

BIBLE BALLAD



The Early Covenant: History books:

Genesis -- when we began;
Exodus is when we ran;
Leviticus is priestly lore.
Numbers tells the sons we bore;
With Deuteronomy, we close
The tale of Moses, whom God chose.
(The Pentateuch is these books' name
The Jewish Torah is the same.)

Then Joshua said, "I serve the Lord
Through all my house, he is adored."
(And Jericho fell by the shout of his men
For the praise of God was strong in them.)
Soon the Judges led in war in peace,
Deborah among them, and Gideon with fleece.
And a loyal heart with Naomi trod,
Ruth came to Judah, and to her God.

Two books of Samuel the prophet we hold
In two books the stories of Kings are told
Two more Chronicle the housing of the ark
In Solomon's temple, with seraphic spark!
There Ezra the priest, copier of books,
became a great author the way it looks!
And Nehemiah spoke at length,
"The joy of the Lord is my strength."

Though trouble for Jews is ever the tale,
Still God sends heroes that never fail.
So Tobit was healed by the angel's craft,
And Judith took sword on her people's behalf.
And Esther with beauty and wits and prayer
Protected her people from Haman's lair
And finally (twice) the Maccabees sons
Gave limb and life for the chosen ones.

The Wisdom Books

But to worship God
as he is revealed
Takes holiness
more than sword and shield
So Job is the teacher
for those in sorrow
The Psalms give praise;
the Proverbs borrow
from Solomon. And
Ecclesiastes writes
There's time for everything,
days and nights,
And birth and death,
and mourn and dance,
And build and break,
and plans and chance.

There's time for love
in the Song of Songs.
Then, lest we forget
the rights and wrongs,
We seek deep Wisdom
in Solomon's prayer
We go to her house
and breathe her air.
Last, but not least
(did the Jews forget?)
Ecclesiasticus
ends the set
Of the books of wisdom
the Bible gave
While the prophets taught
how God will save.

The Prophetic Books

Isaiah has words of comfort;
Jeremiah speaks of grief;
His Lamentations move the heart;
Baruch is wise though brief.
Ezechiel gives warning
and knits to life dry bones
Daniel sees Judgement,
the wrath and the thrones.
Hosea speaks of love
and promise of return;
Joel foretells the Spirit
to pour into hearts that yearn.
Amos speaks of famine
not of bread but the Word;
Obadiah warns Edom
of heaven's wrath incurred.
Babylon's prophet is Jonah
(he rode in the fish -- but how?)
Micah speaks of an end to war
when sword shall turn to plow.
"The Lord," says Nahum
"will break the yoke."
And Habakkuk waits
for the vision's stroke
And Zephaniah teaches us
that God will rest within
While Haggai preaches
a final end to sin.
Zechariah warns the shepherd,
"Stay beside my flock!"
Malachi, the final prophet
speaks of the marriage lock
And teaches that in the latter days
we'll see a new Elijah
To reconcile men with sons
before the great Messiah.
These 46 books tell the ancient story
Of our faithful God and all his glory.

THE NEW COVENANT

Countless ages come and go
The plan of God plan seems very slow
But in the Father's perfect way,
Jesus was born and slept in the hay.
Then he grew to be healer, teacher, and friend
Til he died for love, but it wasn't the end,
For he rose in glory and sent one gift --
the Spirit of Truth -- the gospel Lift.

So Matthew wrote for the Jews in Rome
And Mark was brief for those at home
Luke wrote for gentiles, healing and kind
While John grew old with tales to wind.
The Acts of believers next are told,
'Specially of Paul, who, brave and bold
Traveled the sea lanes, end to end
and wrote his letters to many a friend.

To the Romans he wrote that all works for good
And twice to Corinthians how love's understood.
Then: 'You Galatians are crazy! Faith is the way!'
To Ephesians: 'Praise God, and live in the Day.'
'From my heart,' dear Philipians, 'endless thanksgiving,'
-- plus a word about Jesus and humble living.
Then to Colossians, on faith, angels, friends,
Twice to Thessalonians, preparing for ends.
Two for Timothy, though he was young
One each for Titus and Philemon.

Paul's letters amaze us, from chains or free
Yet others wrote of the mystery:

One to the Hebrews on sacrifice,
the priesthood of Jesus, and its price.

One came from James and two from Peter

Three about love from John

A note from Jude is the last epistle
and we are almost done.

You who read this Revelation
knowing my word is true
Guard your hearts through tribulation
I will come for you.