



## **How the Bible is constructed**

The King James Bible has 783, 137 words from God. Considering that a typical written page contains 250 words, that is a lot of reading. Now consider that each page takes, on the average, two minutes to read. There are around 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Imagine reading all of them on a scroll without headlines or chapter breaks. My point is that the Bible is a big book.

How do you eat an elephant? One piece at a time. How do you read the Bible? I guess that depends on how hungry you are. I read the Bible through within 6 months the first time. I was just raptured by it in the beginning of my Christian walk. My passion is the same for God's word now, but I eat it in methodically smaller chunks. Is there a proper amount that you should read each day? I say read just a chapter because you want God's word to do its work. Let it roll around in your heart for a while. However, whatever works for your walk with God is good enough. Be hungry for the word.

This Bible is broken down into two halves: the Old and New Testaments. The first half begins at the beginning of creation and ends around 400 B.C. It would be speculation as to how old the beginning of creation is. We just do not know. The first 11 chapters of the Bible do not give us enough defined data on the age of creation. Most scholars make it to be about 4000 years ago more or less. The New Testament begins about 400 years after the end of the Old Testament.

It places Jesus' birth near 5 B.C. Tradition places our modern calendar at the beginning of Jesus birth. That is fiction. The Biblical calendar is based on the Julius calendar of Rome.

The Old Testament is made up of 39 books with about 27 authors spanning around 1500 years. Several of the Books were originally combined like 1 and 2 Samuel. Each book was generally placed in a timeline order. However, Job could be dated much earlier than its placement. Much of the authorship of the Old Testament is based on tradition. It would be a good trick for Moses to write about his own death. Tradition has Joshua finishing Deuteronomy. This Testament is broken down into 5 parts. The first five books of the Bible are called The Law. You may hear them called the Pentateuch or Torah. The second is the Historical books spanning from Joshua to Esther. Then we have the Poetical books containing Job to Song of Solomon. Then we conclude with the Prophetical books broken into two parts. The Major prophets (Isaiah to Daniel) and Minor Prophets (Hosea to Malachi).

The Catholic Bible has an additional 14 Apocrypha books that span the 400 years between the end of the Old Testament and the New. The New Testament events are approximately between 6 B.C. and 95 A.D. There is great debate on how old the Gospels are. The first three books are commonly called the Synoptic Gospels. That is due to the sharing of words and accounts of Jesus. About 76% of Mark is shared within the other two gospels. Traditionally Mark is said to be written first. However, we do not know.

There are 8 authors in the New Testament. Paul by tradition wrote 14 letters called Epistles in the New Testament. John wrote his Gospel and the 3 letters of John, and possibly Revelation. Luke wrote his gospel and the book of Acts. There is some dispute if Paul wrote Hebrews. Either way we have 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books. As a side note the Gospel of John is somewhat different than the other three. Yet, it gives us a different insight

into the same Gospel narrative. The New Testament is broken into four sections. There are the 4 gospels, historical book of Acts, the 14 Pauline church letters (Romans to Hebrews), the other 7 epistle letters (James to Jude), and the book of Revelation.

The Bible was broken down into Chapters somewhere around the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Yet, the Bible itself started to take form around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. These books and letters had been commonly circulated among the faithful. The Jewish Old Testament books had been around for many years. Yet, the New Testament took time to become part of the Bible. Through the early years several councils reaffirmed what was canon (God's word) and what was not. The King James version was commissioned in 1604. Since then, The Bible has been translated into 724 languages.

They call this book the living word of God. I believe it is called such because it has survived the centuries. There probably have been several attempts to destroy Gods word. Yet, it has survived nations falling and many wars. There are around 4,500 partial manuscripts in existence. There is no one complete book. Yet, all those partial manuscripts (like puzzle pieces) have completed the whole Bible. Consider that God used so many different authors from different time periods is amazing. Each one of these men felt inspired to collect and preserve the Bible narrative. It is astounding that the same message of God's love and mercy towards His people resonates through each book. It is a God given miracle we have His word today.

There are a group of people found in the middle of the Christian and Jewish faith. They are called Messianic Jews. The main dispute between the two religions is Jesus. Is He the long-awaited messiah of the Old Testament? I heard a testimony from a Messianic Jew that was stunning. Why? He thought Jesus was a Christian God. It was a Christian thing. Yet, as he read the New Testament, he began to realize that Jesus was Jewish. That the Christian faith was

Jewish based. His eyes and heart became wide open when he realized that both books were not separate. This week read Psalm 53 and Romans 3. The Bible is constructed with purpose from God.