



## February Bible Tidbits—Books of The Bible #5

A selection of facts and information to help you discover more of the riches about Sacred Scripture. We continue our journey through the books of the Bible. Remember, if you want to know more or have questions, call Diane at 633-3672.

*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 Home Page ([ourladyofvictorytallmadge.parishesonline.com](http://ourladyofvictorytallmadge.parishesonline.com)),—below the Question of the Week!*

**Wisdom Books:** *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom and Sirach.*

- **Sirach:** The Book of Sirach is a mixture of proverbs and lengthy essays on major themes within wisdom tradition: use of speech, self-control, evil friends, the value of work, death, sickness, etc. Sirach stresses the ethical aspects of everyday life. The author exalts the role of law and fear of the Lord as true wisdom. For the author of Sirach wisdom can be attained, but it is in the form of guidelines for human action, and not in speculation.

**The Prophets:** *A prophet is “one who is called” and speaks “on behalf of another.” They were the heralds of God’s word. They shared a strong sense of the tradition of the Covenant relationship Israel shared with Yahweh. They also spoke for those without a voice; i.e. the poor, the forgotten, and the victims of injustice. The rise of the prophets came at a time in the history of Israel when they were being overcome by stronger foreign powers and placed in exile away from their land and temple. The Prophets can be found at the end of the Old Testament as they point ahead to the coming of the Messiah, one who will obey God and bring blessings upon Israel.*

- **Isaiah:** Isaiah is often considered the greatest of the Old Testament prophets because of the sheer range and vision of his prophecy. Isaiah’s theology demanded that Israel and Judah (the two kingdoms of Israel) place their trust in God and not in foreign powers. Isaiah tried to show that God would stand by them if they remained faithful during their time of oppression. Because the kings of Judah rejected Isaiah’s words, Isaiah turned his hopes to a future king. Isaiah tells his people that God will not abandon the house of David but will raise up a king, a messiah, who will obey Yahweh and bring blessings on Israel.
- **Jeremiah:** Jeremiah’s book opens with his call as a prophet around 627 BC. He preaches down through the collapse of Israel under the Babylonians. Jeremiah never stopped preaching against the two major evils of his day: idolatry and injustice. He pleaded for the people to be converted and come back to the Covenant, so that Yahweh would have mercy. One scholar describes Jeremiah as the prophet of God’s divine sympathy. When the people refused to hear his words, Jeremiah felt the anguish personally.
- **Ezekiel:** The most remarkable individual during Israel’s period of Exile in Babylon was the prophet Ezekiel. He was called by God in the fifth year of the Exile. In the midst of the Exile, Ezekiel was trying to recreate a sense of trust that God still worked as he always had, and that he spoke with as much authority and powers as he always had. This was no easy task as the people were suffering and felt that God had abandoned them. Ezekiel was the first prophet to preach to the people without either the temple or the promised land to show God’s presence for the Babylonians had destroyed the Temple and taken the land.