

FORMATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

NAME

DATE

A. OVERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Over how long of a time period was the Old Testament composed? How many writers have been identified as authors of the Old Testament?
 - Over 1000 years.
 - There are at least 40 different writers.
2. What are the five basic literary genres or types of the Old Testament?
 - Law, historical narrative, poetry, wisdom, and prophetic utterance.
3. In what languages was the Old Testament originally recorded?
 - Biblical Hebrews and imperial Aramaic
4. Number the following writing systems in order from earliest in development to latest and provide a brief definition of each.
 - ___ Syllabic writing system:
 - ___ Ideograms:
 - ___ Alphabetic writing system:
 - ___ Pictograms:
 - ___ Logograms:
5. Hebrew shares a common proto-Semitic alphabetic system with which other ancient dialects?
 - Phoenician, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite and Ugaritic.

6. In light of ancient hand-copying practices, why was there an emphasis on "hearing" the word of the Lord in the Old Testament?
 - Hearing, memorization and public reading

7. Who were the Masoretes? When did they live? What is the Masoretic Text?
 - The Masoretes were Jewish scholars and scribes. They lived between AD 500 – 900. The Masoretic Text is the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

8. When and by whom were chapter divisions added into the Old Testament?
 - Chapter divisions were added in 1518 by Stephen Langdon.

9. What is textual criticism and what is its goal?
 - The science of manuscript comparison.

10. Define the following key terms.
 - a. canon: Reed or stalk of papyrus, oil-grass or sweet cane.

 - b. messenger formula: This is what the Sovereign Lord says

 - c. Pseudepigrapha: Books written under a pen name.

 - d. Apocrypha: Hidden

 - e. Tanak: Hebrew Scriptures

 - f. Vulgate: Latin Translation of the Old Testament.

 - g. Septuagint: Bible

11. List the factors or criteria important to the selection process of the Old Testament canon.
 - Quality of inherent divine inspiration and authority recognizable to the leaders of the Hebrew religious community.
 - Authorship
 - The content of the individual books
 - The use of particular documents and books by the Hebrew religious community.

12. How is it possible for the Hebrew canon to contain fifteen fewer books than the English canon but still also contain the same material?
 - The names or titles of the Hebrew Scriptures were usually taken from the first line or verse of the text

13. Why was there confusion concerning the adoption of some apocryphal books into the canon?
 - The interpretation and the scope of their use within the religious community.

B. THINK ABOUT IT

1. How do we know that the books included in the canon were inspired by God to be there? How would you answer a skeptical friend who asks you about your faith in the canon?

2. Which books are considered "disputed"? Does this affect your view of their status as canon? Why or why not?

