

# The Old Testament

## Noah

- People were bad
- Noah to build ark out of gopher wood
- Assemble two of every kind of living thing
- Take wife, his three sons (Shem, Ham and Japheth) and their wives
- Rain fell for forty days and nights then rested on the earth for one hundred and fifty days
- Mount Ararat
- Raven, dove, dove (olive leaf), dove
- After flood, sacrifice and covenant - rainbow

**Covenant** – A covenant is an agreement between two groups. It takes the form of a promise – a bond between them. Often, each party will have some specific active role to play in order to symbolise this agreement. In the flood story, to prove that he will keep his part of the bargain, God puts a rainbow in the sky as a visible sign of his word – a sign which will remind people of this ‘deal’ every time they see it.

## Tower of Babel

- Babylonia
- Everyone spoke same language
- They made bricks and used tar for mortar
- Wanted to build city with tallest tower ever, with its top in the heavens, so they would be famous
- God felt that they were becoming too ambitious, so decided to scatter them all over the world, and gave them different languages so that they couldn’t understand each other

## Jacob

- Isaac and Rebecca had twin sons – Esau (hunter) and Jacob (quiet man, spent time at home)
- Isaac loved Esau, and Rebecca loved Jacob
- Jacob impersonated Esau (wore skins to make his skin feel like Esau’s), took Isaac stew, and received birthright blessing
- Esau angry, so Jacob travelled north-east to Haran in order to stay with Rebecca’s brother, Laban
- On journey Jacob rested, using a stone as pillow
- Dream - ladder between heaven and earth, angels ascending and descending on it. God told Jacob that he would give the land on which he was lying to his descendents, and God would look after him
- Jacob fell in love with Laban’s youngest daughter Rachel and wanted to marry her - promised to work for Laban for seven years in return
- Laban tricked Jacob into marrying older daughter Leah, and would only hand over Rachel after seven more years work
- Leah many sons, but Rachel only two – Joseph and Benjamin
- Jacob fled from Laban, returned to Canaan, and Esau
- On way, had a wrestling match with God, and was given a new name – Israel
- Esau approached with 400 men, but forgave Jacob for what he had done

# Joseph

- Jacob loved Joseph the most
- Coat
- Dreams
- Brothers jealous, throw Joseph down well
- Sold him for twenty silver pieces, smeared coat with goat's blood
- Joseph taken to Egypt and sold to Potiphar as slave
- Potiphar's wife fell in love with Joseph – he would not return her affection, she accused him of having attacked her, and threw him into prison
- King's butler (vine and branches, grapes juiced into Pharaoh's cup – released) and baker (three cake baskets, birds eating from one of them – sentenced to death)
- Two years later Pharaoh's dream: seven thin cows eating seven fat cows and seven thin ears of corn eating seven fat ears of corn
- Seven years of plenty, then seven years of famine
- Joseph to plan for the famine
- Joseph's brothers (apart from Benjamin) came from Canaan to buy grain from him, accused of being spies, told to prove themselves by returning with Benjamin (Simeon was kept in prison until their return)
- Joseph hid a silver cup in Benjamin's bag of grain

# Moses

- New king of Egypt made Israelites slaves
- Hebrew boys to be killed at birth
- Aaron, Miriam and Moses were born to Amram (father) and Jochebed
- Basket
- Pharaoh's daughter found baby
- Miriam offered to find nurse for him, and fetched Jochebed
- Moses saw slave driver whipping an Israelite, and spontaneously killed the Egyptian
- Moses fled
- Shepherd in Midian
- Burning bush
- Stick became snake, in front of Pharaoh (with Aaron)
- 1. River Nile – blood 2. Frogs 3. Insects 4. Flies 5. Cattle died 6. Boils 7. Hail 8. Locusts 9. Darkness for three days 10. Angel of death (Passover)
- Israelites fled
- Cloud by day, fire by night
- Sea parted
- Quails to eat at first
- Manna in desert
- Ten commandments from God on Mount Sinai
- People melted gold rings and made golden calf. Moses smashed the commandment tablets, destroyed the statue, ground it up, sprinkled it into the people's drinking water
- Moses pleaded for forgiveness, and got new commandments.
- Aaron became new leader

