

The Books of the Bible

THE OLD TESTAMENT

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Ruth.....	328
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1 Chronicles (1 Paralipomenon).....	491
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Ezra (1 Esdras).....	567
Nehemiah (2 Esdras).....	579
Tobit (Tobias).....	594
Judith.....	606
Esther.....	622
1 Maccabees (1 Machabees).....	640
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THE NEW TESTAMENT

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The Books of the Bible

in Alphabetical Order with Abbreviations

Acts of the Apostles Acts	1419	2 Kings 2 Kings	450
Amos Amos	1211	Lamentations Lam	1100
Baruch Bar	1108	Leviticus Lev	142
1 Chronicles 1 Chron	491	Luke Lk	1333
2 Chronicles 2 Chron	522	1 Maccabees 1 Mac	640
Colossians Col	1514	2 Maccabees 2 Mac	674
1 Corinthians 1 Cor	1474	Malachi Mal	1254
2 Corinthians 2 Cor	1490	Mark Mk	1309
Daniel Dan	1171	Matthew Mt	1269
Deuteronomy Deut	227	Micah Mic	1225
Ecclesiastes Eccles	863	Nahum Nahum	1232
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Esther Esther	622	Numbers Num	181
Exodus Ex	91	Obadiah Obad	1220
Ezekiel Ezek	1116	1 Peter 1 Pet	1551
Ezra Ezra	567	2 Peter 2 Pet	1555
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Genesis Gen	17	Philippians Phil	1510
Habakkuk Hab	1235	Proverbs Prov	832
Haggai Hag	1242	Psalms Ps	735
Hebrews Heb	1535	Revelation Rev	1566
Hosea Hos	1195	Romans Rom	1457
Isaiah Is	960	Ruth Ruth	328
James Jas	1547	1 Samuel 1 Sam	332
Jeremiah Jer	1031	2 Samuel 2 Sam	375
Job Job	699	Sirach Sir	900
Joel Joel	1206	Song of Solomon Song	872
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1 John 1 Jn	1558	2 Thessalonians 2 Thess	1522
2 John 2 Jn	1562	1 Timothy 1 Tim	1524
3 John 3 Jn	1563	2 Timothy 2 Tim	1529
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Jude Jude	1564	Wisdom Wis	878
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**The books of the Apocrypha and the Deuterocanonical Books
of the Catholic Old Testament are related as follows:**

APOCRYPHA	DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS
1 (3) Esdras	Not included
2 (4) Esdras	Not included
Tobit	Tobit
Judith	Judith
Additions to Esther	Esther (part of)
The Wisdom of Solomon	The Wisdom of Solomon
Sirach	Sirach
Baruch	Baruch 1–5
The Letter of Jeremiah	Baruch 6
The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young men	Daniel 3 (part of)
Susanna	Daniel 13
Bel and the Dragon	Daniel 14
The Prayer of Manasseh	Not included
1 Maccabees	1 Maccabees
2 Maccabees	2 Maccabees

Abbreviations in the Notes

In the notes to the books of the Old Testament, the following abbreviations are used: Ms for manuscript; Mss for manuscripts. Heb denotes the Hebrew of the consonantal Masoretic Text of the Old Testament; and MT denotes the Hebrew of the pointed Masoretic Text of the Old Testament. The ancient versions of the Old Testament are indicated by:

Gk	Septuagint Greek Version of the Old Testament
Lat	Latin Version of Tobit, Judith, and 2 Maccabees
Sam	Samaritan Hebrew text of the Old Testament
Syr	Syriac Version of the Old Testament
Tg	Targum
Vg	Vulgate, Latin Version of the Old Testament

Cn indicates a correction made where the text has suffered in transmission and the versions provide no satisfactory restoration but the Committee agrees with the judgment of competent scholars as to the most probable reconstruction of the original text.

References to quoted and parallel passages are given following the textual notes on pages where these are relevant.

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Foreword to *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible*

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name (John 20:30-31).

