

BIBLE BASICS FOR PODCASTS 1-5

The notes below accompany listening to the “Bible Basics Podcasts 1-5”

Basic 1: Introduction

This brief introduction offers a summary of what the podcast "Bible Basics" is about: Designed with those wanting to study the Bible with little or no background. This is a very basic introduction which presumes no knowledge of the Bible. It is intended for those who would like to grow in their biblical appreciation.

Basic 2: What is the Bible?

This podcast offers a very brief reflection on the nature of the Bible.

In summary, the Bible is the gathering of stories, songs, cries and laments...

- of the human experience of faithful people
- who believe in the presence and action of a God ...
- who cares about them.
- acts in history
- in the people of Israel (“Old Testament”)
- in Jesus and his disciples (“New Testament”)

Basic 3: The Bible’s Division and their Books

This podcasts offers an overview of the division of the Bible into the First ("Old") Testament and Second ("New") Testament and their various writings.

- "O Biblos" (Greek) + "Book" = Collection of 73 writings
- 46 Books of the First Testament written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek
- 27 writings of the Second Testament in Greek
- Description of First Testament and the Second Testament.

Basic 4: Brief History behind the Books of the Bible

We briefly look at an overview of the historical sweep behind the Bible. A more focused presentation of the historical periods behind both Testaments comes in a later podcast.

- The Bible contains different forms of writing, by different authors over 2000 years.

- There is a discussion of the division of time into "BCE" and "CE".
- Gen 1-11: Predates Abraham, stories of Creation and other stories part of a mythological collection, written during the Exile in the 7-6th Century.
- Second Testament ("new") occurs in the late first century CE.
- Paul is the first writer in the 50s; Gospels written 70-late first century CE.
- Other writings (of the apostles and Book of Apocalypse) date to the second half of the first century CE.

Basic 5: The Bible's Geo-political Context

The authors of the books and writings of the First and Second Testament lived in a world that was geo-political. This podcast introduces the six primary powers that influenced the cultural and social context of the Bible's authors: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome.

1 **Egypt**: Controlled Canaan before Israel's settlement. Zenith under the Ramessids then steadily declined. Alexander's descendants (Ptolemies) ruled till 63 BCE. Dominated Palestine from 320-198 BCE).

2. **Assyria**: Expanded during 9th Century BCE. Captured Samaria in 721 BCE. Defeated by Egypt in 660 BCE. finally routed by Babylonians in 612 with the fall of Nineveh.

3. **Babylon**: Supreme in 18th Century BCE under Hammurabi. Defeated by Assyria but later retained power after 625 BCE, capturing Jerusalem (597 BCE) and destroying its temple (587 BCE). Persians destroy Babylon in 538 BCE.

4. **Persia**: Powerful under Cyrus' rule (550-529 BCE). Conquered by Alexandria in 330 BCE.

5. **Greece**: Alexander of Macedonia supreme in 330s. Conquered Palestine in 333. After his death generals took over.

6. **Rome**: Pompey triumphs over the Greek Seleucids in 62 BCE. Palestine under Roman rule and Titus conquers and destroys Jerusalem in 70 CE.