# Joshua

- Joshua took over. It was time to conquer Canaan (promised land)
- Two spies stayed with Rahab (prostitute)
- King tried to kill them
- Rahab let them down on a rope
- Red cord in window
- River Jordan stilled to allow Israelites across on dry ground
- March around city, seven priests with trumpets in the lead, then the ark, and the soldiers, once a day for six days. Seventh day, go round seven times, and on seventh lap, trumpeters to sound long blast on trumpets, the people shout, walls fall down

The **Ark of the Covenant** contained the commandments which Moses received from God, on **Mount Sinai**. God gave instructions as to how the ark was to be built – it was elaborately decorated with pure gold, and could be a constant reminder to the people of God’s covenant with them. They carried it with them as a kind of ‘battle standard’.

## Samson

- Manoah and wife had son called Samson
- Killed lion with bare hands
- Samson married a Philistine, Delilah, who was promised eleven hundred pieces of silver if she could find out where Samson’s strength lay
- Philistines shaved his head when he was asleep, gouged out his eyes, took him to Gaza, and prison
- Dagon (god), feast, Samson prayed for strength, pulled down temple, and killed everyone

## Ruth

- Elimelech and Naomi from Bethlehem
- Their son Chilion married Ruth
- Chilion died – no children
- Ruth returned to Bethlehem with Naomi
- Boaz Naomi’s relative. Boaz got permission for marriage from Naomi’s closest relative, at town gate, and married Ruth
- They had a son (Obed) – whose own son Jesse was to be the father of the great King David

## Samuel

- Samuel son of Hannah – had been born as a result of her prayers to God
- She gave him over to the temple at Shiloh, to help Eli the priest there
- Samuel heard his name being called three times during the night, and thought that it was Eli
- Realised it was God, and the fourth time replied “Speak; your servant is listening”
- Message: Eli’s two sons going to be punished, and not be future priests
- People wanted a King to rule them. Samuel instructed by God to anoint Saul to be first King of Israel
- Saul was warrior King, who turned away from God’s word. Punishment: someone from different family would be next king

## David & Goliath

- David (shepherd), anointed by Samuel to become King after Saul
- He was Saul’s armour-bearer, as well as a skilled harp player
- Philistine Goliath challenged the Israelites – the losers would be the victors’ slaves
- David fought Goliath, refusing armour, rather trusting in his slingshot
- Five smooth pebbles
- Hit Goliath in the forehead, beheaded him with own sword

# Ahab & Jezebel

- Ahab had palace at Jezreel
- Vineyard – Naboth. • Ahab wanted it as vegetable garden
- Jezebel accused Naboth of treason. Stoned to death
- Elijah passed on God’s punishment: Jezebel will die in Jezreel, and whole family will be destroyed.

- Ahab went into battle in disguise at Ramoth-gilead but shot dead between the joints in his armour

# Elisha

- Saw Elijah being taken up to heaven in fiery chariot by River Jordan
- Woman at Shunem – had son, died, Elisha’s prayers brought him back to life
- Healed Naaman from skin disease (commander of the King of Syria’s army) wash seven times in the river Jordan

- Servant: Gehazi
- King of Syria sent chariots and an army to surround City of Dothan to try to capture Elisha
- Elisha protected by divine army of fiery horses and chariots

# Jeremiah

- Kingdom of Judah
- Watched potter at work. Jeremiah suddenly saw himself like the potter, and the people of Israel like the clay – he could destroy and remake them if they did not listen to God’s message

- Arrested and beaten • Then wrote God’s message (God’s word like fire – couldn’t be put out)
- Jeremiah thrown into well. Ebedmelech from Ethiopia pulled him out
- Zedekiah made new King of Judah. Jeremiah advised him to submit to the Babylonians. He didn’t and Babylonians destroyed city, killing king’s sons and blinding him, taking many inhabitants off as slaves
- Jeremiah wrote to the exiles, saying that God would one day rescue them

**Prophet** – Jeremiah is a good example of an Old Testament prophet. A prophet is a messenger, inspired by God, who is specially commissioned to preach the divine message to the people. Often, this might include predictions for the future.

