

# Journey

AN INTENTIONAL & INTENSE  
LOOK INTO THE NEW TESTAMENT



## INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

### BACKGROUND TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament was written over a sixty-year period of time (A.D. 44–110). This is very brief in contrast to the Old Testament which was written over several centuries (c. 1600–400 B.C.). There are two portions of background which prepare a student to have a good grasp of the New Testament. The first portion is the *Old Testament* and the second is the *Intertestamental Period*. The New Testament finds its roots in the Old Testament in a primary sense, and in the Intertestamental period in a secondary sense.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT ROOTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Without the Old Testament there would be no New Testament. One famous biblical scholar of the fifth century A.D. said that “The New is in the Old concealed; The Old is in the New revealed.” What did he mean by that? Among other things, he meant that the unconditional promises and prophecies of the Old Testament find their fulfillment in the New Testament. The four Gospels, for instance, demonstrate clearly that the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the coming Messiah are fulfilled in Jesus, the Christ. The death of Jesus, for example, was prophetically described in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22. The New Testament would be very difficult to understand in several places without a knowledge of the Old Testament. The New Testament constantly mentions people, places, institutions, ceremonies, beliefs, etc. which would be a mystery without a knowledge of the Old. The greater the familiarity you have with the Old Testament the more you will be able to understand and interpret the New.

### THE INTERTESTAMENTAL ROOTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT 400–4 B.C.

With the book of Malachi the Old Testament came to a close (400 B.C.). Between Malachi and Matthew (400–4 B.C.) God did not give to the Hebrew people any further revelation. For this reason this period is sometimes called the Four Hundred Silent Years. Though silent in the sense of communicating new revelation to Israel, God was still at work during this period fulfilling His prophetic Word from parts of Daniel 8, 11, and Zechariah 9. The prophecies and their fulfillments were: (1) in the realm of the change of political powers controlling Palestine (six military governments ruled Palestine during the 400 years); (2) the persecution of the Jews by Gentile overlords; (3) and God’s protection and preservation of Israel from physical extinction and spiritual corruption through paganism.

Many things mentioned in the New Testament, especially the Gospels and the book of Acts, find their roots in the 400 years between the Testaments. For instance (1) the family of king Herod (Matthew 2:1, 22); (2) the Jewish Sanhedrin—Jewish Supreme Court (Luke 22:66); (3) the religious sectarian groups such as the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 2:4; 3:7) along with their religious ideas, traditions and practices (Matthew 25:1–2; 23; Acts 23:8). Then there were (4) political and militaristic groups such as the Herodians (Matthew 22:16) and the Zealots (one of Jesus’ apostles had formerly been a Zealot—“Simon called the Zealot” (Luke 6:15). Of course (5) the Roman Empire which took over Palestine during Intertestament times (63 B.C.) was still in power throughout the New Testament era (Luke 2:1; 3:1; John 11:48).

The Intertestamental Period was in a sense a period of preparation for the coming of Jesus, the Christ. He came, says Paul, “when the fullness of time had come . . .” (Galatians 4:4–5). During the 400 years between the Testaments, God was at work preparing for that time when His Son, Jesus Christ, would step out of eternity into time. Note the following preparations which led to the “fullness of time.”

*There was the preparing of the way through the Greek language.* Alexander the Great conquered the Mediterranean world and the near east (334–323 B.C.) in a cultural sense as well as militarily. One very important aspect of Greek culture was the Greek language. After Alexander, the Greek language gradually became the language used everywhere. The Old Testament Scriptures were translated into Greek in Egypt between 250 and 100 B.C. This translation known as the Septuagint was used by Jews scattered over the Mediterranean world who were losing their ability to speak Hebrew. In the providence of God, the gospel was spread to Jews and pagans in the Greek language. Also, the whole New Testament was originally written in Greek.

*There was the preparing of the way through Roman political power.* The Roman Empire brought a number of positive things which made the spread of the gospel a reality. For one thing, the Romans built a vast system of excellently made roads throughout the empire. Preachers of the gospel, like Paul, took advantage of these roads to enable them to move swiftly and with ease to their destinations. Never were circumstances better or more favorable for the proclamation of the gospel. The fact that Rome had its armies stationed throughout the empire to insure the law and order for which they were famous was a plus to the growth of Christianity.

*There was the preparing of the way through the Hebrew religion.* During Intertestamental times, Judaism developed into a highly legalistic system. This legalism continued on into New Testament times with great vigor. Legalism is man’s attempt to make himself acceptable to God on the basis of self effort (law keeping). It is illustrated in the Gospels in the various encounters Jesus had with the scribes and Pharisees (see the teaching of Jesus, for instance, in Matthew 15). Legalism was Jesus’ most formidable obstacle to overcome in Judaism. However, what positive things did the Hebrew religion contribute? The answer is simple. The Hebrew religion centered around the truth of monotheism (one God), and the Law of Moses. Wherever the Jews went in the dispersion they took these two foundational truths. Paul took advantage of this ideal situation when he went on his missionary journeys. How? He would always go to the Jews first, at the synagogue, using what truth they did know as a springboard to preach the gospel.

## **THE DIVISIONS OF NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS**

There are 27 books of differing lengths, authors, content, style, emphasis and purpose in the New Testament. They may easily be arranged into three major categories: *gospels* (also some history), *letters* (also called epistles) and *apocalyptic*. Observe the following arrangement:

<b>GOSPELS</b>
Matthew, Mark, Luke/Acts, John
<b>LETTERS</b>
Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, Jude
<b>APOCALYPTIC</b>
Revelation

## **SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR CATEGORIES OF NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS**

### **1. Gospels**

*The four Gospels* (Matthew, Mark, Luke/Acts, John) give four different historical portraits of the Lord Jesus Christ. The English word “gospel” is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word “godespell.” Gode means good and spell means story or tale. The gospel is not just a good story, but a good story which is the good news of salvation to all mankind (Luke 2:10–11). The “good news” encompasses: Christ’s coming, His ministry on earth, His perfect life, His suffering and death upon the cross for the sins of the world, His bodily resurrection from the dead and His ascension to heaven with the promise of His return.

The writers of the four Gospels wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit so that we might have an accurate, purposeful and authoritative account of Christ’s life. Just as any thoughtful modern-day preacher would tailor his sermon to meet the needs of the congregation, so the writers of the four Gospels wrote their portraits of Christ’s life keeping in mind the makeup and needs of those for whom they wrote. But why four Gospels? Why not just one? Or why stop at four? Why not five or even more? The fact that there are four Gospels may be accounted for by the intention of the Holy Spirit to reach four representative groups which would find their counterpart in any age. Matthew wrote to the Jews presenting Jesus as the promised King; Mark wrote to the Romans and portrayed Jesus as the servant of the Lord; Luke wrote to Theophilus (for the Greeks) picturing Jesus as the perfect man; and John wrote for the world with his portrait of Jesus as God. In modern times there are those to whom Mark’s Gospel will have a special appeal and they will be first influenced by it. Others today may find that John’s Gospel is very attractive to them and they are first affected by it, etc.

The four Gospels may be divided into two categories. The first category includes Matthew, Mark and Luke. These three Gospels are called by scholars the synoptic Gospels. What does that mean? Synoptic means “to see together.” In other words, these Gospels take a similar approach in their presentation of the life of Jesus. John’s Gospel, the second category, is very dissimilar from the first three because over ninety percent of its content is not found in the other three.

*The Book of Acts* is the last of the five historical books. It continues the history where the Gospels finish. Jesus ascended to heaven but His work of reaching the world continued on through the preaching of the Apostles and others. Acts reveals the new body, the Church, which Jesus had predicted (Matthew 16:16–18) and which the Holy Spirit created on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). It gives the history of the growth and development of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome. It is a thrilling book recording the triumph of the gospel throughout the Mediterranean world. During the history of the Acts period, ten of the letters (epistles) of Paul were written. James also wrote his letter during this period.



## 2. The Letters (Epistles)

There are 21 books of the New Testament in this category. These are divided into two. The first major section consists of 13 letters written by the Apostle Paul (Romans through Philemon), and the second is made up of Hebrews through Jude which scholars have called the General Epistles.

Some of the *letters of Paul* were written to individuals to encourage them in their faith and work (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus). Some were written to particular churches to challenge their faith, pass on new truth and instruction, correct error, solve problems and warn against evil and false teachers (1 Corinthians, Colossians, etc). Some were circular, like Galatians. Paul's letters have a great balance of doctrinal truth and practical application to individual and corporate church life.

The designation *General Epistles* is applied to Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John and Jude. The designation is not a Biblical expression but it does appear in the title of five of the above letters in the King James Version (A.D. 1611). It is an old term and scholars have puzzled over its meaning without coming up with any satisfactory answer. One interesting view is that the term denotes writings which are general in nature and not addressed to any specific church. One discerns when reading these eight epistles that two of the prominent themes are (1) encouragement for Christians who are suffering persecution (Hebrews through 1 Peter); and (2) warning against false teachers and teaching (2 Peter through Jude).

By the way of clarification, there has always been debate over the authorship of Hebrews. The author of Hebrews does not identify himself but some believe it was Paul. Other scholars have suggested Apollos, Luke, Barnabas, etc. Most, however, think it was someone else based on the author's literary style, vocabulary, method of argumentation, etc.

## 3. Apocalyptic ("unveiling")

The book of Revelation gives a fitting conclusion to the New Testament. Though other New Testament books have some prophetic themes concerning both the Church and Israel, Revelation is exclusively devoted to prophecy. John was told by Christ in Revelation 1:19 to "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this." Revelation majors on the judgment which God will bring upon the earth prior to the second coming of Christ, and it ends on the positive note of victory over God's enemies and the establishment of the kingdom.

