Esther (and others)
167-160 BC	Maccabean Revolt		
		165 BC	Book of Daniel (anonymous)
160-37 BC	Hasmonean Rule		Hebrew Bible Canon established?
37-4 BC	Herodian Rule - Herod the Great - the Builder		

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# NEW TESTAMENT DATES\*

Dates*	Events	Timeframe*	Authorship
6-4 BC-30-33 AD	Jesus		
9-65 AD	Paul	54-65 AD	Paul's letters - Paul (and others)
44-90 AD est.	10 apostles martyred (excl. Judas and John)	50-100 AD	"Catholic" Letters - multiple authors
		60's AD?	Gospel of Mark - John Mark (Peter)
		Pre/Post 70 AD?	Gospel of Matthew - anonymous, or Matthew (Mark, Q)
		80-90 AD?	Gospel of Luke - anonymous, or Luke (Paul, Mark, Q)
		80-90 AD?	Acts of the Apostles - Same author as Luke
		90-100 AD?	Gospel of John - anonymous, or John?
95 AD	John, last living apostle dies	95 AD	Book of Revelation - anonymous, or John?
<b>HISTORY OF THE BIBLE AFTER AUTHORSHIP WAS COMPLETE</b>			
		100-382 AD	Corpus of New Testament formed
382 AD	Council of Rome - Canon of the Bible established		
383-405 AD	Jerome translates the OT and NT from /Greek to Latin	405 AD	Vulgate, official Latin Bible
		1384	Vulgate - First English version - Wycliffe
		1455	Gutenberg Bible - Vulgate (Latin)
		1609	Douay-Rheimes Bible - Catholic Vulgate (English)
		1611	King James Bible - Church of England Vulgate
		1885	King James Bible - First revision
		1901	New American Standard Bible (NASB)
		1943-Present	Catholic versions use original Greek and Hebrew texts

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# *OLPH SCRIPTURE STUDY*

Winter 2026