

Organization of the Hebrew Bible

The Law (Torah, Pentateuch)

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

The Prophets

Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings

Latter Prophets: Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel
The Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets: Amos,
Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Haggai,
Zechariah, Jonah, Joel, Obadiah, Malachi)

The Writings

Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Songs,
Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel,
Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles

Methods of Critical Reading

Studying the Bible includes critical methods of research that connect Biblical texts to historic events, helps us understand past customs, and explains literary styles no longer in use today. Specific types of critical reading include the following:

Exegesis	The scholarly explanation of a Bible passage. The word <i>exegesis</i> means “to bring out or explain.” Exegesis tries to discover what a text meant in its original time and place of composition.
Hermeneutics	The scholarly explanation of a Bible passage that is primarily concerned with what the text means for people today.
Source Criticism	This type of study focuses on the source of each passage. Scholars have identified four sources, or oral traditions, for the Old Testament. By identifying the source of the passage, scholars can determine the message of a particular story or event.
Form Criticism	The study that examines the special form of a poem, law, hymn, or narrative and then tries to determine the cultural-historical situation from which it came.