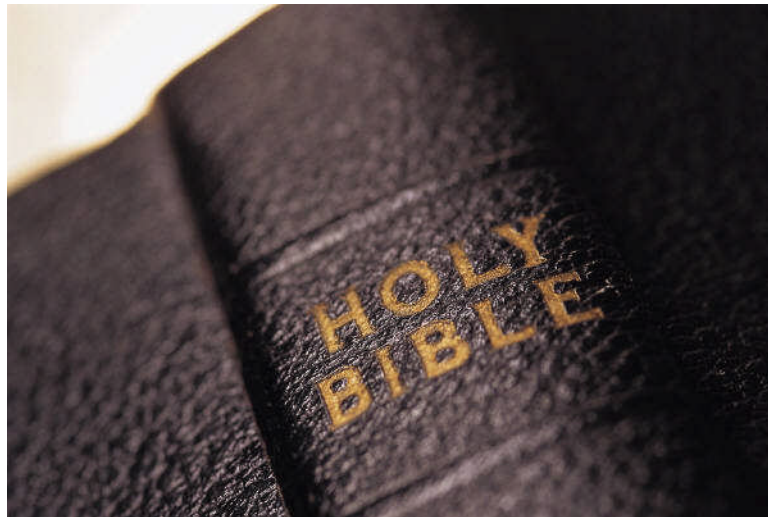


Introduction To The Bible



BY GREG KING
2007 EDITION

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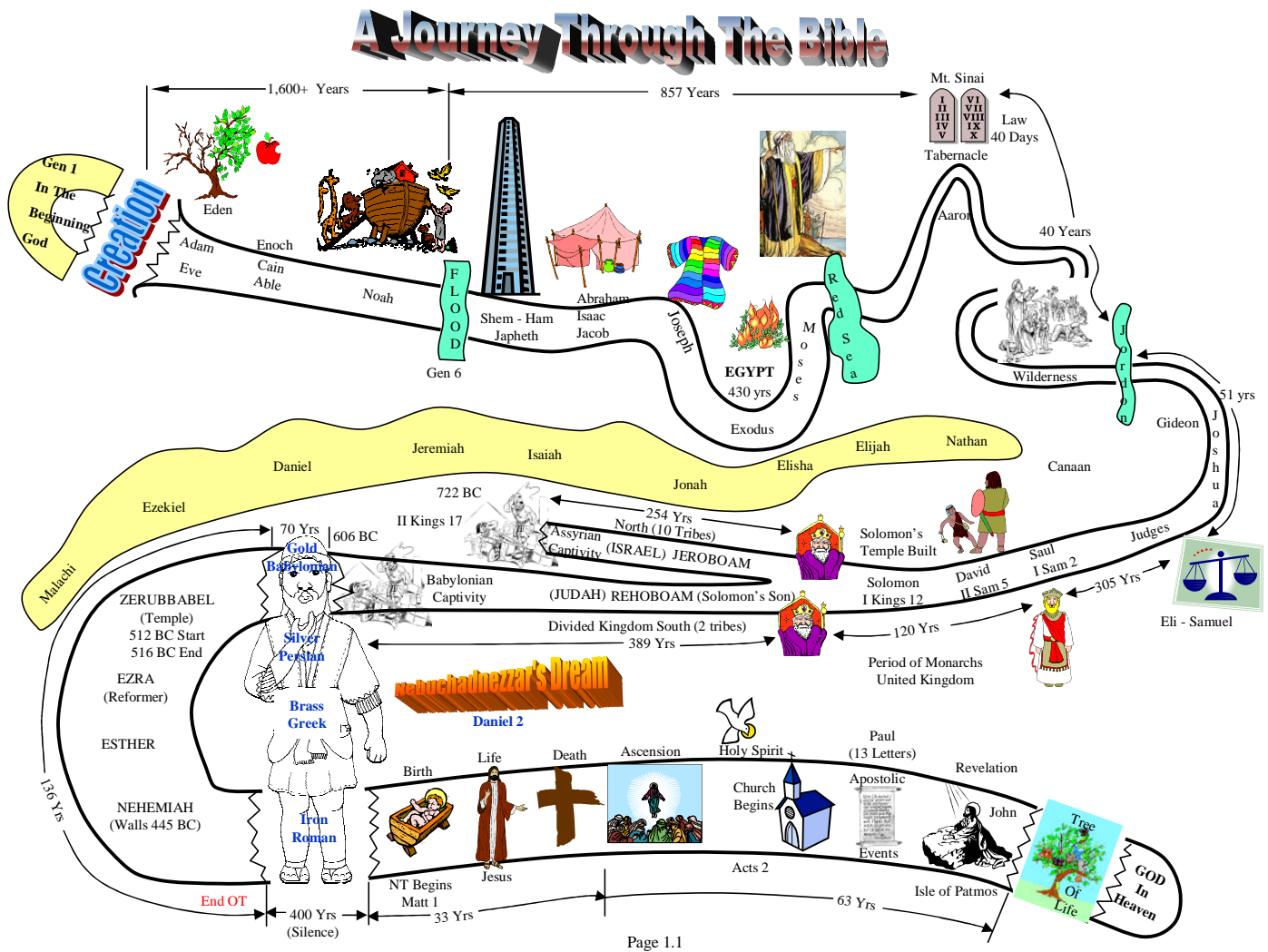
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Special Thanks:

To my dear brother Bobby Bates who is now with the Lord for his initial class from which much of the structure of this course is derived.

To my brother Dick Subry for his hours of work putting together the graphics and helping to edit this course and for making this and my other courses available for distribution on the internet through www.rockymountainchristian.org Thanks brother.



THE BIBLE

66 BOOKS 40 WRITERS 1,500 YEARS IN WRITING 4,000 YEARS OF HISTORY			
THE OLD TESTAMENT		THE NEW TESTAMENT	
<u>LAW</u>	<u>POETRY</u>	<u>BIOGRAPHY</u>	
GENESIS	JOB	MATTHEW	LUKE
EXODUS	PSALM	MARK	JOHN
LEVITICUS	PROVERBS	<u>HISTORY</u>	
NUMBERS	ECCLESIASTES	ACTS OF THE APOSTLES	
DEUTORONOMY	SONG OF SOLOMON		
<u>HISTORY</u>	<u>PROPHETS</u>	<u>LETTERS</u>	
JOSHUA	ISAIAH	ROMANS	TITUS
JUDGES	JEREMIAH	I CORINTHIANS	PHILEMON
RUTH	LAMENTATIONS	II CORINTHIANS	HEBREWS
I SAMUEL	EZEKIEL	GALATIANS	JAMES
II SAMUEL	DANIEL	EPHESIANS	I PETER
I KINGS	<u>MINOR PROPHETS</u>	PHILIPPIANS	II PETER
II KINGS	HOSEA	NAHUM	COLOSSIANS
I CHRONICLES	JOEL	HABAKKUK	I THESSALONIANS
II CHRONICLES	AMOS	ZEPHANIAH	II THESSALONIANS
EZRA	OBADIAH	HAGGAI	I TIMOTHY
NEHEMIAH	JONAH	ZECHARIAH	II TIMOTHY
ESTHER	MICAH	MALACHI	<u>PROPHECY</u> - REVELATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE COURSE.....	7
Why Do We Need This Course?.....	7
WHAT IS THE BIBLE ALL ABOUT?	8
The Basic Concept.....	8
What is the story of the Bible?.....	9
HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE BIBLE.....	9
1. PERIOD OF BEGINNINGS (Genesis 1 - 11).....	10
Beginning of the Universe	10
Beginning of Life.....	10
Beginning of Humanity.....	10
Beginning of Marriage and Family	11
Beginning of Sin and Death.....	11
Beginning of God's Plan for Redeeming Man	11
Beginning of Nations and Languages	11
2. Beginning of the Hebrew Family (Genesis 12 - 50).....	11
Special Attention	13
3. Egyptian Bondage.....	13
Going Into Egypt	13
4. The Exodus.....	14
5. The Wilderness Wanderings.....	14
6. Conquest and Settlement of Canaan	15
Failure Begins To Occur.....	15
7. Period of the Judges.....	16
For Your Information	16
Religion of the Canaanites	16
Child Sacrifices.....	17
8. Hebrew Monarchy (United Kingdom).....	17
The cry for a king	18
Saul becomes the first king.....	18
David becomes the successor.....	18
Solomon becomes the successor	19
9. The Divided Kingdom	19
Judah Alone	21
10. Babylonian Captivity	21
Taken into captivity in four sieges.....	22
Special Attention	22
11. Restoration Back To Canaan (Judea).....	23
Three Stage Return To Judea.....	23
The Restoration.....	23
12. Period of Silence (440 years).....	24
Antiochus Eppiphanes	24
Maccabean Revolt	24
Greek Language is Established.....	24
Jews Lose Hebrew Fluency.....	24
The Septuagint Version (LXX).....	24
Targum.....	25
Talmud and Misha	25
Other Significant Factors:.....	26
The Scribes	26
The Sadducees	27
The Pharisees	27
The Herodians.....	28
The Zealots	28