## HOW DO WE STUDY THE NEW TESTAMENT?

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1. The History
2. The Literature
3. The Theology
  - “What was God saying to *them then*?”
  - “What is God saying to *us now*?”

### POSSIBLE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Book	Approximate Writing Date	Author
James	A.D. 44–62	James
Galatians	A.D. 49–54	Paul
1 Thessalonians	A.D. 50–51	Paul
2 Thessalonians	A.D. 51–52	Paul
1 Corinthians	A.D. 53–56	Paul
2 Corinthians	A.D. 56–57	Paul
Romans	A.D. 57–59	Paul
Ephesians	A.D. 60–62	Paul
Philippians	A.D. 60–62	Paul
Colossians	A.D. 60–62	Paul
Philemon	A.D. 60–62	Paul
Acts	A.D. 63	Luke
1 Timothy	A.D. 63–65	Luke
Titus	A.D. 63–65	Paul
1 Peter	A.D. 64–65	Peter
Mark	A.D. 65–70	Mark
2 Timothy	A.D. 67–68	Paul
2 Peter	A.D. 67–68	Peter
Hebrews	A.D. 67–69	Unknown
Jude	A.D. 68–70	Jude
Matthew	A.D. 80–100	Matthew
Luke	A.D. 90's	Luke
John	A.D. 90–110	John
1 John	A.D. 90–95	John
2 John	A.D. 90–95	John
3 John	A.D. 90–95	John
Revelation	A.D. 90–95	John

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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### I. Babylonian Exile (606–538 B.C.)

#### 4 Developments

1. Complexion of the Jews change
2. Rise of the synagogue
3. New emphasis on the Law
4. Began the Dispersion of the Jews

### II. Persian Period (538–332 B.C.)

#### A. Cyrus the Great became king and followed this policy:

1. Allowed people to live in their native land
2. Allowed people to worship their own god
3. Allowed people to keep their own customs
4. Used Aramaic language as business language

#### B. The restoration of Jerusalem—approximately 50,000 went back

1. Zerubbabel came and led in the rebuilding of the Temple (515 B.C.)
2. Ezra came and established the law as constitution (458 B.C.)
3. Nehemiah came and led in building the walls (445 B.C.)

#### C. Developments

1. The Samaritan controversy
2. A great respect for the law
3. Two “nerve centers” established
  - (1) Law
  - (2) Messianic hope
4. New Judaism—Diaspora Judaism

### III. Greek Period (331–167 B.C.)

#### A. United Greek Empire (332–323 B.C.)

1. Philip of Macedon's dream
2. Alexander the Great's conquest—Hellenism
  - (1) The man
  - (2) His policy—conquest and fusion
    - a. He founded cities
    - b. He mixed the cultures
    - c. He mixed the people
    - d. He made Greek the primary language

#### B. Divided Greek Empire (323–167 B.C.)

1. The four generals of Alexander
  - (1) Cassander ruled Macedonia and Greece
  - (2) Antigonus ruled Phrygia
  - (3) Seleucus ruled Syria
  - (4) Ptolemy ruled Egypt
2. Ptolemies rule Judea (323–198 B.C.)
  - (1) Some peace in Jerusalem
  - (2) High Priest was in control
  - (3) Septuagint produced
3. Seleucids rule Judea (197–167 B.C.)
  - (1) Antiochus III—tried to fight Rome
  - (2) Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) (175–164 B.C.)

He attempted to destroy the Jewish faith and force the Jews to abandon their customs

### IV. The Maccabean Period (167–63 B.C.)

#### A. The Maccabean Revolt (167–142 B.C.)

#### B. The Hasmonean Independence (142–63 B.C.)



- V. The Roman Period (63 B.C.)
  - A. The First Triumvirate (63–44 B.C.)
  - B. The Second Triumvirate (43–A.D. 14)
  - C. Herod the Great—reigned (37–4 B.C.)
    - 1. Period of Beginnings (37–27 B.C.)
    - 2. Period of Public Works (27–13 B.C.)
    - 3. Period of Decline (13–4 B.C.)
  - D. Herod's Sons
    - 1. Herod Antipas (4 B.C.–A.D. 34) Galilee and Perea (killed John the Baptist)
    - 2. Philip (4 B.C.–A.D. 34) Northeast of Sea of Galilee
    - 3. Archelaus (4 B.C.–A.D. 6) Judea and Samaria
    - 4. Herod Agrippa I (grandson) (A.D. 41–44) executed James and imprisoned Peter (Acts 12)
    - 5. Herod Agrippa II (great-grandson) (A.D. 60) heard Paul's defense (Acts 25–26)
  - E. The Procurators—(Those of interest to the New Testament)
    - 1. Pontius Pilate—(A.D. 26–37)
    - 2. Felix—(A.D. 52–60)
    - 3. Festus—(A.D. 59–62)
  - F. Jewish Revolt (A.D. 66)
  - G. Fall of Jerusalem and Destruction of the Temple (A.D. 70)
  - H. Fall of Masada (A.D. 74)

**RULERS OF PALESTINE DURING JESUS' LIFE**

TERRITORIES	R U L E R S			
JUDEA AND SAMARIA	HEROD the GREAT  (37-4 B.C.)	ARCHELAUS  (4 B.C.-A.D. 6)	PROCURATORS	
			Coponius	PONTIUS PILATE  (A.D. 26-37)
			Ambibulus	
			Rufus	
			Gratus	
GALILEE AND PEREA	HEROD ANTIPAS (4 B.C. - A.D. 34)  (Killed John the Baptist)			
ITUREA AND TRACHONITIS  (northeast of Sea of Galilee)	PHILIP (4 B.C. - A.D. 34)			

### Religious Setting

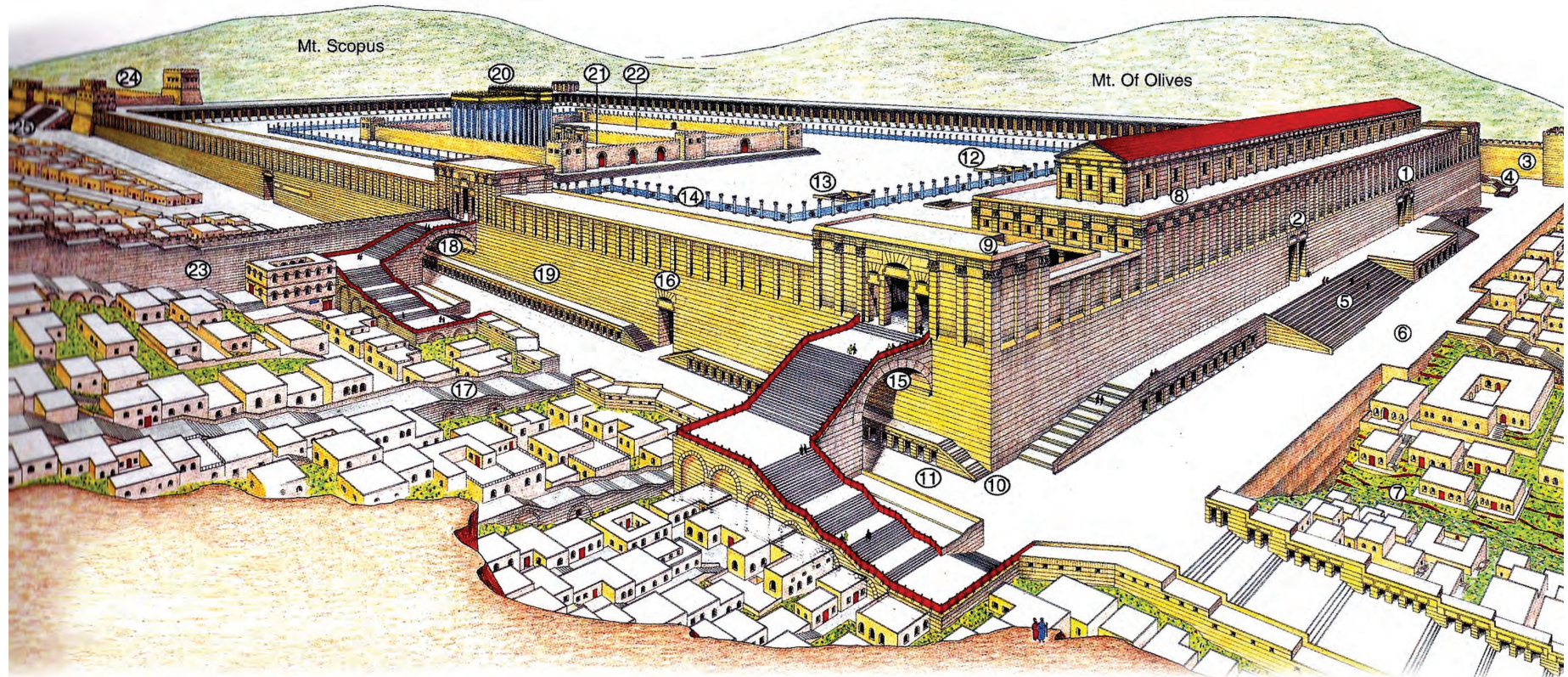
#### I. Paganism

1. Mythology
2. Mystery religions
3. Gnosticism
4. Philosophies

#### II. Judaism

1. Institutions
  - (1) Synagogue
  - (2) The Temple (see p. 11)
  - (3) Sanhedrin
  - (4) Festivals (see p. 12)
2. Sects (see p. 13)
  - (1) Sadducees
  - (2) Pharisees
  - (3) Essenes
  - (4) Zealots

