

Religious Studies—How is God Portrayed in the Old Testament?

Year 7 Term 2



Structure of the Old Testament

The Old Testament is the first part of the Bible. The Old Testament contains 39 different books which were written in Hebrew and are believed to be the sacred Word of God.

The Old Testament contains stories of God guiding, rewarding and punishing His creation. Throughout the Old Testament God communicates with His prophets in order to create a covenant with His people (the Hebrews).

Genesis is the first book in the Old Testament. The events in Genesis are believed to have taken place in 4000 B.C.. The final book in the Old Testament is Malachi. The events in Malachi are believed to have taken place in 440 B.C. In Malachi God promises to send Jesus to save humanity:

“See, I will send my messenger.” (Malachi 3:1-4).

How is God Portrayed in the Old Testament?

Omnipotent	“The waters flooded the Earth for a hundred and fifty days.” Genesis 7:24
Omniscient	“But the Lord will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and that of Egypt, so that no animal belonging to the Israelites will die.” Exodus 9:4
Omnibenevolent	“No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.” Exodus 12:13
Maleficent	“Everything on earth will perish.” Genesis 6-17
Transcendence	“Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt.” Exodus 9: 22
Immanence	“For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth.” Exodus 9:15

Key Terms

Bible	The Christian Holy Book which contains the Old and New Testament.
Canon	A collection of books which are thought to be sacred. The Bible is the Christian Canon.
Old Testament	The first part of the Bible which contains 39 books.
Prophet	A Prophet is God’s messenger.
Hebrew	A descendent of Abraham.
Covenant	An agreement or promise between God and His people (the Hebrews).
God	The Supreme Being in Christianity who created the Universe and all of its content.
Portrayed	Describing someone in a certain way.
Omnipotent	All-Powerful.
Omniscient	All-Knowing.
Omnibenevolent	All-Loving.
Transcendent	Outside of space and time (not present in the Universe).
Immanent	Present in the Universe and accessible to human beings.
Maleficent	Someone who enjoys causing harm or destruction.

Old Testament Stories

Noah’s Ark (Genesis 6-9)

People on Earth were misbehaving which made God very angry. However, Noah was a good man who loved and obeyed God. God told Noah to build an ark for his family and animals. Other people laughed at Noah because there was no water in the desert where they lived. Once the ark was built and Noah, Noah’s family and the animals were safely on board, God covered the Earth with water. The flood lasted for 1 year and 27 days. Noah thanked God.

Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22)

Abraham was a good man who obeyed God. One day God decided to test Abraham’s faith. God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son called Isaac. Abraham was upset at God’s request however willingly took Isaac to the mountain where God asked for the sacrifice to be performed. Abraham began to build an altar and tied Isaac to it. However, just before Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac an angel of God appeared and stopped him. God was pleased with Abraham for trusting Him and blessed Abraham and his family.

Moses and the 10 Plagues (Exodus 7-11)

Moses was born a Hebrew but was raised as an Egyptian Prince. God spoke to Moses and told him to ask the Pharaoh (Egyptian King) to let the Hebrews go. When the Pharaoh refused, God sent 10 Plagues which caused destruction. Eventually, the Pharaoh agreed to free the Hebrews, however he changed his mind and chased them to the Red Sea. God parted the Red Sea which meant the Hebrews could safely cross it.

The Book of Esther

Esther was a Jewish orphan who became Queen of Persia, however her husband (King Xerxes) did not know she was Jewish. King Xerxes had a helper who was very wicked and cruel, he was called Haman. Haman asked the King to kill all the Jewish people. Esther begged the King to not allow this and revealed that she was Jewish. The name “Esther” in Hebrew translates to “Hidden” - God is hidden throughout this story and allows Esther to save the Jewish people from destruction.



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