

THE CONTENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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The Jewish community refers to their Bible as the *Tanakh*. The name consists of the first letters of the names for the three major divisions of the Hebrew Bible (our “Old Testament”):

T	>	Torah (the Law)
N	>	Nebi'im (the Prophets)
K	>	Ketubim (the Writings)

The following table is the Hebrew order for the Old Testament books.

SECTION	BOOK	THEME
Torah / Law		
	Genesis	Creation & Blessing: Covenant
	Exodus	Slavery & Redemption: Divine Presence
	Leviticus	Sacrifice & Sanctification: Being Holy
	Numbers	Wilderness Wandering: Unfaithfulness
	Deuteronomy	Exposition of the Law: Covenant Renewal
Nevi'im / Prophets		
	Joshua	Conquest of Canaan: Covenant Loyalty
	Judges	Cycles of Disobedience: Covenant Disloyalty
	1 Samuel	Davidic History
	2 Samuel	Davidic Covenant
	1 Kings	Royal National History: David to Ahab
	2 Kings	Royal National History: Ahaziah to Gedaliah
	Isaiah	The Salvation of God
	Jeremiah	The Word of God
	Ezekiel	The Glory of God

SECTION	BOOK	THEME
	Hosea	An Example of Forgiveness: Call to Covenant
	Joel	The Day of the LORD: Call to Repentance
	Amos	The Divine Lawsuit: Promise of a Remnant
	Obadiah	Judgment on Israel's Enemies
	Jonah	God's Compassion & Grace
	Micah	The Divine Lawsuit: Covenant Fulfillment
	Nahum	Divine Judgment & Goodness
	Habakkuk	God's Justice with Nations
	Zephaniah	The Day of the LORD: Justice & Mercy
	Haggai	Restoration & Encouragement
	Zechariah	God's Imminent Presence & the Messianic King
	Malachi	Covenant Love & Loyalty
Ketuvim / Writings		
	Psalms	Prayer & Praise to the King of Kings
	Job	God's Justice with an Individual
	Proverbs	God's Wisdom
	Ruth	An Example of Faithfulness
	Song of Solomon	A Celebration of Marital Love
	Ecclesiastes	The Goodness of God & the Meaning of Life
	Lamentations	Unfaithfulness & Repentance
	Esther	The Sovereignty of God over Israel
	Daniel	The Sovereignty of God over Nations
	Ezra	Restoration of Temple & Community
	Nehemiah	Restoration of Jerusalem & Covenant
	1 Chronicles	History of Covenant: Adam to Solomon
	2 Chronicles	History of Covenant: Solomon to Cyrus

Note: Books with the double-line boxes around them indicate collections that the Hebrew Bible treats as a single book (e.g., 1 & 2 Samuel are one book, the twelve minor prophets are one book, etc.).

What is the overall theme or storyline or plot for the Old Testament?

God calls His people to display His moral character in obedience to His covenant.

Concerning the Gospel in the Old Testament:

The Gospel in the Old Testament requires the advent of the Messiah.

See Luke 24:25–26.

Old Testament saints believed the same Gospel, except in prospect.

See John 1:43–45. Cf. Acts 26:22–23; 1 Peter 1:10–12.