

# The Church of our Lord Jesus the Christ

## A Scriptural New Testament Church

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*"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).*

## The Old Testament

### Lesson 3

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#### INTRODUCTION

**The Bible has two main divisions.** The **first** division is called the **Old Testament**. The **second** division is called the **New Testament**. The Old Testament includes the first 39 books of the Bible. It begins with Genesis and ends with the book of Malachi. The Old Testament tells the story of God's dealings (working) with mankind from the beginning of the world until the birth of Jesus.

#### THE WRITINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament was first written in the Hebrew language. The 39 books of the Old Testament were written by several different men. These men received the message which they wrote from God.

**In the New Testament, we learn how these writers received the message they wrote:** *"for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).*

#### THE DIVISIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

We have learned that the Bible has two major divisions, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament can be further divided into four main sections. These sections are: **Law, History, Poetry, and Prophecy.**

#### THE BOOKS OF LAW

The first 5 books of the Old Testament make up the first section of LAW. The books in this section are: **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.** These books were written by Moses, the great servant of God.

**Genesis** is the story of the beginning of all things. In Genesis we learn about the beginning of man and woman, marriage, sin, death, different languages, the nation of Israel, and God's plan to save man from his sins.

Genesis also tells about men such as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. These men are often called **Patriarchs**. The word "patriarch" means "a father," or a "head of a family." The book of Genesis tells us about the **Patriarchal Age (from Adam and Eve to Moses' receiving the ten commandment Law on Mount Sinai)**. In the Patriarchal Age the people did not have God's commandments written down in the Bible. Instead, God spoke directly to the patriarchs and revealed His commandments and teachings to them.

**Exodus** tells about the nation of Israel. God had chosen Israel to be His special people. From Israel God planned later to bring Jesus to be the Saviour of the world. The people of Israel had gone to live in Egypt during a time of famine (no food). The Egyptians made slaves of them. Exodus tells the story of how God sent Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt.

**Leviticus** and **Deuteronomy** contain the first written law which God gave to mankind. This law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. It contains the **Ten Commandments** and **many other laws**. This law of Moses was given **ONLY** to the nation of Israel (Exodus 19:3; Deuteronomy 5:1 ff). It was to last until the death of Christ on the cross. Christ fulfilled the law of Moses and took it out of the way. Read Matthew 5:17,18; Galatians 3:23-28; Colossians 2:13,14.

**Numbers** is a book of history and also contains some of the laws which God gave to Israel. It tells about Israel's wanderings in the desert for 40 years before they entered the land of Canaan.

### THE BOOKS OF HISTORY

The second section of the Old Testament is called **History**. This section contains 12 books. They are: **Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther**.

These 12 books tell the history of the nation of Israel. They tell about the wars in which God helped Israel destroy the wicked people of Canaan. They tell about the building of God's temple in Jerusalem. They tell how Israel became a rich, powerful nation but later divided into **two separate kingdoms called Judah and Israel**.

These books also tell how the people of Israel forgot about their God and worshipped idols (false gods). God punished them for their sins by permitting other nations to make slaves of them. But whenever Israel repented [decided to stop doing wrong things and turn back to God, doing things God's way], God permitted them to return to their home.

### THE BOOKS OF POETRY

There are five books in this section. They are: **Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon**.

**Job** is the story of a man who suffered much. But even though he had many troubles, he still remained faithful to God.

**Psalms** are poems and songs written by King David and others. These poems praise God for His goodness, power, and glory.

**Proverbs** is a book of wise sayings. It was written by King Solomon and others.

**Ecclesiastes** was written by King Solomon. It tells about a man who tried to find happiness in riches, love, power, fame, and learning. He found that none of these could bring true happiness. He learned that true happiness can only come from fearing God and keeping his commandments.

**The Song of Solomon** is a love song.

### THE BOOKS OF PROPHECY

The last section of the Old Testament is **Prophecy**. It contains 17 books. These books were written by the great prophets of God whose names they bear. They are: **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi**.

These prophets were men who spoke for God. The prophets had big jobs to do. First: They rebuked the people of their own time for their sins. Second: They were permitted by God to see into the future. God

gave them the power to foretell things which would happen many years later. For example, the prophet Isaiah lived 700 years before Christ came to the earth. Yet he (Isaiah) foretold many things about Christ and His kingdom. Read Isaiah, Chapter 53, which tells of Christ's death for our sins.

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### Read the Lesson before taking the Test.

#### Fill in the blanks:

1. The Old Testament contains the first  books of the Bible.
2. The last section of the Old Testament is .
3. The law of Moses was given only to the nation of .
4.  tells us about Israel's wanderings in the desert for 40 years.
5.  is the story of a man who suffered much.
6.  is a book of wise sayings.
7.  is the story of the beginning of all things.
8. The Old Testament begins with the book of  and ends with the book of .
9. The word "patriarch" means  or "head of a family."
10. The Old Testament can be divided into  main sections.
11. There are  books of prophecy in the Old Testament.
12. The first five books of the Old Testament were written by .
13. There are  books of history in the Old Testament.
14. The prophets were men who  for God.
15.  and  contain the first written law which God gave to mankind.

#### Check the correct answer.

- True  False  God chose Israel to be His special people.
- True  False  The Ten Commandments were given only to the nation of Israel.
- True  False  God punished Israel when they worshipped idols.
- True  False  Ecclesiastes is a love song.
- True  False  The law of Moses should be obeyed by all people today.
- True  False  The prophets had the power to foretell.
- True  False  We do not need to study the Old Testament today.

True  False  In the Patriarchal Age, the people did not have God's commandments written down in the Bible.

Questions or Comments you may have.



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