13. Period of the Messiah	28
14. Period of the New Testament Church	29
Major Divisions Of The Bible	30
The Old Testament	30
The New Testament	30
Divisions of the Old Testament (39 books)	30
Jewish Divisions (Luke 24:44)	30
Modern Divisions	30
Divisions of the New Testament (27 Books)	31
Introduction To Each Book In The Bible	32
<i>The Law Of Moses</i>	32
1. Genesis.....	32
2. Exodus	32
Typology in Exodus.....	33
3. Leviticus	33
4. Numbers.....	34
5. Deuteronomy	34
<i>History</i>	35
6. Joshua	35
7. Judges	35
8. Ruth	36
9. 1 Samuel	36
10. 2 Samuel	36
11. 1 Kings.....	37
12. 2 Kings.....	37
13. 1 Chronicles.....	37
14. 2 Chronicles.....	38
15. Ezra.....	38
16. Nehemiah.....	39
17. Esther.....	39
<i>Poetry</i>	40
18. Job	40
19. Psalms.....	40
20. Proverbs.....	40
21. Ecclesiastes.....	41
22. Song of Solomon	41
<i>Major Prophets</i>	41
23. Isaiah.....	42
24. Jeremiah (the weeping prophet).....	42
25. Lamentations.....	43
26. Ezekiel	44
27. Daniel	45
<i>Minor Prophets</i>	45
28. Hosea	45
29. Joel.....	46
30. Amos.....	46
31. Obadiah.....	47
32. Jonah.....	47
33. Micah.....	48
34. Nahum	49
35. Habakkuk.....	49
36. Zephaniah	50
37. Haggai.....	51
38. Zechariah	52
39. Malachi	52

The New Testament	53
<i>The Gospels</i>	53
40. Matthew	53
41. Mark	54
42. Luke	55
43. John	56
<i>History</i>	57
44. Acts	57
<i>Epistles: Paul writes 13 letters. Other letters written by James, Peter, John, then the final letter to John, the Revelation</i>	57
45. Romans	57
46. 1 Corinthians	58
47. 2 Corinthians	59
47. Galatians	60
48. Ephesians	60
49. Philippians	61
50. Colossians	63
51. 1 Thessalonians	65
52. 2 Thessalonians	65
53. 1 Timothy	66
54. 2 Timothy	67
55. Titus	68
56. Philemon	69
57. Hebrews	70
59. James	71
60. 1 Peter	73
61. 2 Peter	74
62. 1 John	76
63. 2 John	79
64. 3 John	79
65. Jude	80
66. Revelation	81

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE COURSE

Introduction: The Bible speaks of itself as the inspired word of God. This course is designed to help you better understand God's written revelation to man, the Bible. In this course we will do several things:

- A. *Examine* and set forth the historical perspective of the Bible and demonstrate the chronological setting from Genesis to Revelation.
- B. *Demonstrate* how the Bible is arranged in its present form and why the books of the Bible are in the order that they are.
- C. *Introduce* every book in the Bible and demonstrate where it fits into Biblical chronology.

