

# 15 Bible Periods:

Although I don't know who first came up with this categorization, I know that it has been a great help to me in my own personal Bible study to use the 15 periods of Bible history. I was first introduced to it, insofar as I can remember, when I entered preaching school at Brown Trail in 1980. As we studied the course, "Old Testament Survey," we were required to memorize the 15 Bible periods and put the Bible books and major events into those periods. It seems to me, now, that the Bible just naturally divides itself into these 15 periods. Others have divided history into more or less than 15 periods, but this is the arrangement that makes the most sense to me. During all of these periods God was dealing with mankind and He has given us an amazing record to study and through which study we can derive tremendous benefits. It helps a lot to know how these Bible Books and events hook into the recorded history of the world through God's written revelation. It will enhance your study of the word of God if you will learn these periods well. Here they are...

- **01. ANTEDILUVIAN PERIOD.** Now this is just a fancy term for "before the flood." This period covers the creation and all of the things that happened before the flood. *The scriptures involved are* **Genesis 1:1–7:16.**
- **02. POST-DILUVIAN PERIOD.** In this period of history we read about the events which occurred during and immediately after the Flood. One great event in this section was the building of the tower of Babel and the scattering of the people. *The Bible text:* **Genesis 7:16–11:26.**
- **03. PATRIARCHY PERIOD.** This is not to be confused with the much broader dispensation of time called the Patriarchal Age. It is a smaller segment of time in which the major characters are the three patriarchs (fathers) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. One of the most interesting and instructive sections of the Bible involves this remarkable and exciting period. *Text:* **Genesis 11:27–Ex 1:7; and Job.**
- **04. EGYPTIAN BONDAGE.** For the protection of God's people, through whom the Messiah was to come, a period of time was spent in bondage in Egypt. During this time, Israel developed and grew, with God's providential care, into a great NUMBER of people. One of the requirements for a nation is to have PEOPLE, and Egyptian bondage is important in the development of the scheme of redemption for that reason. *The text:* **Exodus 1:8–14:31.**
- **05. WILDERNESS WANDERING.** Because of a lack of strong faith, those over 20 were unable to enter the promised land (Num 14:29), but wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Many lessons can be gleaned in a study of this period. *Text:* **Exodus 15:1–Joshua 3.**
- **06. CONQUEST OF CANAAN.** Joshua leads the people into the promised land and there begins a period of conquest of the land God had given Israel. *Text:* **Joshua 4–Judges 3:4.**
- **07. PERIOD OF THE JUDGES.** During this period, there was a continual cycle of faithfulness to the Lord and unfaithfulness; blessings and judgments. Judges were raised up among the people to deliver them from bondage. *Text:* **Judges 3:5–1 Samuel 9.**

- **08. PERIOD OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.** The people wanted a king to lead them into battle as the nations surrounding them had. For 120 years divided equally among Saul, David, and Solomon there was a united kingdom of Israel. This is a very interesting period filled with rich lessons. *Text:* **1 Samuel 10–1 Kings 12:15; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon.**
- **09. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM.** As King Rehoboam rejected the wise counsel of the older men and accepted the foolish advice of the younger, the kingdom was rent asunder and began a new period. *Text:* **1 Kings 12:16–2 Kings 17:5; Isaiah; Hosea; Joel; Amos; Jonah; Micah.**
- **10. PERIOD OF JUDAH ALONE.** Assyria was allowed by God to capture and swallow up the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This period deals only with Judah to the south. *Text:* **2 Kings 17:6–25; 1 & 2 Chronicles; Jeremiah; Lamentations; Ezekiel; Obadiah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah.**
- **11. BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.** Because Judah failed to learn from her neighbor to the north, Israel, God allowed Babylon to conquer, capture, and rule over His people for 70 years. *Text:* **Daniel.**
- **12. PERIOD OF THE RESTORATION.** The people were allowed to come back from Babylon to restore the temple and rebuild Jerusalem's walls. *Text:* **Ezra; Nehemiah; Esther; Haggai; Zechariah; Malachi.**
- **13. BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS.** This is known as the 400 silent years in that no Bible books were written, but much was happening that led toward the “fullness of time” of Galatians 4:4. This is where the uninspired books called the Apocrypha are produced.
- **14. PERIOD OF THE CHRIST.** The coming of the Messiah is accomplished in this period. How rich and rewarding is the study of the life of Christ! *Text:* **Matthew; Mark; Luke; John; Acts 1.**
- **15. PERIOD OF THE CHURCH.** In one sense Bible history closed in the first century, but in another sense, that history has continued into this century, as the church continues to carry out the Great Commission. We are presently living in this period. *Text:* **Acts 2–Revelation.**

--David Lemmons, <http://maplehillchurchofchrist.blog>