# THE TEMPLE MOUNT—A.D. 70



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- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Temple Triple Gate Entrance* ( <i>Acts 3:2—Beautiful Gate</i> ) | 11. Rooms of the Scribes   | 19. Western Wall  |
| 2. Temple Exit Gate*   | 12. Exit from Hulda Gate   | 20. Temple  |
| 3. Old City Gate   | 13. Exit from Hulda Gate   | 21. Priest's Inner Court                                  |
| 4. Entrance to below Basilica ( <i>grain storage</i> )             | 14. Soreg, "fence" ( <i>Greek &amp; Latin inscriptions, not Hebrew, warning of death to strangers who go beyond, having entered through the Cipanos Gate</i> ) | 22. Court for the Women                                   |
| 5. Steps to Temple Entrance  | 15. Robinson's Arch  | 23. City Wall ( <i>first wall</i> )                       |
| 6. Ophel   | 16. Cipanos Gate ( <i>part of lintel still visible</i> )   | 24. Antonia Fortress                                      |
| 7. Tyropean Valley ( <i>cheese makers valley</i> )                 | 17. Street leading to the Upper City   | 25. Steps ( <i>Acts 2:35—Paul at the steps</i> )          |
| 8. Royal Basilica ( <i>Luke 19:45–46; site of money changers</i> ) | 18. Wilson's Arch  | 26. Priest's garments storage ( <i>Josephus Flavius</i> ) |
| 9. Pouch of Blowing of the Trumpet                                 |  |   |
| 10. Found Here Where it Fell in A.D. 70                            |  |   |

\*The Hulda Gates ("burrowing")

## JEWISH SPECIAL DAYS

SPECIAL DAYS	HEBREW NAME	DAY	REFERENCE	READING (MEGILLOTH)	COMMEMORATION
Passover (Feast of Unleavened Bread)	Pasach	14 Nisan	Exodus 12 (Lev. 23:4–8)	Song of Solomon	Deliverance from Egypt
Pentecost	Shavuoth	6 Sivan	Deut. 16:9–12 (Lev. 23:9–14)	Ruth	Celebration of the harvest
Day of Atonement	Yom Kippur	10 Tishri	Lev. 16 (23:26–32)		Sacrifices for sins of the nation
Feast of Tabernacles	Succoth	15–21 Tishri	Neh. 8 (Lev. 23:33–36)	Ecclesiastes	Wanderings in the wilderness
Dedication	Chanukah	25 Kislev	John 10:22		Restoration of the Temple in 164 B.C.
Lots	Purim	13–14 Adar	Esther 9	Esther	Failure of plot against Jews by Haman



## RELIGIOUS SECTS OF JESUS' TIME

	PHARISEES	SADDUCEES	ESSENES	ZEALOTS
Origins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Descended from Hasidim freedom fighters of the Maccabee era</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Descended from Solomon's high priest, Zadok</li> <li>♦ Became a faction in approximately 200 B.C.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Resisted the Maccabees' claim to the high priesthood in approximately A.D. 170</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ A movement formed against a Roman census in A.D. 6 and led by Judas the Galilean</li> </ul>
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Were middle class merchants numbering about 6,000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Were priests who were wealthy, aristocratic, and often Hellenistic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Were possibly dissident Sadducees or Pharisees who preferred isolation in the wilderness to participation in Temple services led by corrupt priests (about 4,000)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Were extreme Pharisees and religious Jews living primarily in Galilee</li> </ul>
Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Believed in the entire Old Testament as law</li> <li>♦ Accepted the oral interpretations of the Old Testament as binding</li> <li>♦ Believed the study of the Torah (law) was the highest act of worship</li> <li>♦ Believed that keeping the law was God's desire</li> <li>♦ Believed in bodily resurrection and life after death</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Believed in only the Torah as God's law</li> <li>♦ Rejected oral traditions</li> <li>♦ Believed the Temple was the only path to God</li> <li>♦ Did not believe in bodily resurrection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Believed in withdrawal from corruption</li> <li>♦ Believed true priests were descended only from Zadok</li> <li>♦ Believed in rigid adherence to the Torah</li> <li>♦ Believed they had been chosen to prepare for the imminent arrival of the kingdom of God</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Theology resembled that of the Pharisees, however, only God could rule</li> <li>♦ Slavery was the worst evil</li> <li>♦ Taxes were due only to God</li> </ul>
Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Supported the synagogue for the study, interpretation, and teaching of the Torah</li> <li>♦ Believed in strict, detailed obedience to the oral and written law</li> <li>♦ Accepted Rome as a necessary evil so long as they could practice obedience to their beliefs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Ran the Temple and all the ceremonies</li> <li>♦ Dominated the Sanhedrin, the religious ruling council</li> <li>♦ Lived a Hellenistic lifestyle</li> <li>♦ Received Roman support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Worked at copying and studying the Torah</li> <li>♦ Lived in isolated communities</li> <li>♦ Shared property and communal meals</li> <li>♦ Practiced ritual cleansing</li> <li>♦ Rejected Hellenism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Practiced terrorism against the hated Romans</li> <li>♦ Refused to pay taxes</li> <li>♦ Adhered carefully to the Torah and oral interpretations</li> </ul>



### I. Development of the New Testament Text

Principles of Canonicity:

1. Was it written by an apostle or a close associate of an apostle?
2. Did it have early church acceptance?
3. Did it teach doctrine consistent with teachings of Jesus and the apostles?

### II. Studying the Text

- I. Textual Criticism
2. Source Criticism
3. Form Criticism
4. Redaction Criticism

### III. How the Gospels Came To Be (Luke 1:1–4)





## MATTHEW

**Author:** Matthew, also called "Levi," (Mark 2:13–17) was a former tax gatherer (9:9).

**Date & Place Written:** 80–100 A.D. from Antioch, Syria.

**Original Readers:** Mainly to a Jewish audience.

**Snapshot:** Jesus fulfills the Old Testament prophecies of the coming Messiah-King.

**Purposes & Themes:** The King and His Promised Kingdom. Matthew is the first of the four Gospels. It ties what follows in the New Testament to what came before in the Old. The book is very teaching oriented and is organized around five major discourses. There are two prominent themes: (1) the kingdom of heaven (32 times) and (2) hypocrisy and self-righteousness (Ch. 23).

**Portrayal of Christ:** Jesus is the King, Israel's Promised Messiah

**Uniqueness:** Matthew's gospel is the bridge that leads us out of the Old Testament and into the New. The Messiah and Savior promised in the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament. Over forty times Matthew quotes from the Old Testament, more than any other gospel writer. Only Matthew makes reference to the coming "church" (16:18; 18:17) and to the "Kingdom of Heaven." Only in Matthew do we have specific miracles related to the Crucifixion and the Resurrection (27:50–54).

### Outline:

- I. Announcement and Arrival of the King (1:1–4:11)
- II. Proclamation and Reception of the King (4:12–15:39) First Discourse (Chs. 5–7)—The Sermon on the Mount Second Discourse (Ch. 10)—The Sending out of the Twelve Third Discourse (Ch. 13)—Kingdom Parables
- III. Opposition and Rejection of the King (Chs. 16–27) Fourth Discourse (Ch. 18)—Kingdom Living Fifth Discourse (Chs. 24–25)—The Olivet Discourse
- IV. Resurrection and Triumph of the King (Ch. 28)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. From the Fall, God promised a Messiah (Genesis 3:15) and Jesus fulfilled that promise—God is always true to His Word.
2. As Messiah, Jesus is the King and is worthy of our worship.
3. Christ's Great Commission (28:16–20).

## NOTES

## MARK

### NOTES

**Author:** John Mark, a missionary companion of Paul (Acts 12:25) and an associate of the apostle Peter (1 Peter 5:13).

**Date & Place Written:** Probably 65–70 A.D., during the Roman persecution of Christians. Perhaps written from Rome and probably the first of the gospels.

**Original Readers:** Roman gentiles in particular and all gentiles in general.

**Snapshot:** Jesus is God's Son, a Suffering Servant of all people (10:43–45).

**Purposes & Themes:** Mark develops three themes: discipleship, the contrast between belief and unbelief, and the cross and glorious Resurrection of Christ.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Servant at work emphasizing Christ's miracles and personal encounters more than discourses of teaching.

**Uniqueness:** Mark is the shortest and most active of the four biographies of Jesus. Mark's favorite word is "immediately," appearing ten times in the first chapter alone. Mark lists the most of Christ's thirty-five recorded miracles. He also tells more about the emotions of Jesus than any other Gospel author (6:6, 31, 34; 8:12, 33; 10:14, 21; 11:12). Most of Mark's Gospel is repeated in the Gospels of Matthew (91%) and Luke (53%).

#### Outline:

- I. The Service of Jesus (1:1–9:1)
  - A. Presentation (1:1–13)
  - B. Popularity and Opposition (1:14–3:6)
  - C. Growing Ministry (3:7–6:32)
  - D. Peak of Popularity (6:33–8:26)
  - E. Turning Point (8:27–9:1)
- II. The Sacrifice of Jesus (9:2–15:47)
  - A. Jesus as Redeemer (9:2–10:52)
  - B. Jesus as Lord (Chs. 11–13)
  - C. Jesus as Sacrifice (Chs. 14–15)
- III. The Triumph of Jesus (Ch. 16)

#### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Suffering and loss aren't necessarily bad things—in fact, for Christians, sometimes they lead to greater blessing (8:35).
- 2. Great will be the reward of all who follow Jesus whatever the cost (10:28–31).
- 3. We are to serve others with the same humility and devotion that our Lord served (10:43–45).