# Esther

- King Xerxes of Persia (capital: Susa)
- Queen Vashti refused to be ‘shown off’ at party
- Replacement wife: Esther (adopted by Mordecai the Jew)

- Mordecai heard of plot to kill King, and warned him (through Esther). Name in records.
- Haman chief of staff. Mordecai refused to kneel to him Haman tried to kill all Jews – royal seal
- Esther pleaded to the King on the Jews’ behalf, and saved them
- King gave Mordecai royal honours • Haman hung on his own gallows

# Daniel

- Daniel and friends taken from Jerusalem to Babylon as slaves
- No rich food – vegetables. Became fitter and healthier than others
- Interpreted King's dream

- Wouldn't worship ninety foot high gold statue when music played, thrown into a burning fiery furnace – four men walking through flames – fourth looks like a god
- Belshazzar new king      • Writing on the wall – Belshazzar's rule to end. Darius new king
- Daniel thrown into the lion's den because he was praying to God (king had been tricked), but he survived the experience.

**Faith...** Daniel and his companions are a good Old Testament example of faith – by refusing to turn away from God, despite pressure from the King, they survived seemingly fatal ordeals. It was their faith which kept them going, and which safeguarded their lives.

# Jonah

- Jonah told to go to Nineveh, but fled – set off from Jaffa to Tarshish in Spain
- Storm, pray to gods, Jonah thrown overboard, swallowed by huge fish for three days

- Eventually went to Nineveh, spoke to people (destruction in 40 days), they all changed their ways, and God didn't destroy them
- Jonah sulked outside city, and begged to die      • Plant grew in one day, and died in one day
- Jonah more concerned about one plant than 120,000 people in Nineveh, and all the animals there

# The New Testament

## Annunciation

- Nazareth
- Mary and Joseph
- Angel Gabriel – Mary going to have baby
- Agreed to do whatever God asked
- Cousin Elizabeth also expecting a child

## Nativity Stories

- Joseph going to break off engagement, but angel appeared to him in dream
- Roman Emperor Augustus – everyone register for taxes in their home town
- Joseph descended from King David – Bethlehem was home town
- Travelled 80 miles from Nazareth
- Only room left in inn was stable
- Angel appeared to shepherds
- Took Jesus to be named at temple in Jerusalem when he was 8 days old
- Simeon and Anna
- Wise men from east saw star and came to worship Jesus (gold, frankincense, myrrh)
- Herod didn't want rival King. Told wise men to tell where Jesus was. Warned not to, in dream
- Herod killed every boy under 2 years old

## Jesus in the Temple

- Jesus was 12
- Passover Festival
- Left behind in Temple at Jerusalem
- Jesus called the Temple his father's house

## John the Baptist

- Zechariah and Elizabeth
- Desert. Camels' hair clothes, leather belt, ate locusts and wild honey
- Told of coming of Jesus, and said people should change their ways
- Baptised in River Jordan

## Wedding

- First miracle
- Cana in Galilee
- Six water jars
- Best wine kept until last

# The Twelve

- Taught from Peter's boat • Nets – huge catch – filled two boats
- Peter and Andrew left everything and followed Jesus
- Matthew was tax collector (Jesus was like a doctor treating the sick)
- The twelve were: Peter and Andrew; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew (Nathanael); Matthew; Thomas; James (son of Alphaeus); Simon; Judas, and Judas Iscariot (who betrayed Jesus)

# Lord's Prayer

- Jesus told people to pray quietly, and on their own, and gave Lord's Prayer as an example of how to do this

# Death of John the Baptist

- King Herod Antipas got divorced and married Herodias (his brother's wife)
- John objected and was imprisoned by Herod
- Herodias' daughter danced at Herod's birthday party
- Herod offered her any wish she wanted – even half of his kingdom
- With advice of her mother, asked for John the Baptist's head on a dish. Herod had to keep his word

# Believing & Forgiving

- Roman officer at Capernaum a good man – built temple
- His servant dying. Asked Jesus for help
- Said Jesus merely had to give order from distance – great faith
- Dinner with Simon the Pharisee. Woman came in from street, washed Jesus' feet with tears, dried them with hair, and covered them with scented oil
- The sinful are most in need of forgiveness – Jesus forgave her sins