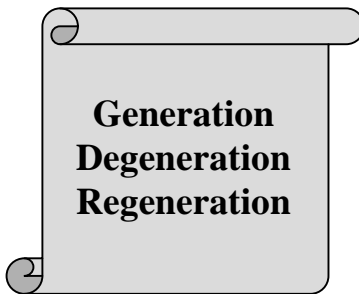
Why Do We Need This Course?

- A. 1 Corinthians 2:9-13 says that the marvelous things of God have been revealed to us by His Spirit.
- B. 2 Peter 1:20-21 Peter says we "must understand" that holy men of God were moved by the Spirit of God to write the Bible (cf. Galatians 1:11-12; Ephesians 3:3-4).
- C. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 Paul said that all scripture (scripture is the term for written revelation) is inspired by God and is able to equip us completely for every good work that God has for us to do.
- D. 2 Timothy 2:15 Paul instructs Timothy to "handle accurately the word of truth". This is necessary because of its knife-like sharpness and ability to cut (Hebrews 4:12-13). One should not handle a scalpel like a hatchet.
- E. 2 Peter 3:15-18 Peter instructs us of the danger of not knowing God's Word sufficiently. Failure to know God's Word can destroy us (John 8:31-32, Hosea 4:6).

WHAT IS THE BIBLE ALL ABOUT?

The Bible is not so much a book about God as it is a book about man and his relationship with God. It is a history of the fall of man through sin and the redemption of man back to God through Jesus Christ to the ultimate glory of God.

The Bible can be thought of as the record of man's *GENERATION, DEGENERATION, AND REGENERATION.*



Generation:

Deals with the creation of man in the image of God. The Bible is the only source available that accurately tells man where he came from and why we are here.

Degeneration:

Deals with the introduction of sin into the world and man's ultimate fall and degradation due to sin. This introduces the beginning and source of pain, suffering, disease, and ultimately death (Romans 5:12).

Regeneration:

Deals with God's plan for redeeming man. God's eternal plan was set in motion from Genesis 3:15. The majority of the Bible deals with God's plan to regenerate man and culminates in the promise of the redemption of both the body and the soul.

The Basic Concept

The Bible can be broken down into three major divisions and themes dealing with the redemption of man.

- A. Someone is coming.
- B. Someone has come.
- C. Someone is coming again.

Someone Is Coming

This is the theme of the Old Testament. From the time man sinned, God promised to redeem. Here are some verses that have the theme, "Someone is coming"

... *Genesis 3:15*

... *Genesis 22:15-18; cf. Galatians 3:16*

... *Deuteronomy 18:15; Acts 3:18-26*

... *Isaiah 7:14; cf. Matthew 1:20-23*

Someone Has Come

This is the theme of the Gospel accounts of the life of Christ. That someone of whom the prophets spoke is now here. Take a close look for yourself.

... *Matthew 2:5-6*

... *Matthew 3:1-3, 4:12-16*

Someone Is Coming Again

This is the theme of the rest of the New Testament books. Jesus will come again to complete that redemption process which was promised back in the garden of Eden.

... *Acts 1:11*

... *1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

What is the story of the Bible?

It is the story of the generation of man, documenting the degeneration of mankind through sin. The rest of the Bible is a step-by-step procedure by which God brings Christ into the world so that man's sins can be forgiven. The Bible story then looks forward to the second coming of Christ, the final resurrection of all men to stand before Christ at the judgment and the redeemed to take their position as heirs in the presence of God.

HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE BIBLE

There are fourteen (14) separate historical periods of Biblical history. Each is woven together over thousands of years to form one continuous story. The fourteen separate periods are:

- A. Period of Beginnings
- B. Beginning of the Hebrew family
- C. Egyptian bondage
- D. The Exodus
- E. Wilderness wanderings
- F. Conquest and settlement of Canaan
- G. Period of the Judges
- H. Hebrew monarchy (or The United Kingdom)

- I. The Divided Kingdom
- J. Babylonian captivity
- K. Restoration back to Canaan
- L. Period of Silence (Intertestamental period)
- M. Period of the Messiah
- N. Period of the New Testament Church

1. PERIOD OF BEGINNINGS (Genesis 1 - 11)

This period covers the beginning of several significant things:

- A. Beginning of the universe
- B. Beginning of life
- C. Beginning of humanity
- D. Beginning of marriage and family
- E. Beginning of sin and death
- F. Beginning of God's plan to redeem man
- G. Beginning of nations and languages

Beginning of the Universe

Five things are needed for the universe to exist as it does: (time, force, energy, space, and matter). Genesis 1:1-2 covers all five. In the beginning (time); God (energy); created (force); the heavens (space) and the earth (matter). The universe was created in six literal days, not "billions" of years as evolutionists claim. "Evening and morning" were one creation day (Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31; 2:1-3 cf. Exodus 20:11; cf. Hebrews 11:3).

Beginning of Life

Plant life came into being on the third day (Genesis 1:11-13). Sea creatures and birds came into existence on the fourth day (Genesis 1:20-23). God created land animals on the fifth day (1:24-25).

Beginning of Humanity

Man was created just as he is today on the sixth day (1:26). We did not "evolve" from lower forms of life as some attempt to teach.

Beginning of Marriage and Family

Marriage and the family were the first "institution" that God made for man. Marriage and family go all the way back to the garden of Eden, even before government and the church.

Beginning of Sin and Death

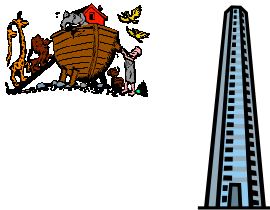


Genesis 3:1-19 introduces the reason for the rest of the Bible. This is where sin and death entered into human history. Death, decay, disease, pain, suffering, strife, and all other bad things can be traced to this beginning event.

Beginning of God's Plan for Redeeming Man

God immediately announced His intentions to "crush" the serpent and introduce one who would accomplish that task (see Matthew 12:29 and Romans 16:20). The rest of the Bible tells the details of how God would accomplish this promise.

Beginning of Nations and Languages



After God destroyed the world through the flood, Noah's three sons (Shem, Ham, and Japheth) (ch 9) became the beginning of the three basic types of peoples. (Black skinned, yellow skinned, and white skinned). Different language began in Genesis 11.

The period of beginnings answers the questions: "Where did we come from, why are we here, and how did we get into the mess that we are in?"

2. Beginning of the Hebrew Family (Genesis 12 - 50)



After the fall of man and the destruction of the world by water, God set in motion the specifics of His plan to redeem man back to Himself. In order to accomplish this He had to bring Christ into the world to pay the penalty for sin.

The Hebrew family would be the human bloodline through which God would ultimately bring Christ into the world. The

beginning of the Hebrew family was a man named Abram (later changed to Abraham).

This section reveals the details of how God chose Abram and ultimately made his descendants into the nation of Israel.

Abraham had a son named Isaac, who had a son named Jacob. These three are known as "the fathers".

Jacob's name was changed to "Israel". He eventually had twelve sons. These twelve sons married and had children who became the "tribes" of Israel.