## LUKE

### NOTES

**Author:** Luke, a Gentile physician (Colossians 4:14) and a missionary companion of the apostle Paul (2 Timothy 4:11). The only Gentile to write any part of the Bible.

**Date & Place Written:** Possibly in A.D. 90's from either Caesarea or Rome .

**Original Readers:** Theophilus, Roman Gentiles, and the entire Gentile world. A companion book with Acts (Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1).

**Snapshot:** Jesus is Savior of all people, whether Jew or Gentile.

**Purposes & Themes:** There are two dominant themes: the humanity of Jesus (Son of Man) and His love for all mankind (19:10). In addition, Luke demonstrates Christ's unique ministry to the outcasts of society (tax collectors, women, Gentiles, poor, Samaritans, etc.).

**Portrayal of Christ:** Jesus is the perfect Son of Man offering salvation to the world (found 25 times in this gospel). Luke, a physician himself, also portrays Jesus as the Great Physician (5:31–32; 15:4–7, 31–32; 19:10).

**Uniqueness:** Luke's book, the longest book in the New Testament, is the least Jewish and most universal of the four Gospels. He is the only Gentile to write any book in Scripture. Only Luke details Jesus' actual birth and words He spoke in childhood (Ch. 2). Luke alone tells us the stories of the good Samaritan (10:25–37), the prodigal son (15:11–32), and the rich man and Lazarus (16:19–31). Since Luke also wrote Acts, he penned 28% of the New Testament. Luke also had the most to say about women and prayer.

#### Outline:

- I. The Son of Man Comes (1:1–4:13)
- II. The Son of Man Is "Mighty in Deed" (4:14–9:50)
- III. The Son of Man Is "Mighty in Word" (9:51–21:38)
- IV. The Son of Man Is Crucified and Resurrected (Chs. 22–24).

#### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. No matter who you are, where you're from, or what you've done—Jesus came to seek you and to save you (19:10).
2. Jesus is a compassionate Savior to the poor and needy and to the outcasts of society.
3. Reverential fear is a proper response to the presence of God.
4. Forgiveness is available to all.

## JOHN

### NOTES

**Author:** John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (21:20–24). He was one of the sons of Zebedee (Lk. 5:10). Also, the theologian of the gospel writers.

**Date & Place Written:** Probably A.D. 90–110, as the last gospel written. Written from Ephesus.

**Original Readers:** All believers.

**Snapshot:** Jesus is God, the only Savior of the world.

**Purposes & Themes:** Against the backdrop of Gnosticism, John’s goal is to present the deity of Christ (20:30–31). He selects seven miracles as signs to demonstrate Jesus Christ is God. Also, John shares certain words and phrases as recurring themes: believe, witness, Comforter, life-death, light-darkness, I am . . . , and love.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The one and only Son of God, fully God and fully man.

**Uniqueness:** John is the most theological of the four gospels. John records no parables and only seven miracles (“signs”), some unique to John (2:1–2; 4:46–54; 9:1–38; 11:1–44). Ninety-two percent of John is unique. Much about Jesus’ life is omitted—no genealogy, birth account, nothing about His boyhood, temptation, transfiguration or ascension, and no great commission. John also highlights the seven “I am” (YAHWEH) declarations of Jesus (6:35; 8:12; 10:7, 9; 10:11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5).

#### Outline:

- I. Introduction and Summary (1:1–18)
- II. The Beginning of Jesus’ Ministry (1:19–4:54)
- III. Growing Opposition (Chs. 5–12)
- IV. Discourse with the Disciples (Chs. 13–17)
- V. Arrest, Trial, and Crucifixion (Chs. 18–19)
- VI. Resurrection and Appearances (Chs. 20–21)

#### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation (1:12; 3:16; 14:6).
2. Jesus Christ is God (1:1; 5:18; 10:30; 20:31).
3. The Holy Spirit promises to guide and to comfort believers (14:15–18, 26; 15:26–27; 16:7–15).



## ACTS

### NOTES

**Author:** Luke, a Gentile physician, who also wrote the gospel of Luke (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** Probably written sometime between A.D. 62 and 80 from Rome. The book covers events from the AD 30's and 60's.

**Original Readers:** To the Greeks, especially Theophilus. A companion book with the Gospel of Luke.

**Snapshot:** The Holy Spirit comes to indwell, heralding the birth and expansion of the Christian church.

**Purposes & Themes:** Acts 1:8 states the theme is to witness in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the world. The book records the acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The baptizer with the Holy Spirit and the resurrected Savior.

**Uniqueness:** The book of Acts provides information on the first thirty years of the church—material found nowhere else in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit is mentioned about seventy times. The word “witness” is used over thirty times. Acts tells of the first Christian martyr, Stephen (Ch. 7). Acts transitions the gospel from being a purely Jewish message to one for all people (9:15; 10:45) and the beginning of the Christian missionary movement (Ch. 13).

#### Outline:

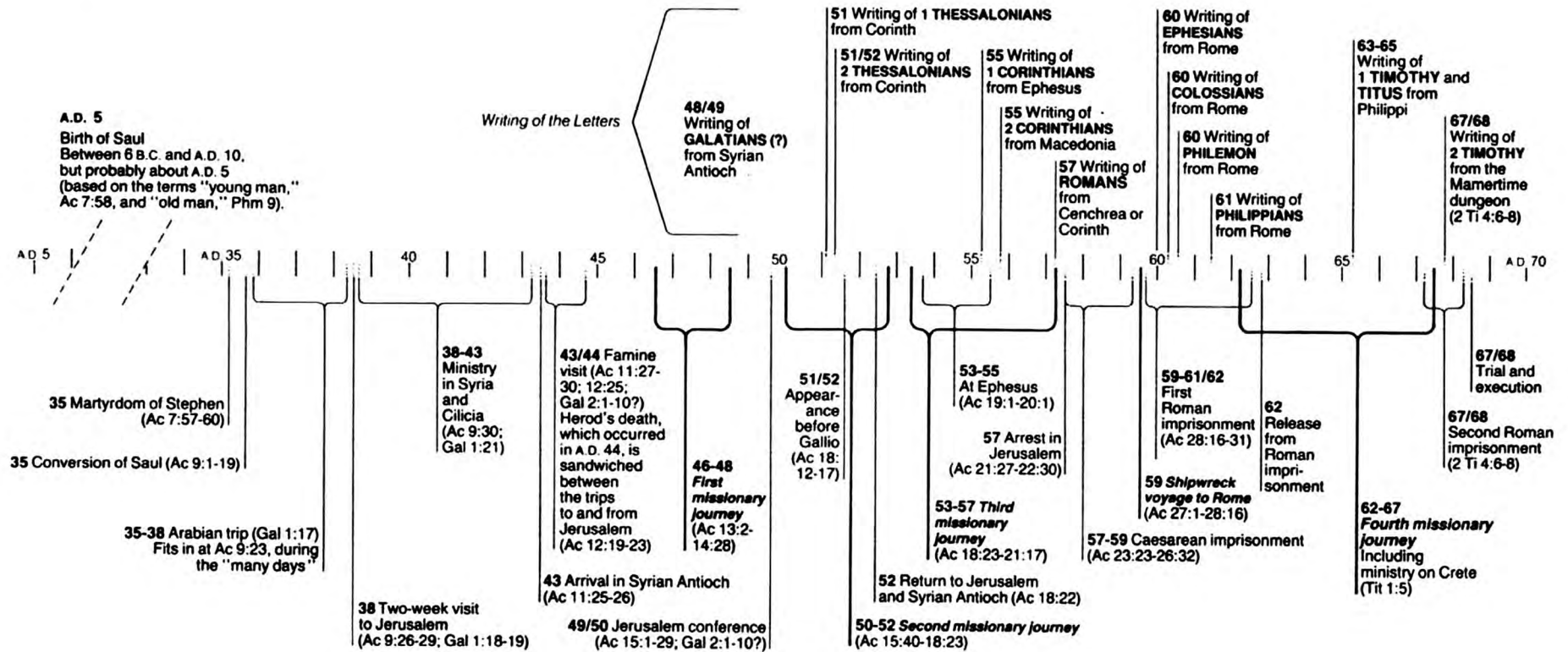
- I. Witnessing in Jerusalem-Judaistic Christianity
- II. Witnessing in Judea and Samaria-Hellenistic Christianity (8:4–11:18)
  - A. Philip (8:4–40)
  - B. Paul (9:1–31)
  - C. Peter (9:32–11:18)
- III. Witnessing to the Uttermost Parts of the World (11:19–28:31) Paul's Journeys (13:1–21:17)

#### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. We are to be His witnesses wherever we are, whoever we are with, and whatever we are doing (1:8).
2. As Jesus promised, He has established His church to reach a lost world and to make disciples (Matthew 16:18).
3. The same Holy Spirit is at work today in our lives and through His church.

# TIMELINE OF PAUL'S LIFE

21





# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL



### I. Length of Letters

The order of Paul's letters in the New Testament is determined by length.

#### A. Letters of the day averaged:

1. Private—87 words
2. Literary—200 words

#### B. Paul's letters averaged 1,300 words:

1. Shortest is Philemon—335
2. Longest is Romans—7,101

### II. The use of "Amanuensis"

### III. The Form of Paul's Letters

1. The Author
2. The Recipients
3. The Greeting
4. Commendation or Thanksgiving
5. The Body
  - Doctrinal
  - Practical
6. The Closing

### IV. The Content of the Letters

1. Soteriological—How are we saved?  
(Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians)
2. Christological—Who is Jesus Christ?  
(Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians)
3. Eschatological—What about end times?  
(1 & 2 Thessalonians)
4. Ecclesiological—What is the church?  
(1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon)

## ROMANS

**Author:** The apostle Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** Written from Corinth near the end of his third missionary journey around A.D. 62–63. See Acts 20:2–3.