# God's Kingdom

- Sower sowed seed (like the word)
- Path – eaten by birds (message snatched away)
- Stony ground – sun shrivelled (give up when trouble comes)
- Thistles – smothered and choked (worries/money get in way)
- Good ground – grew (hear and understand)
- Farmer sowed wheat, and enemy sowed weeds in field

- All gathered in together when it had grown, and then sorted – just like mankind will be sorted into the good and the bad, and judged after death
- Kingdom like a mustard seed – a tiny seed growing into great tree – kingdom is growing and growing
- Man found treasure in field, sold what he had, bought land. Make sure kingdom is yours!
- Kingdom worth more than anything else – like merchant selling everything to buy the finest pearl

## Feeding 5,000

- Food provided by a boy
- Five barley loaves, two small fish
- Crowd ate fill, and twelve baskets left over
- Jesus said, “I am the bread of life.”

## Mary, Martha & Lazarus

- Mary and Martha sisters
- Lived at Bethany, outside Jerusalem
- Martha busy, Mary listened
- Lazarus died. Jesus sent for. Tomb for 4 days
- Jesus brought Lazarus back to life.
- From now on, Pharisees and chief priests made plans to kill Jesus

## Holy Week

- Passover festival
- Jerusalem
- Donkey
- Coats and palms
- Drove out merchants and money changers in Temple – place of prayer not robbers’ den
- Judas Iscariot paid 30 silver coins by chief priests to betray Jesus
- Upstairs room. Last supper. One will betray me. Spirit will always be with you. Bread and wine

- Went to Gethsemane to pray. Peter will deny three time before cock crows
- Peter, James and John to keep watch, but fell asleep three times
- Jesus arrested: Judas kissed Jesus, to mark him out. Peter cut off Malchus’ ear (high priest’s servant).

Jesus healed him

- Peter denied Jesus three times
- Jesus said he was Son of God. Sentenced to death. Judas sorry and gave money back then hanged himself
- Accused of Blasphemy before Pilate (Roman governor)
- Passover. Release one man. Barabbas (murderer)
- Golgotha
- Simon of Cyrene
- Notice on cross: ‘This is Jesus the King of the Jews’
- Two thieves – one on either side
- Earthquake. Side pierced with sword. Joseph of Arimathea took body for burial



- Mary Magdalene found empty tomb, and angel said that Jesus had risen from dead
- Peter and John saw empty tomb
- Mary saw Jesus and thought he was the gardener. Recognised him when he called her by name
- Road to Emmaus – Cleopas. When Jesus thanked God for the bread at the meal, they knew his identity
- Jesus appeared in room with disciples, even though doors were locked. They ate together
- Thomas missed this, and doubted. Same thing happened one week later then he believed
- Miraculous catch of fish (Peter) – Jesus made sure that Peter really loved him, and forgave him

## Pentecost

- Mount of Olives
- Spirit in future
- Cloud, two men in white. Jesus to heaven
- Pentecost. Jerusalem. Wind and flame – this was the spirit
- Everyone from all areas suddenly understood the disciples' language
- That day, three thousand people became Christians

## Stephen

- Early follower of Jesus
- Accused of speaking against Moses and God
- Stoned to death, but prayed for his murderers
- Paul saw this, and approved
- Philip was an early follower, and explained his religion and baptised a high official of the Queen of Ethiopia

## Conversion of Paul

- Originally called Saul
- Going to Damascus in Syria
- Blinding bright light
- Ananias, in Straight Street
- Paul got sight back, and became Christian prophet
- Jewish authorities tried to kill Paul, but he escaped from the city in a basket lowered from the walls

## Paul's teaching on Love

- Paul put a lot of energy into preaching to different people
- He wrote letters to the communities, highlighting what they were doing wrong, and explaining what they must do in order to put themselves right
- Key teaching: people should love one another, just as Christ loved mankind
- Humans could not be separated from the love of God, and by loving each other, they fulfill the law
- He said that love was patient and kind, and that of the virtues of faith, hope and love, the greatest was love