

KNOW THE BIBLE



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Books of Prophecy #3

Post Exile Period

The next set of Books in the Holy Bible and last section of the Old Testament is the Post Exile Period of the Books of Prophecy. This group includes 3 of the Minor Prophets:

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

The timeframe that these prophets lived is around 520 B.C. to 400 B.C. which led up to the quiet time of the prophets until the last of the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist, was born; documented in gospel accounts in the NT.

The prophetic ministries of these men deal primarily with encouraging the returned people of God to rebuild the temple especially Haggai and Zechariah. Their ministries took place about the same time. They were contemporaries with Zechariah's ministry lasting a much longer time period. They were in support of Zerubbabel and Ezra from the Book of Ezra in the Books of History #4.

Malachi was spurred on by the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah at a later time. Malachi was a contemporary of Nehemiah who led the last return of the Israelites back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls (the Book of Nehemiah is also in the last section of History books #4).

Each of these books is a rebuke of God's people for their unfaithfulness and a motivation to return to God's ways in order to receive the Lord's blessing.

How to remember this section:

The last section of Prophecy, the third set has 3 prophets. Section **3** has **3** prophets! **Haggai** starts it off (like Sarai who becomes Sarah) followed by the other Z (**Zechariah**) with the last prophet before John the Baptist namely **Malachi** (the bigger M prophet).

- **Haggai** – *next to Obadiah, this is the shortest book in the Old Testament. However, its teachings are significant. The consequences of disobedience and obedience are clearly visible. Obedience brings blessing, encouragement and strengthening of faith. **We are to give careful thought to what our God-given purpose is and perform that duty BEFORE God will bring about blessings.** The Jews were apathetic to the rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel. Haggai and Zechariah were charged by God to impassion His people and bring about a spiritual renewal. Messianic prophecies are prominent in the 2nd chapter of this book.*

- **Zechariah** – with both Haggai and Zechariah preaching at the same time in 520 B.C., the central theme is the **encouragement of the people of God to return to the Lord so that He may return to them.** The glorious future that is to come would then be fulfilled. Zechariah's ministry lasts much longer than Haggai. This book is apocalyptic and eschatological in nature (**end times**). Prophetic statements are prominent.
- **Malachi** – spurred on by the two previous prophets, Malachi rebukes Israel for her unfaithfulness and evil practices. A prophet during the time of Nehemiah around 430 B.C., Malachi witnesses the Jews losing hope. They no longer take the Law of God seriously, and begin to doubt God's love for them and His just character. Malachi rebukes them and reaffirms the Lord's coming and **offers a stern warning that only those that repent and reform their ways will be spared God's wrath.**

This is the last group of the OT sections in the Holy Bible. It contains only 3 books in all written by 3 of the Minor Prophets. This time period is during the returns of the Jews to the Promised Land.

***(Remember:** The Books of Prophecy intertwine during the Books of History. You see God's hand in all history! You can now overlap the books to see the depth of God's work throughout history. **And, this is just the Old Testament!**)*

(Write the books in the spaces below; for permanent memory)

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Now you know the first 39 books of the Holy Bible, how they are broken down, and what they are about. These are the books of the Old Testament!

Of note:

The Apocryphal books are rejected for a variety of reasons:

1. ***They were never included in the Hebrew Old Testament.*** *The Hebrew canon is made up of 22 books, which are the exact equivalent of the 39 books of our Old Testament. This takes on its full significance when it is remembered that the Old Testament is a Jewish collection of Jewish history and law - and there is no evidence that these books were ever accepted by any Jewish community, either in or outside of the Israel.*
2. ***They were never accepted as canonical by Jesus and His Apostles.*** *Jesus' Old Testament was the Hebrew Old Testament and the Hebrew Old Testament has never numbered these apocryphal writings. The apostles in their preaching mention many Old Testament events, but they never refer to any incidents or characters of the Apocrypha. The New Testament writers quote from practically all of the Old Testament books, but nowhere quote from the Apocrypha. The Apocrypha are self-contained; no where in the canonical scripture are these books referenced.*
3. ***They were not accepted by early Jewish and Christian writers.*** *About 400 A.D. the great Christian scholar Jerome, whose translation of the Latin Vulgate remains the basis of the official Roman Catholic Bible, strongly maintained that these books were "apocryphal" and were not to be included in the canon of Scripture.*
4. ***Objections to them cannot be overruled by dictatorial authority.*** *Throughout different periods of its own history officials of the Roman Church had been out-spoken **against** the Apocrypha as Scripture. Yet, On April 8, 1546, in the Fourth Session of the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic Church pronounced the Old Testament Apocrypha as authoritative and canonical Scripture. They were not accepted for over 1500 years after Christ!*

5. They do not show evidence of essential qualities of inspiration. Great portions of these books are obviously legendary and fictitious. Often they contain historical, chronological and geographical errors. Some of these books contradict themselves and contradict the canonical Scriptures!

6. They have been shrouded with continual uncertainty. Since they were not regarded as authoritative by the Jews, they had to gain their recognition elsewhere. No two early Greek manuscripts agree as to which books are to be included in the Septuagint outside the canonical Scripture readily known as the 39 books of the OT.

7. They cannot be maintained on a compromise basis. Church of England gives to the Apocrypha a semi-canonical status: they may be read in public worship "for example of life and instruction of manners" but not in order "to establish any doctrine." This position assumes that the Apocrypha at times may add to or conflict with the established teachings of the canonical Scriptures.

8. The New Testament apocrypha were written under assumed names of the apostles and others between the 2nd century and 6th century. They were written hundreds of years after Christ, while the canonical Scripture are all from the eyewitness accounts of the 1st century apostles. These writings, along with the OT apocryphal books, are sometimes erroneously described as "the lost books of the Bible," a sensational and misleading title because these books were **NEVER a part of the Holy Bible.**

Below are 3 Bible verses from the Post Exile Period of the Books of Prophecy. Match the correct Bible verse to the corresponding Book. The idea is to become familiar with where topics and names are found in the Word of God.

1. *“See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.*”

Haggai 1:5

2. *“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”*

Zechariah 9:9

3. *“Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.’”*

Malachi 3:1

Below are 3 Bible verses from the Post Exile Period. Correctly identify the Bible verse with the corresponding book. The idea is to become familiar with where topics and names are found in the Word of God.

“So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God,”

1. Which book of the Post Exile Period? _____

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”

2. Which book of the Post Exile Period? _____

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”

3. Which book of the Post Exile Period? _____

Malachi 3:10

Zechariah 12:10

Haggai 1:14

After identifying the previous Bible verses, take the time to find a Bible verse on your own that really identifies with that particular book. Just the act of searching and writing it down gives you a better sense and greater familiarity with the Word of God. You are actively participating in studying the Holy Bible.

Haggai _____

Zechariah _____

Malachi _____

Notes

Describe a topic in this section to remember.

(Example: *The Two Shepherds named Favor & Union are explained giving reason for the coming judgment on Israel from the Lord for their rejection of the Messianic Shepherd –King, Jesus Christ (foretelling) Zechariah 11***)**