**Original Readers:** The local church in Rome made up mostly of Gentile converts (1:13; 11:13).

**Snapshot:** The cornerstone of Christian truth.

**Purposes & Themes:** Paul emphasizes the basic doctrines or teachings of Christianity. The overarching theme of Romans is the righteousness that comes from God: the marvelous truth that God justifies guilty, condemned sinners by grace alone through faith in Christ alone.

**Portrayal of Christ:** Christ is our Righteousness.

**Uniqueness:** Unlike Paul's other letters to churches, Romans is written to a congregation he had never met.

**Outline:**

Introduction (1:1–17)

- I. The Doctrine of Sin (1:18–3:20)
- II. The Doctrine of Salvation (3:21–5:21)
- III. The Doctrine of Sanctification or Holiness (Chs. 6–8)
- IV. The Doctrine of God's Dealings with Israel (Chs. 9–11)
- V. The Doctrine of the Christian Life (Chs. 12–15:13)
- Conclusion (15:14–16:27)

**Theology/Life Lessons:**

- 1. Everyone is a sinner in need of a Savior (3:9–20).
- 2. Sinners are only saved by faith in Jesus Christ (3:21–31).
- 3. As God's children, we are called to live a life of freedom.
- 4. God has a special plan for the nation of Israel (Chs. 9–11).
- 5. True righteousness is demonstrated in our attitudes and behaviors.

## NOTES

# 1 CORINTHIANS

**Author:** The apostle Paul, with the assistance of Sosthenes (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 53–56 from Ephesus on third missionary journey.

**Original Readers:** Church at Corinth founded during Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 18). Corinth was a vile city where immorality, prostitution, slave trading, and sex trafficking was rampant.

**Snapshot:** Christian conduct within the local church.

**Purposes & Themes:** Paul wrote this letter in response to reports and questions he had received regarding factions, incest, lawsuits, marriage, divorce, role of women, misuse of gifts, and denial of the resurrection.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The resurrected Redeemer and the Firstfruits from the dead.

**Uniqueness:** In no other letter is there such a vivid and realistic picture of the problems and difficulties confronting a church in a pagan and corrupt society. This letter contains the earlier reports of the Lord's Supper (11:20–34), and the great hymn of love (Ch. 13), and the glorious resurrection (Ch. 15).

## Outline:

Introduction (1:1–9)

- I. Acknowledging Reports of Division and Disorder (Chs. 1:10–6:20)
  - Answering Specific Questions (Chs. 7–16)
    - Questions Concerning Marriage and Divorce (Ch. 7)
    - Questions Concerning Christian Liberty (8:1–11:1)
    - Questions Concerning Public Worship (11:2–16)
    - Questions Concerning the Lord's Supper (11:17–34)
    - Questions Concerning Spiritual Gifts (Chs. 12–14)
    - Questions Concerning Resurrection (Ch. 15), Personal Matters (Ch. 16)

## Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Specific sin issues within a church are not new—neither is the way to handle them.
- 2. Personal purity, self-discipline and love for others are vital to a church's impact.
- 3. God has provided great clarity on some of life's most important questions.

## NOTES



## 2 CORINTHIANS

**Author:** The apostle Paul (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 56–57 from Philippi in Macedonia near the end of his third missionary journey (7:5).

**Original Readers:** Corinthian believers.

**Snapshot:** Paul defends his apostolic ministry to the troubled Corinthian church and against the “enlightened spiritual elites.”

**Purposes & Themes:** In 1 Corinthians, Paul addressed problems in the Corinthian church. Sadly, some did not respond positively to Paul’s instructions. Instead, some questioned Paul’s authority. So Paul felt it necessary to make a quick and brief trip to Corinth and then to write a severe and painful letter to the church (which we do not have, 2:4). The church responded favorably to that letter, though a minority still opposed Paul. Titus delivered that letter and brought back to Paul the positive reaction of the church. 2 Corinthians is Paul’s response. In Chapters 1–7, Paul expresses his joy over their positive response.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Comforting and Sufficient Christ (1:3; 9:8; 12:9; 13:11) .

**Uniqueness:** Perhaps Paul’s most intensely personal and pastoral book. He uniquely addresses some of his personal history and hardships (11:23–33; 12:1–7).

### **Outline:**

- I. Paul Explains His Apostolic Work (Chs. 1–7)
- II. Paul Encourages Generous Giving (Chs. 8–9)
- III. Paul Defends His Apostolic Authority (Chs. 10–13)

### **Theology/Life Lessons:**

- 1. Christians should respect authority, whether in the church, the home, or society at large.
- 2. Christ is our great comforter (1:3–7).
- 3. We are new creatures in Christ (5:17).
- 4. We are Christ’s ambassadors carrying His message of reconciliation (5:11–21).
- 5. Holy living is essential (6:11–7:16).
- 6. We should be liberal and generous in our giving (Chs. 8–9).
- 7. God allows difficulty into our lives to keep us humble and dependent (12:7–10).

## NOTES

## GALATIANS

**Author:** The apostle Paul (1:1; 6:11).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 49–54 from Antioch or Ephesus.

**Original Readers:** Several established churches in the region of Galatia in southern central Asia Minor, which included the cities of Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe—all were local churches Paul established on his initial missionary journey (Acts 13:4–14:28; Galatians 1:2, 3:1).

**Snapshot:** Christians are free in Christ from legalism (5:1).

**Purposes & Themes:** Combating Judaizers, who stressed keeping the law, Paul strongly defends the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith alone apart from any human work.

**Portrayal of Christ:** Our Divine Deliverer and Freedom Giver.

**Uniqueness:** No commendation is given. The early date makes Galatians Paul's earliest epistle and one of the oldest New Testament books. This book has done more than any book in the New Testament to free our Christian faith from Judaism (law), and from the burden of salvation by works. Paul uniquely stresses the power of the Cross (1:4; 2:20–21; 3:13–14; 4:4–7; 5:22–25; 6:14).

### Outline:

Introduction (1:1–10)

- I. Personal—Paul Defends the Gospel and His Apostolic Authority (1:11–2:21)
- II. Doctrinal—Paul's Doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone (Chs. 3–4)
- III. Practical—The Power of Christian Liberty (5:1–6:10)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Salvation is solely by grace through faith apart from works.
- 2. Legalism is a destructive heresy.
- 3. Believers are adopted into God's family (4:5–7).
- 4. We must walk in the Spirit and not after the flesh (5:16–26).
- 5. We are responsible to bear one another's burdens (6:2–5).
- 6. We are called to enjoy a life of freedom.

## NOTES

## EPHESIANS

### NOTES

**Author:** Paul (1:1), who spent three years living in Ephesus on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:1–20:1, 20).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 60–62, during his first Roman imprisonment lasting two years (also wrote Philippians, Colossians and Philemon). See 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; Acts 28:16–31.

**Original Readers:** To a local church in Ephesus in Asia Minor where Paul stayed three years on his third missionary journey, or perhaps to several churches in that region.

**Snapshot:** All believers are privileged to be members of Christ's body, the church (1:23; 4:25; 5:23, 30).

**Purposes & Themes:** Devoid of any personal references or greetings, this letter dwells on the person of Christ and His body, the church, the household of God (2:20; 4:15–16). As believers, we are united as one in Christ.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Head and Cornerstone of His body, the church.

**Uniqueness:** This book details the great mystery of the church, the body of Christ, and believers are members of one wonderful body.

#### Outline:

Introduction (1:1–2)

- I. Doctrinal Truths (1:3–3:21)
  - A. What God Has Done for Us (1:3–23)
  - B. What Christ Has Done for Us (2:1–10)
  - C. What Christ Has Done Between Us (2:11–3:21)
- II. Practical Exhortations (4:1–6:20)
  - A. Our New Unity (4:1–16)
  - B. Our New Walk (4:17–6:9)
  - C. Our New Strength (6:10–20)

Conclusion (6:21–24)

#### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. Christ is the head of His Body, the church.
2. All Christians are part of the body of Christ.
3. God has a great plan of redemption.
4. Family is important to God.
5. Put on the whole armor of God to prepare for spiritual warfare.
6. We are rich in Jesus Christ (1:7; 3:8, 16).
7. Believers should live Spirit-filled lives (5:18).

## PHILIPPIANS

**Author:** Paul, along with Timothy (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 60–62 during two-year imprisonment in Rome (1:12, 14, 17; Acts 28:30).

**Original Readers:** The church at Philippi in Asia Minor (Acts 16:12–40; 20:1–6). Paul founded the church during his second missionary journey.

**Snapshot:** A letter of friendship and thanksgiving between the apostle and a beloved church.

**Purposes & Themes:** The dominant theme of this letter is joy. There are sixteen references to “joy” and “rejoicing” in 104 total verses. The church at Philippi had sent Paul a gift. This letter is Paul’s gratitude to them for their sacrificial generosity. Paul’s teaching on Christ’s humiliation and exaltation is profound (2:5–11).

**Portrayal of Christ:** Christ is our Example of Joy.

**Uniqueness:** One of Paul’s most upbeat letters, even though he was in prison. He deals less with theological matters and largely with personal and practical issues. Paul’s letter is saturated with all Christ has done for us (1:3–13; 2:6–22; 3:6, 20).