While the Evangelist was speaking primarily about the Gospel he had written, his words describe the purpose of the whole of the Scripture. In other words, all that is written in the Bible aims to present to us Jesus, the Messiah and Son of God, who by his teaching, his miracles, his Passion, death, and Resurrection, has opened to you and me the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus. The Bible tells one story.

Our main difficulty with the Bible, however, is that it is a collection of books written in a multitude of literary forms: stories of origins, tales of the ancestors, histories, collections of laws and statutes, prophecies, songs, etc. It is sometimes difficult to discern how a particular book fits in with the others. Nonetheless, the Bible tells just one story held together by a variety of themes and threads that revolve around a central plot. It is the story of our salvation.

The Great Adventure Catholic Bible elucidates for us the strongest of the threads, that is to say, the series of covenants by which God has established a relationship with the human race in his mission to draw back to himself all of us who are wounded by original sin. Drawing from the wildly popular and effective *Great Adventure Catholic Bible Study* by Jeff Cavins, *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible* includes helpful tools such as a *Bible Timeline* Chart and several articles identifying the key persons, events, and transitions that drive the plot of salvation history from beginning to end.

In the “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation” from the Second Vatican Council, the Council Fathers acknowledged:

God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New. For, though Christ established the new covenant in His blood (see Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25), still the books of the Old Testament with all their parts, caught up into the proclamation of the Gospel, acquire and show forth their full meaning in the New Testament (see Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:27; Rom. 16:25-26; 2 Cor. 3:14-16) and in turn shed light on it and explain it.¹

As in any adventure, in order to reach your destination, you need a map. *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible* provides that for you. Enjoy the journey!

Archbishop Michael J. Byrnes

¹ *Dei Verbum* (DV) 16.

Introduction to *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible*

by Jeff Cavins

By picking up this Bible, you have taken the first step in discovering the greatest literary treasure known to humanity. Those who open the pages of the Bible do so for a variety of reasons. Some are merely curious, others are looking for wisdom in their daily lives, and still others are consciously responding to a restless call deep within their hearts, a call to a meaningful relationship with God.

The Bible is truly an amazing book, but many people admit that they have a difficult time reading it. While it contains all the elements of a great novel—a riveting plot, dynamic characters, fantastic settings, and a climactic conflict and resolution—the overarching “story” is not immediately apparent.

Beginning with Genesis, then moving on to Exodus, the reader has a sense of movement, an apparent narrative continuity, but the story is often interrupted by tangential anecdotes, lengthy genealogies, and mysterious characters and events that are difficult to understand. For many, the adventure of reading the Bible comes to an abrupt halt when they begin its third book, Leviticus. Suddenly, the narrative has disappeared. In its place, the reader encounters a complex system of laws pertaining to the human body, relationships, and ritual sacrifice that seem to have very little to do with anything he or she can relate to.

Herein lies the problem—the Bible was not written as a novel. We cannot read through it from cover to cover and expect to come away with a sense of satisfaction of having read and understood an amazing story. It is more complex than that. If we want to understand Scripture (and enjoy reading it!), then we need to understand *how* to read it.

First, we need to know that the Bible is not really a single “book” but a library of seventy-three different books, forty-six in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament. Take a look at “The Books of the Bible” on page xv. It is important to note that these books are not listed chronologically; they are primarily arranged by their literary type—law, history, wisdom, and prophecy, among others.

While the Bible contains books of several different literary genres, there is one overarching story that ties it all together—the story of how God has revealed himself to his people and carried out his plan of salvation. This is known as “salvation history.” If we can get a grasp of the story of salvation history, then we will be able to see the “big picture” of the Bible.

But reading the Bible straight through from beginning to end is not the best way to make sense of this overall “story.” If we want to make sense of the Bible, we need to understand how it all fits together. This is why we created *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible*.

What makes *The Great Adventure Catholic Bible* different from any other Bible is that it incorporates a road map that helps readers navigate its pages so that they can easily grasp the “big picture,” the story of salvation. This road map is *The Bible Timeline*.

