

# 39

## *39 Books of the Old Testament*

There are four types of books in the Old Testament: law, historical, wisdom (poetical) and prophetic. While the Old Testament books are placed in one category, they often contain a little of the other styles as well. For instance, a historical book can contain some poetry and some prophecy.

**The Pentateuch (Books of the Law)** — The first 12 Chapters of Genesis shed insight into the 'pre-history' of Israel; the remaining chapters and other books detail Israel's foundational history and laws that governed its birth and existence.

**Genesis**  
**Exodus**  
**Leviticus**  
**Numbers**  
**Deuteronomy**

**The Books of History** — From different perspectives, and from different time periods, these books record Israel's historical development.

**Joshua**  
**Judges**  
**Ruth**  
**1 Samuel**  
**2 Samuel**  
**1 Kings**  
**2 Kings**  
**1 Chronicles**  
**2 Chronicles**  
**Ezra**  
**Nehemiah**  
**Esther**

# 39

**The Wisdom Literature** — Contains much of the poetry of the Hebrew nation and provides us with important stories, poetry and wisdom:

**Job**  
**Psalms**  
**Proverbs**  
**Ecclesiastes**  
**Song of Solomon**

**The Prophetical Books** — The prophetical books of the Old Testament are those that define the prophecy for Israel. The books are divided among 'major prophets' and 'minor prophets.'

**Major Prophets** —

**Isaiah**  
**Jeremiah**  
**Lamentations**  
**Ezekiel**  
**Daniel**

**Minor Prophets** —

**Hosea**  
**Joel**  
**Amos**  
**Obadiah**  
**Jonah**  
**Micah**  
**Nahum**  
**Habakkuk**  
**Zephaniah**  
**Haggai**  
**Zechariah**  
**Malachi**

The timeline of the Old Testament is often misunderstood. The writings take place over a period of 2,000 years, but they are not necessarily placed in chronological order in the Bible.

Many of the prophetical and poetical books, for instance, take place during the periods also written about in the historical books.

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