### Outline:

Introduction (1:1–11)

I. Joy in Living (1:12–30)

II. Joy in Serving (Ch. 2)

III. Joy in Fellowship (Ch. 3)

IV. Joy in Rewards (Ch. 4)

Conclusion (4:21–23)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. Joy is at the heart of the Christian life no matter what.
2. Life philosophy: “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (1:21).
3. We should pray more and worry less (4:4–7).
4. Controlling the mind is controlling life (4:8–9).
5. Contentment is a mindset to be practical (4:10–12).
6. “I can do all things through him (Christ) who strengthens me” (4:13).
7. “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory and Christ Jesus” (4:19).

## NOTES

## COLOSSIANS

**Author:** Paul, along with Timothy (1:1, 23; 4:18).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 60–62, during Paul’s imprisonment in Rome (4:3, 18). Colossians and Ephesians are companion letters.

**Original Readers:** The believers in the church at Colossae, though Paul did not know them personally (1:2; 2:1). It was also read in the nearby church at Laodicea (4:16). The recipients were largely Gentile. The church at Colossae began during Paul’s three-year ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19), probably Epaphras was the founder.

**Snapshot:** Jesus Christ is our all in all.

**Purposes & Themes:** Paul writes this letter to counteract some erroneous and dangerous teachings in the church largely associated with Jewish legalism and pagan mysticism.

**Portrayal of Christ:** Jesus Christ is the complete and sufficient Savior of all.

**Uniqueness:** Paul neither founded nor visited this church (1:4, 7, 8; 2:1). Christ is presented as the all-sufficient and superior One. In Colossians, every believer is complete in Christ.

### Outline:

Introduction (1:1–14)

- I. Christ Is Our Lord (1:15–2:23)
  - A. Lord of Creation (1:15–17)
  - B. Lord of the Church (1:18–23)
  - C. Lord of Ministry (1:24–29)
  - D. Lord of our Salvation (2:1–23)
- II. Christ Is Our Life (3:1–4:1)
  - A. In our Minds and Bodies (3:1–7)
  - B. In our Attitudes and Relationships (3:8–4:1)
- III. Christ Is Our Love (4:2–9)
  - A. Love for “Outsiders” (4:2–6)
  - B. Love for other Believers (4:7–9)

Conclusion (4:7–18)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Our Lord Jesus Christ is supreme over all.
- 2. Our sufficiency and completeness is in Christ.
- 3. Our life in Christ is transformed as we put off the old and adorn the new (3:5–17).
- 4. How we conduct ourselves as Christians to outsiders is critical to successful evangelism (4:5–6).

## NOTES

# 1 THESSALONIANS

## NOTES

**Author:** Paul, along with Silvanus, and Timothy (1:1; 2:18).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 50–51, among the earliest of Paul’s writings. Probably written during the latter part of Paul’s stay in Corinth on his second missionary tour (Acts 17:1–18:1).

**Original Readers:** To the church at Thessalonica (1:1).

**Snapshot:** Live godly while awaiting Christ’s return (“parousia”).

**Purposes & Themes:** The letter deals with specific questions and special problems, particularly what happens when we die and the return of Christ. Paul describes how Jesus will return, but doesn’t address the when. Until then, walk worthy.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Coming One.

**Uniqueness:** This book is one of Paul’s most personal. He calls them “brethren” fourteen times. It also contains two of the Bible’s shortest verses: “Rejoice always” (5:16) and “pray without ceasing” (5:17). Every chapter closes with something about the Lord’s sure return (1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13–18; 5:23).

### Outline:

Introduction (1:1–2)

- I. Paul Remembers the Church (1:3–3:13)
  - A. How she was born (Ch. 1)
  - B. How she was nurtured (Ch. 2)
  - C. How she was established (Ch. 3)
- II. Paul Challenges the Church (Chs. 4–5:22)
  - A. To love and sexual purity (4:1–12)
  - B. To prophetic urgency (4:13–5:11)
  - C. To peace and light (5:12–22)

Conclusion (5:23–28)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Christ will return for His people.
- 2. While awaiting Christ’s return, live godly.
- 3. As Christians we grieve with hope (4:13).
- 4. Death immediately ushers a believer into the presence of Christ.



## 2 THESSALONIANS

**Author:** Paul, along with Silvanus, and Timothy (1:1; 3:17).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 51–52, shortly after his first letter. Also written from Corinth. See Acts 18:18–21.

**Original Readers:** To the church in Thessalonica (1:1).

**Snapshot:** Christians should work until Jesus returns.

**Purposes & Themes:** The Thessalonians continue to struggle in their understanding of the Lord’s anticipated return. Some had even stopped working to wait. Paul writes to provide clarity and to exhort them to remain productive.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Lord will destroy the wicked.

**Uniqueness:** Other than the teachings in Revelation, this letter addresses the coming Antichrist the most (Ch. 2).

### Outline:

Introduction (1:1–2)

- I. Be Affirmed that Christ is Coming (1:3–12)
- II. Be Aware that the Antichrist will Emerge (2:1–17)
- III. Be Obedient to these Admonitions (3:1–15)
  - A. To Pray Fervently (3:1–5)
  - B. To Work Productively (3:6–15)

Conclusion (3:16–18)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Stay balanced—look forward to Christ’s return, but stay busy doing good until He does.
- 2. Live a productive work life.
- 3. Live with hope for our Lord’s return.

## NOTES

## 1 TIMOTHY

**Author:** The apostle Paul (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 63–65, from Macedonia (1:3) not long before Paul's death.

**Original Readers:** To Timothy, my true child in the faith (1:2). This is the first of three pastoral epistles: 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. Timothy served as pastor of the local church in Ephesus. Paul probably led Timothy to Christ while in Lystra on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6–23). When Paul revisited Lystra on his second journey, Paul chose Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16:1–3).

**Snapshot:** Spiritual leaders are taught how to conduct their personal lives and to lead their churches.

**Purposes & Themes:** Paul dealt with three concerns: false teachings, church order, and being a faithful servant in the church.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Appointer of His Leaders (1:12).

**Uniqueness:** Paul sets the standard for the character and conduct of pastors and deacons (5:1–13). Timothy appears to command good pay for vocational church leaders (5:17–18).

**Outline:**

Greeting (1:1–2)

- I. Paul and Timothy (1:3–20)
  - II. Regulations for Worship and Order in the Church (Chs. 2–4)
  - III. Discipline within the Church (Ch. 5)
  - IV. Miscellaneous Instructions (6:1–19)
- Conclusion (6:20–21)

**Theology/Life Lessons:**

- 1. Churches must hold to the sound doctrine of the Word of God (1:3–11).
- 2. It takes a good soldier of Christ to wage a good warfare to maintain solid doctrine (1:18–20).
- 3. Christians are urged to pray for those in positions of authority (2:1–2).
- 4. Church leaders are called to a high standard (3:1–13; 5:17–25).
- 5. Widows are to be honored in the body of Christ (5:1–16).

## NOTES

## 2 TIMOTHY

**Author:** Paul the apostle (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 67–68, during second imprisonment in Rome when his death is imminent.

**Original Readers:** Timothy (1:2).

**Snapshot:** Paul's final words to a beloved coworker and long-time friend.

**Purposes & Themes:** Paul warns this young pastor against false teaching and urges him to live a pure life before his people. He also forewarns Timothy that trouble will come but God is faithful (3:12; 4:18). Paul further urges Timothy to join him as soon as he can (4:6).

**Portrayal of Christ:** The One who is able (1:12).

**Uniqueness:** Paul tells us the divine origin of the Bible (3:16).

### **Outline:**

Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1–5)

I. Encouragement from Experience (1:6–14)

II. Paul and His Associates (1:15–18)

III. Directions to Timothy (Ch. 2)

IV. Last Days (3:1–9)

V. Exhortations to Timothy (3:10–17)

VI. Farewell Message (4:1–18)

Conclusion (4:19–22)

### **Theology/Life Lessons:**

1. The church, especially her leaders, is commanded to guard against wrong doctrine and teach the Word of God.
2. As the end nears, a greater falling away will occur (3:1–11).
3. Living a godly life will bring difficulty and persecution (3:12).
4. God's Word is inerrant and infallible and is profitable for all of life (3:16–17).
5. Finish strong (4:6–8).
6. There are many ways to "do" church.

## NOTES

## TITUS

**Author:** Paul, a servant of God (1:1).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 63–65, either while on the move to or while in Macedonia, from either Corinth or Nicopolis (3:12).

**Original Readers:** Titus, whom Paul left behind on the island of Crete to oversee the churches (1:4–5).

**Snapshot:** Church leaders are instructed on their lives and teaching.

**Purposes & Themes:** Paul addresses three matters facing the churches in Crete: the character of the leaders, advice for teaching groups, and proper Christian conduct. Also, the deity of Christ is strongly maintained (1:3–4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6).

**Portrayal of Christ:** Our Divine Teacher.

**Uniqueness:** Paul quotes a Cretan philosopher, Epimenides, of the sixth century B.C. (1:12).

**Outline:**

Greeting (1:1–4)

- I. Encouragement from Experience (1:5–9)
  - II. False Teachers (1:10–16)
  - III. Christian Behavior (2:1–10)
  - IV. Christian Doctrine and Life (2:11–3:7)
  - V. Closing Admonitions (3:8–11)
- Conclusion (3:12–15)

**Theology/Life Lessons:**

- 1. Members of the church along with church leaders are held to a high standard.
- 2. Godly leaders are essential in the church (1:5–9).
- 3. Older men and women should be mentoring the younger generation (2:1–8).
- 4. Sound doctrine is to be adorned and applied through good deeds (2:10, 14; 3:8, 14).

