

LESSON 1

THE BIBLE: AN INTRODUCTION AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Bible is a collection of books. In fact, the word Bible comes from the Greek word *Biblia* which means books. The books of the Bible were written by different people during more than 1,000 years.

The Bible is divided into two main parts: the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**. The Old Testament are the Scriptures, or sacred writings, of God's chosen people covering many centuries. The New Testament is about the life of Christ and the beginning of the Church. It covers about 60 or 70 years.

In the Bible, you will find many different kinds of writing. In the Old Testament, for example, the books contain the **history** of God's people, the **law** of how things were done including the 10 Commandments, writings of the **prophets** such as Isaiah, who foretold Christ's birth, and **poetry** and **wisdom** writings found in the Psalms and Proverbs. The New Testament contains the **Gospels**, **history** of the early church, **letters (epistles)** to the churches from St. Paul and other apostles and **prophecies** found in the book of Revelation.

You probably remember many things about the Old Testament. This is where you will find the stories of Creation, the Fall, Noah's Ark, Jacob's Ladder, Moses and the Ten Commandments, David and Goliath, and many other well known stories you have heard.

This year, we will be studying the first four books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These four books are called the Gospels and they tell the story about the life of Jesus Christ. We will learn more about the Gospels and its authors in the next lesson.

You will find all the names of the books of both the Old and New Testament near the front of the Bible. Like any book, the Bible has a *table of contents* that list the books of the Bible and their page numbers. When Biblical passages are given, they include the name of the **Book**, number of the **chapter** and **verse**. It will look like this: Genesis 1:1. If you want to find this passage, you turn to the table of contents to see where the Book of Genesis begins, turn to that page and find the first chapter and then the first verse.

History

Find Genesis 1:1 Write the passage.

Genesis is the first book of the Bible. This is where you will find the story of Creation, Noah's ark and other well known Bible stories.

Find Genesis 6:9 (Remember this means the Book of Genesis, Chapter 6, Verse 9.) Fill in the blank below.

Genesis 6:9 "But _____ found favor in the eyes of the _____."

What do you remember about this man in the Bible? Write a brief summary of his story.

Law

Sometimes, you will see a biblical passage or reference that looks like this: Exodus 20:2a. the reference tells us to read the Book of Exodus, Chapter 20, Verse 2a. The small letter (a) means we should read only the first half of the verse. Exodus 20:2a, 3 makes up the first of the Ten commandments. The comma (,) after 2a means we read the first part of verse 2 and all of verse 3.

Look up Exodus 20:2-17 to fill in the blanks below about the Ten Commandments. (The exact verses are listed next to each commandment.)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Verse 2a, 3 1. I am the _____
 _____. You shall have no
 other gods before me.

Verse 4a 2. You shall not make for yourself any
 _____ image.

Verse 7a 3. You shall not take the
 _____ of the Lord your
 God in _____.

Verse 8 4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep
 it _____.

Verse 12a 5. Honor your _____ and
 _____.

Verse 13 6. You shall not _____.

Verse 14 7. You shall not commit _____.

Verse 15 8. You shall not _____.

Verse 16 9. You shall not bear _____ against your neighbor.

Verse 17 a,c 10. You shall not _____ your neighbor's house or _____ that is
 your neighbor's.



In our studies of the Gospels, we will learn some new commandments that Jesus taught. Remember the Ten Commandments as you learn about the teachings of Jesus.

Wisdom and Spiritual Writings

The Psalms are also part of the Old Testament. One of the authors of the Psalms is David, son of Jesse, slayer of Goliath and father of King Solomon. The book of Psalms, or Psalter, is used in our church services. You will hear Psalms read at Vespers, Matins and other special services.

Look up Psalm 104. You will hear this every week at Vespers. Write the first verse.

Psalm 104: _____

Look up Psalm 24:7-10. You will hear these words as the priest knocks on the door of the church during the Pascha (Easter) service. Write down verse 7.

Psalm 24:7-10 _____

Sometimes two or more books have almost the same name. You will see this in both the Old and New Testaments. A number in front of the name helps to tell them apart as in 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles and 2 Chronicles. When we read these, we say "First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings, Second Kings, First Chronicles and Second Chronicles."

Look up 1 Samuel 3:1-10. To find this passage, turn to the table of contents to find 1 Samuel (First Samuel), Chapter 3, Verses 1-10.

This story is about a boy named Samuel. Read the passage and then answer the questions.

Who did Samuel think was calling him? _____

How many times did he go to this person? _____

Who was really calling him? _____

Prophecy

Samuel was a boy who was called by God. He was a prophet. A prophet is someone who proclaims the will of God and/or who foretells the future. The Old Testament contains many prophecies that are fulfilled in the New Testament.

Look up the following pairs of verses that show the prophecies (predictions or foretelling) in the Old Testament fulfilled (came true) in the New Testament. Fill in the blanks.

Micah 5:2 and Luke 2:4 tells about where Jesus was _____ . It was in _____ .

Isaiah 9:7 and Luke 1:32-33 tell about Jesus reigning on the throne of _____ .

Isaiah 9:6 and Luke 2:11 speak of a _____ .

Note to Parents:

Read Bible stories with your child on a daily basis. Discuss which stories are from the Old Testament. Introduce your child to the Psalms and Proverbs.