

## 2. How does the Old Testament fit together?

Luke 24:25-35

### Discuss while waiting to begin...

1. A friend asks you, "What's the Bible about?" What would you say?

### 1. The main divisions within the Old Testament

"Bible" = "*biblia*" = "books"

- 39 OT, 27 NT... many types of writing...
- from: Moses about C15th BC → Apostles C1st AD = 1600yrs.
- But ONE message... because ONE author (2 Timothy 3:16)

#### The Old Testament

- Hebrew OT = 1500-400BC = Moses to Malachi
- Greek OT translation = about 200BC = "Septuagint" or LXX

Our English Bibles follow the Greek LXX ordering of the OT

| Historical books  | Mixed poetry           | Prophetic books   |
|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Genesis to Esther | Job to Song of Solomon | Isaiah to Malachi |

The Hebrew Bible has different book order (e.g. Luke 24:44, Romans 3:21, Acts 28:23)

| The Law...  | The Prophets...      |                      | The Writings...  |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
|             | The former prophets: | The latter prophets: |                  |
| Genesis     | Joshua               | Isaiah               | Psalms           |
| Exodus      | Judges               | Jeremiah             | Job              |
| Leviticus   | 1 & 2 Samuel         | Ezekiel              | Proverbs         |
| Numbers     | 1 & 2 Kings          | Hosea                | Ruth             |
| Deuteronomy |                      | Joel                 | Song of Songs    |
|             |                      | Amos                 | Ecclesiastes     |
|             |                      | Obadiah              | Lamentations     |
|             |                      | Jonah                | Esther           |
|             |                      | Micah                | Daniel           |
|             |                      | Nahum                | Ezra             |
|             |                      | Habakkuk             | Nehemiah         |
|             |                      | Zephaniah            | 1 & 2 Chronicles |
|             |                      | Haggai               |                  |
|             |                      | Zechariah            |                  |
|             |                      | Malachi              |                  |

- **The Law** = "torah" = "instruction"
- **Former prophets:** not history... but *preaching* the history of God's people
- **Latter prophets:** warning and promise... about God's judgment
- **The Writings** = a.k.a. "The Psalms" sometimes grouped in with "The Law and the Prophets"
  - (i) "Wisdom" = Job, Proverbs, Song of Songs, some Psalms
  - (ii) The rest = about the Babylonian exile and beyond

## **2. The main message of the Old Testament**

### **(a) The Law and the Prophets LOOKED FORWARD...**

Matthew 11:13, "For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John..."

### **(b) The Old Testament is about JESUS**

Luke 24:26-27

### **(c) The Old Testament is about God's "KINGDOM"**

Mark 1:14-15 Jesus says: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

### **(d) All the Bible's "big ideas" come together in "COVENANT"<sup>1</sup>**

Matthew 26:28, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins"

Luke 1:72-73, "to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham..."

#### **What is a covenant?**

- A relationship between two parties
- Between God and human beings
- Conditions: God promises blessings... AND curses
- A bond established by blood

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<sup>1</sup> **Recommended reading:**

"Covenants made simple", by Jonty Rhodes.

"An introduction to covenant theology", by J. I. Packer.

"Christ of the Covenants", by O. Palmer Robertson.