The following verses reveal the beginning of the Hebrew family through Abram:

... *Genesis 12:1-7*

... *Genesis 15:1-6*

... *Genesis 16:1-15 Abram's attempt to "help God out." Ishmael was the beginning of the people who are now the Muslim Arabs. They have been hostile toward the Jewish nation since their beginning as God said in :12.*

... *Genesis 17:1-17 Circumcision instituted as the sign of the covenant that God made with Abram. In this section, God also promises to give Abram a child of promise through Sarai (whose name is changed to Sarah, "Mother of nations").*

... *Genesis 21:1-5 Isaac is born.*

... *Genesis 22:1-18 God tests Abraham and promises that through his seed (singular) He would bless all the nations of the earth. This is a specific promise of the coming Messiah (cf. Galatians 3:16-29).*

... *Genesis 25:19-34 Isaac fathers Jacob and Esau. Jacob will be the one through whom the promised seed will come.*

... *Genesis 29:31 - 30:24 Jacob has twelve sons, one of whom is Judah. Judah is the one through whom Christ would be brought into the world. NOTE: The bloodline should have transferred to Ruben... but he lost his birthright by sleeping with Jacob's concubine (Gen 35:22). Simeon & Levi lost their birthright because of their violence (Genesis 34:25-29). Judah, the 4th in line, inherited the birthright, thus it is through him that Christ would come.*

... *Genesis 35:9-12; 23-29 God changes Jacob's name to Israel and reconfirms the land promise and seed promise. Here is a list of the twelve sons of Israel.*

... *Matthew 1:1-17 Traces the descendants of Jesus back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see also 1 Chronicles 1-2).*

Special Attention

Of special interest in the beginning of the Hebrew family are the following items.

- A. God raised up a nation through Abraham by "promise."
- B. God gave circumcision as a sign of the covenant that the Jews had to obey.
- C. God also gave a land promise (Canaan). The nation that would eventually bring Christ into the world had to have a place to grow, prosper, and multiply.

3. Egyptian Bondage

After the Hebrew family had been formed, God needed to grow that family into a mighty nation. It would be through that nation that the Christ would eventually be brought into the world.

The family of Israel would be brought into Egypt by God's providential hand, and grow into a nation.

Going Into Egypt



... *Genesis 37:1-25 Joseph is sold into slavery in Egypt.*

... *Genesis 41:14-43 Joseph's dream and God's providence elevates Joseph to a position of power.*

... *Genesis 42:1-7 Joseph's brothers come to Egypt to buy grain because of the famine in Canaan.*

... *Genesis 45:1-11 Joseph perceives God's providence in placing him in Egypt.*

4. The Exodus

... *Exodus 1:1-12* The tribes of Israel grow into a mighty nation.

... *Exodus 1:22 - 2:10* God prepares Moses to be a deliverer.



... *Exodus 3:1-17* The burning bush and the land promise restated.

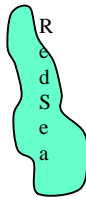


... *Exodus 6:1-10* Let my people go.

... *Exodus 7 - 10* The ten plagues begin to force Pharaoh to let the Jews go.

... *Exodus 11: 1-10* Plague on the firstborn.

... *Exodus 12:1-51* The Passover celebrated and the deliverance of Israel.



... *Exodus 14:17-30* Crossing the Red Sea and the destruction of the Egyptians.

... *Exodus 19 - 20* Receiving the Ten Commandments (the law that would govern the nation of Israel until Christ came). Note: the ten commandment law was given only to Israel, and was never intended for the Gentile world. It's intention was to be a tutor to lead to Christ (Galatians 3:16-26). Once Christ came and died, the purpose for the law ceased and the new covenant of Christ took the place of the Law.



5. The Wilderness Wanderings



God's intention was to lead the nation of Israel out of Egypt and into the promised land (the land of Canaan). The Israelites were commanded to go into the land, drive out the inhabitants of the land, and settle there. However, they were not obedient to the will of God. They disobeyed God and as a result, God punished the entire nation by causing them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

In the initial departure from Egypt there were 603,550 fighting men, not including women, children, and old men. Of that original number, only 2 men were allowed into the promised land, Joshua and Caleb. All the rest of the nation fell in the wilderness due to disobedience.

The book of Numbers is the record of the wilderness wanderings.