## NOTES

## PHILEMON

**Author:** Paul, a prisoner for Christ (vv. 1, 9, 19).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 60–62, during Paul’s first Roman imprisonment. (Also wrote Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians during same period.)

**Original Readers:** Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and others in the church at Philemon’s house (1:1–2). Philemon was a slave owner, whose slave, Onesimus, had escaped to Rome. While there he was converted. Paul sent him back to Philemon with this letter. Philemon was a prominent member in the church at Colossae (vv. 1–2; Colossians 4:9), which met in his house (v. 2).

**Snapshot:** Paul begs for forgiveness and mercy for a runaway slave converted to the Christian faith.

**Purposes & Themes:** Paul writes and urges Philemon to forgive and take back his runaway slave, who had come to know Christ (vv. 10, 17).

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Infinite Intercessor.

**Uniqueness:** Philemon is the shortest of Paul’s letters in the Bible, only twenty-five verses.

**Outline:**

Greeting (vv. 1–3)

- I. The Character of One Who Forgives (vv. 4–7).
  - II. The Actions of One Who Forgives (vv. 8–18).
  - III. The Motives of One Who Forgives (vv. 19–22).
- Conclusion (vv. 23–25)

**Theology/Life Lessons:**

- 1 Christians are called to forgive as Christ has forgiven us.
- 2 As Paul did with Philemon, believers should always challenge others to do the right thing.

## NOTES



## SUMMARY OF PAUL'S LIFE

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Birth of Paul (in Tarsus) and Luke (in Philippi?)	A.D. 5?	
Paul sent to Jerusalem for his education under Gamaliel II (rejoining members of his wider family?)	A.D. 20	
Paul's conversion on road to Damascus	A.D. 31/32	Acts 9:1–19
Paul summonsed by Barnabas to work in Antioch	A.D. 40	Acts 11:25–26
Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey to Cyprus, Pamphylia and Galatia	A.D. 46	Acts 13–14
Urgent apostolic council in Jerusalem	A.D. 49	Acts 15
Paul's second missionary journey, traveling into Macedonia and Athens. Luke first meets Paul in Troas and stays on in Philippi	A.D. 50	Acts 15:41–17:33
Paul based in Ephesus for three years	A.D. 52–55	Acts 19:1–20:1
Paul and Luke sail from Palestine and are shipwrecked, landing eventually on Malta	A.D. 59 (autumn)	Acts 27
Paul and Luke arrive in Rome	A.D. 60 (spring)	Acts 28:14
Paul martyred in Rome under Nero (beheaded near Ostian Way), probably some time prior to the great fire in Rome (July 14, A.D. 64)	A.D. 63/64	

## HEBREWS

**Author:** Unknown, perhaps Barnabas, Apollos, Luke, or Paul.

**Date & Place Written:** Probably sometime before A.D. 70, since temple sacrifices are mentioned and the temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. Perhaps written from Jerusalem around A.D. 67–69.

**Original Readers:** Jewish Christians with whom the writer was acquainted (6:9–12; 10:32–34; 13:7).

**Snapshot:** Jesus is superior to any Old Testament person or sacrifice.

**Purposes & Themes:** Some of the Jewish people who had come to Christ were in danger of drifting back in the practices of Judaism. Hebrews emphasizes the superiority of Christianity to Old Testament Judaism.

**Portrayal of Christ:** Jesus is superior (1:1–4; 2:3; 3:5–6; 7:25; 8:6; 9:12–14). The word “superior” occurs thirteen times in this epistle.

**Uniqueness:** Hebrews is one of only two New Testament letters (the other being 1 John) that includes no greeting, or hint of its author. The letter contains five strong warning passages (2:1–4; 3:7–19; 5:11–6:20; 10:26–31; 12:15–29). Chapter 11 contains the great roll call of the heroes of the faith.

### Outline:

Introduction (1:1–3)

- I. Christ is Superior to Prophets and Angels (1:4–2:18)
- II. Christ is Superior to Moses and Joshua (3:1–4:13)
- III. Christ is Superior to Aaron’s Priesthood (4:14–7:28)
  - A. Christ Offers a Superior Covenant (8:1–10:18)
  - B. Faith in Christ is the Better Way (10:19–12:29)

Conclusion (Ch. 13)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. New believers must be instructed in the way of Christ, lest they go astray.
2. The way of grace (Christianity) is far superior to the way of works (Judaism).
3. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (13:8).
4. Jesus Christ completely finished the work of salvation for us.

## NOTES

## JAMES

### NOTES

**Author:** James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1). The half-brother of our Lord (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). He became a believer after the Resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:7). He went on to become one of the “pillars of the church” (Galatians 2:9).

**Date & Place Written:** James was martyred in A.D. 62. James’ epistle was probably written between A.D. 44 and 62, perhaps 45–49 A.D. If true, then James is the earliest New Testament book.

**Original Readers:** “To the twelve tribes in the dispersion” (1:1), were Jewish Christians who had been persecuted and driven out of Jerusalem by opposing Jews, now scattered among the nations.

**Snapshot:** True faith is shown by one’s good works.

**Purposes & Themes:** James is most concerned with the practical aspects of the Christian faith.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Returning Rewarder.

**Uniqueness:** James is the proverbs of the New Testament. He mentions the name of God seventeen times, but the Lord Jesus Christ is only mentioned twice (1:1; 2:1). Many of James’ teachings echo the Sermon of the Mount in Matt. 5–7 (1:19–21, 26–27; 3:1–12; 4:11–12; 5:1–3, 12). James is the most practical of all the epistles. In just 108 verses James issues fifty-four commands.

#### Outline:

Salutation (1:1)

- I. True Faith Sustains through Trials (1:2–11)
  - II. True Faith Overcomes Temptations (1:12–18)
  - III. True Faith Shows in our Actions (1:19–2:26)
  - IV. True Faith is Shown in our Words (Ch. 3)
  - V. True Faith is Seen in our Character (Ch. 4)
  - VI. True Faith is Revealed in our Prayer Life (5:1–18)
- Conclusion (5:19–20)

#### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Trials provide great opportunity for spiritual growth (1:2–12).
- 2. God’s Word is to be lived not just heard (1:19–25).
- 3. Showing impartiality is a sin (2:1–13).
- 4. True faith is shown in how we live (2:14–26).
- 5. Controlling our tongue and speech is critical (3:1–12).
- 6. Friendship with worldliness is dangerous (4:1–10).
- 7. Seriously ill believers should request to be anointed and prayed for by the church leaders (5:13–18).

## 1 PETER

**Author:** The apostle Peter (1:1), with the assistance of Silvanus (Silas, 5:12).

**Date & Place Written:** 64–65 A.D., from “Babylon” (5:13), which probably is a symbolic name for Rome.

**Original Readers:** “To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1:1). Reference is to Christians whose citizenship was in heaven but who lived in these Asia Minor provinces. They were likely both Jewish and Gentile, though mostly Gentile because of the way they are described in 1:14, 2:9–10 and 4:3–4.

**Snapshot:** Suffering for the sake of Jesus is good and noble.

**Purposes & Themes:** Believers were facing Roman persecution and Peter writes to remind them that God is still in control (4:12–13). To suffer for Christ is indeed an honor. This initial letter of Peter offers hope for the hurting.

**Portrayal of Christ:** The precious Cornerstone (2:6).

**Uniqueness:** The epistle contains several key words. One is “precious.” Seven precious things are mentioned in his two letters (1 Peter 1:7, 19; 2:4, 6–7; 3:4; 2 Peter 1:1, 4). “Hope” is another favorite term (1:2, 18, 19; 2:21, 24; 3:18; 4:1). “Grace” is yet another. But “suffering” is the key word, being found in every chapter for a total of twenty-one times.

### Outline:

Greetings (1:1–2)

- I. Christian Privileges (1:3–2:10)
  - II. Christian Relationships (2:11–3:12)
  - III. Christian Suffering and Service (3:13–4:19)
  - IV. Christian Discipline (5:1–11)
- Conclusion (5:12–14)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Experiencing suffering for Jesus’ sake is good (1:3–9).
- 2. Life can be hard, but is always good (4:12–19).
- 3. Believers are to humbly respect and submit to governmental, marketplace, and family authority (2:11–3:7).
- 4. Christians should defend the gospel with gentleness and respect (3:13–17).
- 5. Better days are ahead (5:6–11).
- 6. Satan, our adversary, seeks to intimidate Christians (5:8).

## NOTES

## 2 PETER

**Author:** The apostle Peter (1:1; 3:1).

**Date & Place Written:** Probably A.D. 67–68, shortly before Peter was executed (1:13–15) in Rome.

**Original Readers:** Christians in Asia Minor (1:1–2).

**Snapshot:** Beware of false teachers within the church.

**Purposes & Themes:** Peter writes to warn his readers against the heresies of false teachers. They wrongly taught that: the death of Christ did not pay for our sins (2:1), people could live as they pleased (2:10), and the Lord would not return to judge this world (3:4). This letter is a “reminder” (1:12; 3:1) of the truth of the Gospel. Peter’s first letter comforts his readers through the persecutions from without. The second letter warns his readers of dangers from within the church. Peter challenges his readers to know their faith. The word “knowledge” appears in some form sixteen times in three short chapters.

**Portrayal of Christ:** He is our Strength.

**Uniqueness:** The author claims to have been an eyewitness of the transfiguration of Christ (1:16–18; cp. Matthew 17:1–13). Peter addresses “how” the Bible was inspired (1:20–21). Peter validates Paul’s writing as Scripture (3:16).