The Bible Timeline divides salvation history into twelve color-coded time periods. Each period is like a chapter in salvation history, and each color helps you to remember the periods and keep them in order. These twelve color-coded periods are:

1. Early World (*Turquoise* – the color of the earth viewed from space) page 2
2. Patriarchs (*Burgundy* – God’s blood covenant with Abraham) page 30
3. Egypt and Exodus (*Red* – the Red Sea) page 84
4. Desert Wanderings (*Tan* – the color of the desert) page 174
5. Conquest and Judges (*Green* – the green hills of Canaan) page 268
6. Royal Kingdom (*Purple* – the color of royalty) page 340
7. Divided Kingdom (*Black* – Israel’s darkest period) page 426
8. Exile (*Baby Blue* – Judah “singing the blues” in Babylon) page 471
9. Return (*Yellow* – Judah returning home to brighter days) page 561
10. Maccabean Revolt (*Orange* – fire in the oil lamps in the purified Temple) page 634
11. Messianic Fulfillment (*Gold* – the gifts of the Magi) page 1260
12. The Church (*White* – the spotless Bride of Christ) page 1412

For each of these periods (at the page numbers listed above), we have provided a *Timeline* chart, that provides a visual overview of the period, including: important characters, key events, geography, major covenants, world rulers, and contemporary events in secular history. Following the chart for each period you will find a written summary of it, which highlights its significance in salvation history. Throughout the biblical text, we have also indicated and explained seventy key events that tie the story together. In addition, every book of this Bible is color-coded to indicate where that book belongs in *The Bible Timeline* system, which helps you to understand where it fits within the overall story.

The Bible Timeline also helps to make the complex simple. While all seventy-three books of the Bible fit within the history of salvation, not every book recounts that history in a narrative way; other books contain laws, teaching, prophecy, prayers, or the stories of particular people. To get the big picture of the Bible, it helps to focus on

fourteen narrative books that tell the story from beginning to end. These fourteen narrative books are:

Genesis	Joshua	2 Samuel	Ezra	Luke
Exodus	Judges	1 Kings	Nehemiah	Acts
Numbers	1 Samuel	2 Kings	1 Maccabees	

These books tell the overarching story that ties all of Scripture together. We recommend reading these fourteen books in order. To help you do this, a *Bible Timeline* reading plan can be found on page xxix. Using this plan, if you read four or five chapters a day, you can read all fourteen narrative books in just ninety days. (To help you make sense of what you are reading, we have also included an explanation of how to interpret the Bible on page xxx.)

Once you have a good understanding of the overarching story of salvation—the “big picture”—you can then see how the remaining fifty-nine books of the Bible fit into this story. As you become more comfortable navigating the Bible, you will be able to build a biblical foundation for yourself that will yield tremendous fruit. The knowledge and insight you gain will serve you well in every area of your life.

Knowing salvation history will give you a better understanding of the entire Catholic Faith. The four parts (or “pillars”) of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) are based on this story. Its first pillar is the Creed, which is a summary of salvation history. Its second pillar, on the sacraments, explains how we *enter into* this amazing story. The third pillar tells us how to live the Christian life, and the fourth pillar discusses prayer. The Bible is an indispensable part of a healthy prayer life. We explain how you can pray with Scripture using *lectio divina* on page xxxvi.

The Church teaches us that, “in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets his children with great love and speaks with them” (*Dei Verbum* 1). Your heavenly Father loves you and wants to speak to you today. This makes the Bible you are holding the most treasured book on earth.

If you cherish Sacred Scripture and allow it to take root in your heart, the Holy Spirit will work through it to guide, instruct, correct, and encourage you every day in your walk with the Lord.

It is our sincere hope that in the Bible you will discover the story that makes sense out of life, the story that reveals God’s heart and loving plan for us. In addition, we pray that you will discover your place in this wonderful plan and that this will give you a profound sense of purpose and peace—and a strategy for daily life.

Blessings!

Jeff Cavins