- ... *Numbers 13:1-20 God sends men to spy out the riches of the promised land.*
- ... *Numbers 13:26-33 There is an abundant land, but Israel has no faith. They see "Giants in the land."*
- ... *Numbers 14:26-45 God's judgment is pronounced on the nation.*

6. Conquest and Settlement of Canaan

After the 40 years of wilderness wanderings, Moses died while viewing the promised land from Mt. Nebo. Of the original people in the Exodus over the age of twenty, only Joshua and Caleb were still alive. The leadership of the nation is now turned over to Joshua, the son of Nun.

... *Joshua 1:1-9 Joshua is made the leader.*

Under the leadership of Joshua, the people were commanded to take possession of the land. However, they failed to drive all the inhabitants from the land as the Lord commanded. As a result, the inhabitants of the land influenced Israel and polluted their religion. In the end, this will be the downfall of the nation as they go into captivity and are destroyed.



... *Joshua 1:4-7 Land promise.*

... *Joshua 2:24 The inhabitants are given into their hand.*

... *Joshua 6 Jericho falls.*

... *Joshua 7 Defeat at Ai because of Achan's sin.*

... *Joshua 9:6-15 Joshua makes a covenant with the people of the land in violation of the commandment of the Lord (see Exodus 23:30-33; 34:12; Numbers 33:55; Deuteronomy 7:2).*

... *Joshua 13:1,13 The land is fully given by God, but Israel fails to possess the land fully.*

Failure Begins To Occur

... *Joshua 15:63 Failure to drive out Jebusites.*

... *Joshua 16:10 Failure to drive out Canaanites in Gezer.*

... *Joshua 17:12 Failure to possess land because Canaanites dwell in the land.*

... *Joshua 18:3 Encouragement to possess the land.*

... *Joshua 21:45 God fulfilled His part of the deal.*

... *Joshua 23:6-16 Warning of judgment if they intermingle with the surrounding nations.*

... *Joshua 24:31 Israel remains faithful during the lifetime of Joshua and the elders.*

Their reliance upon the God of Israel begins to falter after the death of Joshua.

... *Judges 1:27- 2:10 Collapse.*

7. Period of the Judges



Judges were spiritual and political rulers appointed by God (Judges 2:16-19; 2 Chronicles 19:6)

During the time of the judges, the nation goes through the following cycle:

- A. Nation serves God faithfully
- B. Nation does evil before the Lord
- C. Nation forsakes God and his law
- D. Follow their own way
- E. Sold into slavery and oppression, war and servitude
- F. Cry to God for deliverance
- G. Repentance
- H. Judges are raised up to deliver the people again
- I. Nation serves God faithfully
- J. Cycle repeated over again....

The reason for their constant defeat is that they continue to "do what was right in their own eyes" (Judges 17:6; 21:25).

For Your Information

Religion of the Canaanites

Baal was their principal god; Ashtoreth, Baal's wife, their principal goddess. She was the personification of the reproductive principles in nature, therefore sexual orgies, prostitution, and rituals were an integral part of this worship. Ishtar was her Babylonian name; Astarte her Greek and Roman name. Baalim, the plural of Baal, were images of Baal. Ashtaroth, the plural of Ashtoreth. Ashera was a sacred pole, carved of stone or a tree trunk, representing the goddess. Temples of Baal and Ashteroth were usually together. Priestesses were temple prostitutes, Sodomites were male temple prostitutes. The worship of Baal, Ashteroth, and other Canaanite gods consisted of the most extravagant orgies; their temples and "High places" were the centers of their immoral worship.

Child Sacrifices

An excavation at Gezer, (1904 - 1909), found ruins of a "High Place" dating to 1500 BC. It was an enclosure 150' X 120', surrounded by a wall. Within the walls were 10 stone pillars, 5 to 11 feet high before which the sacrifices were offered.

Under the debris in this "High Place" excavators found jars containing the remains of children who had been sacrificed to Baal after being conceived in rituals.

Another practice (called "foundation sacrifices") was to sacrifice a child and place its body into the walls of the new building to bring good luck to the rest of the family. Prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth were the official murderers of little children as sacrifices.