### Outline:

Greeting (1:1–2)

- I. Know Your Salvation (1:3–11)
- II. Know Your Scripture (1:12–21)
- III. Know Your Adversaries (Ch. 2)
- IV. Know Your Prophecy (Ch. 3)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. God’s Word is divinely inspired and can be trusted (1:20–21).
- 2. Be alert and aware of false teachers (Ch. 2).
- 3. God desires for all to be saved (3:9).
- 4. Christ will return (3:10–13).
- 5. Keep growing in Christ (3:18).

## NOTES



## 1 JOHN

**Author:** The apostle John according to tradition.

**Date & Place Written:** Approximately A.D. 90–95 from Ephesus.

**Original Readers:** Christian churches in Asia Minor.

**Snapshot:** Jesus was a real man just as He is really God.

**Purposes & Themes:** John tackles the heresy claiming Jesus had been on earth only in spirit, not in body (4:3; 1:1). This heresy is known as Gnosticism. John calls believers to love others, live righteously, and believe Jesus Christ has come in the flesh as God's Son.

**Portrayal of Christ:** He is our Life (1:1–2) and Righteous Advocate (2:1).

**Uniqueness:** This letter includes none of the usual features of a Bible letter—greetings, author identification, and the like. Yet, it is a very warm and compassionate letter. The book contains several contrasts: light and darkness (1:6–7; 2:8–11), love for the world and love for God (2:15–17), children of God and children of the devil (3:4–10), the Holy Spirit and the Antichrist (2:18–22; 4:1–3), and love and hate (4:7–12, 16–21). This epistle is one of assurance, using the term “know” or related terms forty times!

**Outline:**

- I. Walk in the Light (Chs. 1–2)
- II. Walk in Love (Chs. 3–4)
- III. Walk in Fullness of Life (Ch. 5)

**Theology/Life Lessons:**

- 1. Jesus Christ is fully man and fully God.
- 2. God is ever faithful to forgive our sins (1:9).
- 3. Loving others in word and deed verifies the genuineness of our faith.
- 4. There is a progression in the Christian life (2:12–14).
- 5. True partnership with Christ includes walking in the light (1:7), imitating Christ (2:6), and separating from the world and its standards (2:15–17).
- 6. God desires us to enjoy the assurance of our salvation (5:13).

## NOTES

## 2 JOHN

**Author:** The apostle John, identified only as “the elder” (v. 1).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 90–95, after 1 John. The readers were well known and likely lived in Asia Minor, near Ephesus.

**Original Readers:** “To the elect lady and her children” (v. 1), refers perhaps to an actual family or, figuratively, a church.

**Snapshot:** Jesus was totally man and God.

**Purposes & Themes:** Much like 1 John, beware of false teachers who deny Jesus’ physical life on earth (vv. 7–11). Also writes to encourage his readers to continue to walk in Christ’s commandments (vv. 4–6). “Truth” is found five times in this short letter of thirteen verses.

**Portrayal of Christ:** He is the Truth (v. 2).

**Uniqueness:** One of the New Testament’s four single-chapter books, is the shortest of all by verse count: thirteen. Also, the only book in New Testament addressed to a lady.

**Outline:**

Salvation (1–3)

I. Walk in the Truth (4–6)

II. Watch out for False Teachers (7–11)

Conclusion (12–13)

**Theology/Life Lessons:**

1. This is love, that we walk according to the truth of His commandments (vv. 4, 6).
2. All teaching should be measured by Scripture (v. 9).
3. Avoid false teachers.

## NOTES

### 3 JOHN

**Author:** Only identified as “the elder” (v. 1), who is probably the apostle John.

**Date & Place Written:** After 1 and 2 John between A.D. 90–95, also from Ephesus.

**Original Readers:** “To the beloved Gaius” (1:1).

**Snapshot:** Church leaders must be humble, not proud.

**Purposes & Themes:** John praises two humble and loving leaders in Gaius and Demetrius, but harshly condemns Diotrephes for his self-serving style of leadership.

**Portrayal of Christ:** He is the Way.

**Uniqueness:** Third John, one of four single-chapter books in the New Testament, is the second shortest by verse count: fifteen.

**Outline:**

Greeting (1–4)

I. Gaius is Commended (5–8)

II. Diotrephes is Criticized (9–10)

III. Demetrius is Complimented (11–12)

Conclusion (13–15)

**Theology/Life Lessons:**

1. God’s servant leaders are humble, never proud.
2. A Christian parent has no greater joy than to hear their children obey the truth (v. 4).
3. Doing good is of God; doing evil is not (v. 11).
4. Be generous and serve (like Gaius), not selfish and proud (like Diotrephes).

### NOTES

## JUDE

### NOTES

**Author:** Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James (v. 1). Possibly, Jude was Jesus' half brother (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). The writer probably knew the apostle Peter since Jude makes reference to Peter's writings (vv. 17–18).

**Date & Place Written:** A.D. 68–70, probably from Jerusalem.

**Original Readers:** "To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ" (v. 1), which applies to all Christians.

**Snapshot:** Be alert to false teachers and their dangerous doctrines.

**Purposes & Themes:** In no uncertain terms, Jude condemns false teachers (vv. 4, 8, 10, 16, 18–19) and predicts their judgment and destruction (vv. 11–13). He further urges his readers to continue growing in their faith and the love of God.

**Portrayal of Christ:** He is our Keeper.

**Uniqueness:** Jude provides details on two Old Testament events not recorded in the Old Testament: the archangel Michael's fight with Satan over the body of Moses (v. 9) and Enoch's prophesy of God's judgment (vv. 14–15).

#### Outline:

Greetings and Occasion (1–3)

I. Character and Doom of False Teachers (4–16)

II. Admonishment to Hold to the Faith (17–23)

Benediction (24–25)

#### Theology/Life Lessons:

1. It is the job of every Christian to contend for the faith (v. 3).
2. Avoid false teachers who will lead you astray.
3. True believers reflect God's love, show compassion, and work to pull sinners out of the fire (v. 23).
4. Our Christ is able to keep us from falling (v. 24).

## REVELATION

**Author:** The apostle John (1:1), who also wrote the gospel of John and 1, 2, 3 John, a total of five New Testament books.

**Date & Place Written:** Probably A.D. 90–95, while exiled by the Roman Emperor Domitian to the Isle of Patmos (1:9).

**Original Readers:** “To the seven churches that are in Asia” (1:4), specifically Asia Minor, but also to all believers.

**Snapshot:** God will judge sin and evil and reward His saints.

**Purposes & Themes:** John writes to unfold the future (1:19).

**Portrayal of Christ:** The Alpha and Omega (1:8), our Victorious King (19:11–16)!

**Uniqueness:** Probably the most difficult book in all of the Bible to interpret. The only book of the Bible that promises a blessing to all who read it (1:3). It is the only book of prophecy in the New Testament. The book contains seven sevens (churches, seals, trumpets, signs, plagues, dooms, and things).

### Outline:

- I. The Past—Things Already Seen (Ch. 1)
- II. The Present—Things Which Are (Chs. 2–3)—Seven Churches
- III. A Heavenly Scene (Chs. 4–5)
- IV. The Future—Things to Come (Chs. 6–22)
  - A. Worldwide Tribulation and Christ’s Return (Chs. 6–19)
  - B. Millennial Reign of Christ on Earth (Ch. 20)
  - C. The Eternal State (21:9–22:5)
- Conclusion (22:6–21)

### Theology/Life Lessons:

- 1. Jesus Christ is preeminent and worthy of our praise.
- 2. Sin, Satan, and unbelief will be judged.
- 3. Satan will be finally executed.
- 4. We will reign forever with Christ—God’s team wins!

## NOTES



## A SUMMARY OF THE BIBLE

There is far more to the Bible than can be given in a brief summary. We could spend years studying it and never fully understand all that is in it for us. Indeed, the more we know about the Bible, the more we realize how much we don't know, and the more we want to study what it says. But there is a danger in delving more and more deeply into the Bible. We can lose our grip on the basic, simple gospel message. That's why it is very important, whatever the depth of our understanding of the Bible, to have this simple gospel message sorted out in our minds. To help with that, let's grasp some simpler headings.

<i>Genesis 1 and 2: God created</i>	<b>God</b>
<i>Genesis 3: Man rebelled</i>	<b>Us</b>
<i>Genesis 4 to Malachi: God called</i>	<b>God</b>
<i>Matthew to John: God came</i>	
<i>Acts to Jude: God built community</i>	<b>What if we do?</b>
<i>Revelation: God will complete community</i>	<b>What if we don't?</b>

This gives us a very simple summary, as follows.

**God.** There is a God who created us. He designed us to live in an intimate personal relationship with Him and with one another. We are created for love, to love God and to love one another.

**Us.** Men and women don't want to live in a relationship with God, so we have turned our backs on Him and decided to go our own way, to do our own thing. As a result we have each lost our relationship with God and with one another.

**God.** God still loves us and wants us to live in a proper relationship with Himself and with one another. That is why He came to earth in the person of Jesus—to call us back into those proper relationships and to provide the way for us to do so. As He died on the cross, He took the death penalty we deserve for everything wrong we have ever done, so that we can be forgiven, and so that relationships can be restored.

**What if we do?** If we say that we are sorry and that we do want to turn around and live in a proper relationship with God and with others, God will restore us to those relationships. These relationships are patchy here on earth, but they grow, and when we die we will live in a perfect relationship with God and with others. That's heaven.

**What if we don't?** If we refuse to turn back to God, there is nothing more He can do for us. God did all He could for us when Jesus came and died for us. If we choose to reject Him, we are consigning ourselves to separation from Him and from other people—an increasing separation on earth and then, when we die, a total separation. That's hell.

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