

ABOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Law Books - the 1st five books of the Bible are called "The Law" or Toran (which means Law), or Pentateuch (which means the first 5 books). It means instruction, guidance or direction. It points the way for the faithful Jew and for the Jewish community. The first five books contain the Ten Commandments and other laws which deal with worship, cleanliness, civil and community laws.

The books of Law are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

The History Books - the history books cover the Jewish history from Joshua, when the Jews moved into the Promised Land through having kings such as David, through the fall of the nation and exile, to the return and rebuilding of Jerusalem. There are 12 history books.

The books of History are: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther

The Poetry Books - the poetry books are also called wisdom literature because they were poem and wise sayings that people could live by. They were seen as wise instructions which young people could build their lives upon. They include songs which celebrated victories, thanked God for harvests, and cried in pain to God for help. They recognized the presence of God. There are 5 poetry books.

The Books of Poetry are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon

The Prophets - There are 17 books in this category. A prophet is not a fortune teller but "one who speaks on behalf of another" (Exodus 17). The prophet is a mouthpiece or spokesman for God. They declared the will of God and called the people back to God away from their sinful ways. One of the key thoughts is that to love God they should be loving their neighbors and be fair and just with them. There are 5 Major Prophets and 12 Minor Prophets.

The 5 Major Prophets are: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The 12 Minor Prophets are: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.