



November Bible Tidbits—Books of The Bible #2

A selection of facts and information to help you discover more of the riches about Sacred Scripture. **Over the next several months we will continue our journey through the books of the Bible.**

Each month we'll offer you several new tidbits in print and on-line: In print on the reverse side of the OLV Activities Calendar; On-line on OLV's Web Page (ourladyofvictorytallmadge.parishesonline.com). The Tidbits are on the Home Page—below the Question of the Week!

Historical Books of the Old Testament *continue*: (*Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ruth, then Ezra and Nehemiah, along with Esther.*) The Historical Books recount the stories of the conquest of the Promised Land.

- **Judges:** This book continues the story of Israel's conquest and gradual occupation of the land promised to them by God. In contrast to Joshua's portrayal of a swift and sure invasion, the Book of the Judges tells of an uncertain struggle and slow conquest of the land, together with their own struggle to find unity among the tribes.
- **Ruth:** The Book of Ruth is a dramatic short story composed largely of dialogue. Yahweh has no speaking part, but the story is always aware of his presence. Love is the message of this story—"hesed" love: Ruth's love for Naomi, her mother-in-law, and the love Boaz has for Ruth. The story is about Ruth, a Gentile, who leaves her own homeland and family to travel with Naomi as they return to Naomi's people. The faithfulness of Ruth is rewarded by God as can be seen in the genealogy at the end of the Book, for the child of Ruth and Boaz is the grandfather of David, in the line of Jesus Christ. Truly, God has come for all people who are faithful.
- **1 and 2 Samuel:** These two books along with the two Books of Kings trace the last days of the period of the judges and the first days of Israel as a monarchy. The major figure in these two books is Samuel, a prophet and religious leader, who also is the most important political voice of this time. Although Samuel was reluctant to have a king, he accepted the people's demands when God made the choice evident in Saul. The second half of 1 Samuel traces David's rise to power as Saul's fortunes decline. The Second Book of Samuel centers on the reign of David, his military power as he wins over a large empire for the newly united Israel, and his sin and its effect on his family.
- **1 and 2 Kings:** 1 Kings opens with the story of Solomon, whose wisdom was legendary and who built the temple that became the focal point of Israel's religious life. The rest of the chapters of 1 Kings recount the early days of the divided monarchy. At the end of 1 Kings and the beginning of 2 Kings we hear the prophetic stories of Elijah and Elisha. The Second Book of Kings then ends with the story of Judah from the end of the Northern Kingdom to the Exile in Babylon and the fall of Jerusalem as well as the destruction of the Temple in 586 BC.
- **1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah:** Our best knowledge of the post-exilic life (life after the exile in Babylon) of Israel comes from these four books. These books must be taken together, for they form a single continuing view of how the small community of Judah adapted itself to a new way of life that no longer depended on a king or national freedom to survive. It was the beginning of a profound change that gradually shaped Israel into what can be recognized as the beginnings of modern Judaism.
- **1 and 2 Chronicles:** These books stress the role of the cult, prayer, worship and ritual purity as a way of life. Chronicles often follows the Books of Samuel and Kings, sometimes word for word in whole chapters, except when it comes to the story of David. For the Chronicler, David was a holy and dedicated leader who followed Yahweh faithfully. This picture of David as the founder of a community centered on the temple becomes the standard by which the Chronicler then judges the rest of Israel's history.