

March 2022 Edition 74

Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

Story

Human beings are storytellers. Just think about the last time you met up with a friend. What is it that you talked about? How did they tell you the story of what had been happening in their lives since the last time you met? And how did you tell them your story? When we know people well, it can often feel as though we are actually part of the action that they are narrating, because even if we have not met the people they are describing, we have probably built up a picture of them in our minds. It's very similar to what we do when we read a good book.

The Bible as the Story of God

It may not be how you initially think of it, but the Bible is really a library of books which tells the story of God – and specifically the ways in which human beings have interpreted the work of God in the world over a few thousand years.

There are many reasons why we may not always see the Bible in this way. The first is that it is made up of 66 very different books. There are histories, which probably most resemble story. There is also law, prophecy, letters, hymns, poetry, sayings, gospels (which are an entirely novel literary form) and so much more. It is little wonder that we do not immediately recognise a coherent story of God running through the pages of scripture.

And yet, the more that we hear the stories from the scriptures; the more that we engage with them; and the more that we understand them, the more possible it becomes to notice key themes that characterise God's interactions with humanity. For example, the Exodus is a book from the Old Testament which tells us about when the Israelites left slavery in

Egypt, led by Moses. These experiences shaped the people of Israel and especially their understanding of God. Themes of exodus and exile are part of the story of God and humans. Other themes that we find throughout the scriptures include creation; judgement; deliverance; covenant; salvation; forgiveness; resurrection.

Our own stories and the story of God

As Christians, we regularly engage with stories from the scriptures, both in our own reading, and during Church services. As our faith develops and we spend time in prayer, we will often find ourselves seeking to understand better how God has been working – and continues to work – in our lives. As we do this, the stories of our own lives are seen in relationship with the bigger story of God. So, for example, we might understand the feast of the Epiphany differently when we have had a dramatic realisation or revelation in our own lives.

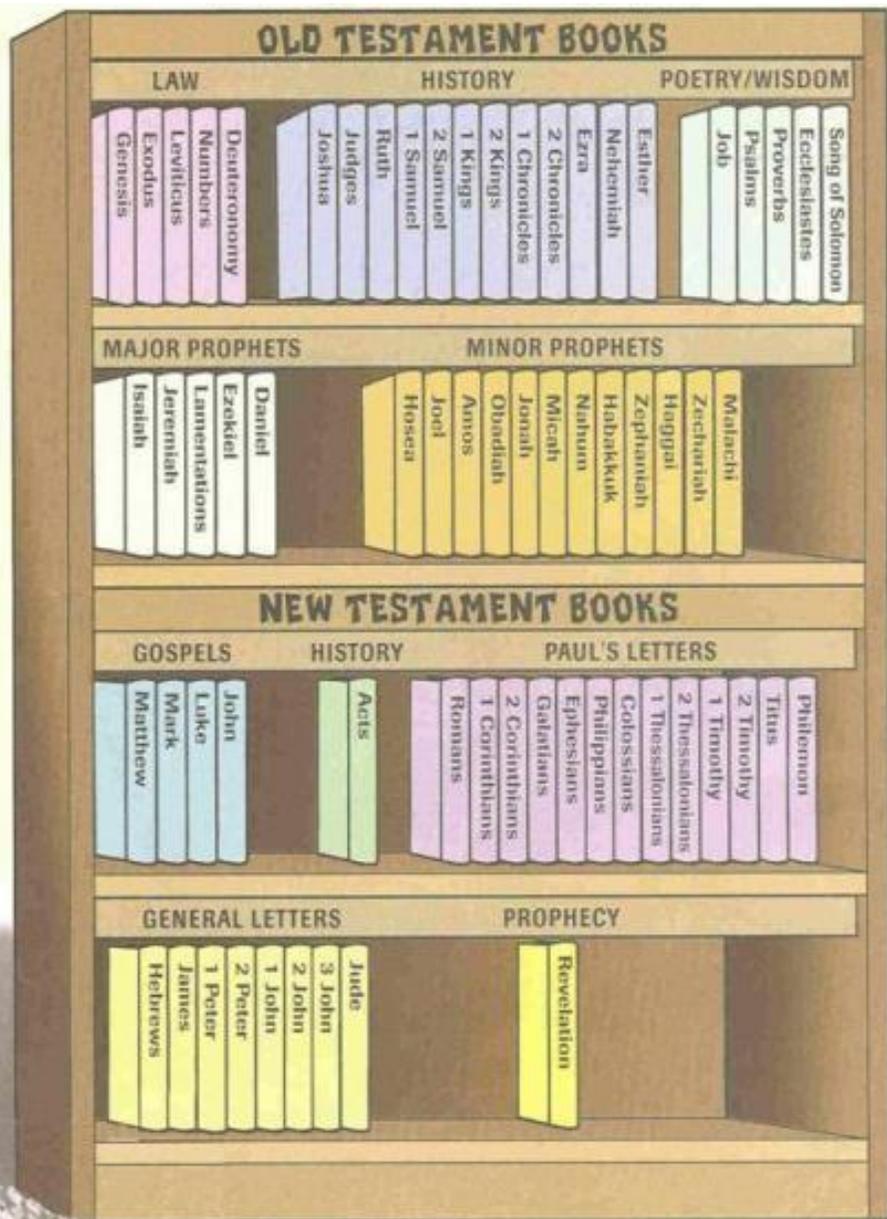
Lent Course

This year's Lent course aims to do two things. First, it will give us some time to look in more detail at the Bible. We will start from basics, looking at the different books, and the different types of literature. We will also explore a little of the history contained within the scriptures, and going on at the time they were written. Following an overview, we will dig a little deeper into first the Old Testament, and then the New Testament. Hopefully there will be time to look in some depth at particular books.

Of course we don't only read the scriptures for information, so there will also be an opportunity to engage a little more deeply in the process of storytelling, asking ourselves how the stories of the scriptures are told, and what they help us to understand about our own ongoing relationship with God.

The Lent course will be delivered over five weeks, with opportunities to attend during the day or in the evening. As usual, the same sessions will be delivered daytime and evening, so you can mix and match sessions according to your availability. While there will be ways in which sessions build on one another, each can also stand on its own, so there is no need to attend all sessions. You will be welcome whenever you can make it.

Bible Bookcase



March Services and Events

Wednesday 2	10.00	Holy Communion with Ashing
	20.00	Sung Communion with Ashing
Saturday 5	08.30	Men's Breakfast at Café Affair
Sunday 6	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Monday 7	19.30	Knit & Natter Group in the Leverton Room
Tuesday 8	10.00	Lent Course I
	19.30	Lent Course I
Sunday 13	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion
	18.00	Evening Service
Tuesday 15	10.00	Lent Course II
	19.30	Lent Course II
Wednesday 16	20.00	PCC Meeting
Thursday 17	14.30	Afternoon Club Garden Centre Visit
Saturday 19	10.00	Women's Group in the Cuddington Hall
Sunday 20	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Sung Communion and Children's Groups
Tuesday 22	10.00	Lent Course III
	14.30	Knit & Natter Group in the Leverton Room
	19.30	Lent Course III
Sunday 27	08.00	Holy Communion
	09.30	Mothering Sunday Parade Service
Tuesday 29	10.00	Lent Course IV
Wednesday 30	19.00	Men's Carvery at the Hogsmill
	19.30	Lent Course IV

Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9am

Everyone is very welcome