(Source: Haley's Bible Handbook)

8. Hebrew Monarchy (United Kingdom)

This period of Biblical history lasts 120 years. The people are starting to be influenced by the nations around them and cry for a king. God reluctantly gives them what they ask even though

it is not in accordance with His plan. As a result, the nation will split and become a divided kingdom.

The cry for a king



... *1 Samuel 8:4-9, 20 This was not in God's plan. He set up the judges, but that's not good enough for these people.*

Saul becomes the first king

... *1 Samuel 9:1 - 10:1 Saul becomes the first king and reigns for 40 years (13:1).*

... *1 Samuel 15:1-35 Saul disobeys God and the kingdom is torn from his hand.*

David becomes the successor



... *1 Samuel 16:1-13 David is anointed by Samuel.*

... *Chapter 17-31 deals with the decline of Saul's reign and the increase of David's reign. Saul goes from bad to worse and dies in chapter 31.*

... *David's reign actually begins in 2 Samuel 1 after Saul's death.*

... *David's reign sets the stage for Israel's highest point in their history. After this time, a steady decline of the nation will occur from which they will never totally recover.*

... *Jesus is predicted to sit on David's throne over the house of Israel. Christ is called the "son of David" (Romans 1:4; Matthew 1:1).*

... *David reigns 40 years.*

... *2 Samuel deals with the reign of David*

Solomon becomes the successor

The Monarchs:

- 1. Saul (40 yrs)**
- 2. David (40 yrs)**
- 3. Solomon (40 yrs)**

The people cried for a king, and God allowed them to have one. Because of Solomon's sin, the nation will split.

... *1 Kings 2:1-12 David dies and the throne is occupied by Solomon.*

... *Solomon is known as the wisest man in the Bible (other than Jesus himself). Solomon wrote Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.*

... *1 Kings 6 Solomon builds the first temple.*

... *1 Kings 10 Solomon's wealth was marvelled at by the world, even today there has not been a nation to match the wealth, prestige and splendor of Israel under Solomon's reign.*

... *1 Kings 11:1-13 Solomon turns away from God because of marrying foreign women and engaging in idolatry. Solomon's sin is the reason the nation will split and eventually be destroyed.*

... *This is the result of not driving the nations from the promised land as God instructed Joshua. The fellowship and friendship with the nations polluted the religious convictions of the Israelites and they forsook the Lord.*

9. The Divided Kingdom

Israel up North

- * Ten Tribes**
- * Jereboam Leads**

Judah in South

- * Two Tribes**
- * Rehoboam Leads**

... *1 Kings 12 - 22 Israel's strength is lost when she leaves God and the leaders compromise their principles (see 1 Kings 11:4 -13; 26 - 43).*

... *1 Kings 12:1-19 Solomon's son, Rehoboam, causes the people to rebel to fulfill the word of the Lord (:15).*

... *Ten tribes split off and follow Jereboam and settle in the northern part of Canaan. This group is known as "Israel" from now on.*

... *Two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) settle in the South with Jerusalem as their capital. This group is known as "Judah" from now on. When reading the prophets often you will see them writing to Judah or Israel or both. Now you will be able to distinguish which group is being addressed.*

Kings of Israel			Kings of Judah		
1. Jeroboam I	933-911	Evil	1. Rehoboam	933-916	Bad
2. Nadab	911-910	Evil	2. Abijah	915-913	Bad
3. Baasha	910-887	Evil	3. Aswa	912-872	Good
4. Elia	887-886	Evil			
5. Zimri	886 7 Days	Evil			
6. Omri	886-875	Extra Evil			
7. Ahab	875-854	Worst	4. Jehosphaphat	874-850	Good
8. Ahaziah	855-854	Evil	5. Jehoram	850-843	Bad
9. Joram	854-843	Evil	6. Ahaziah	843	Bad
10. Jehu	843-816	Evil	7. Athaliah (queen)	843-837	Wicked
11. Jehohaz	820-804	Evil	8. Joash	843-803	Good
12. Joash	806-790	Evil	9. Amaziah	803-775	Good
13. Jeroboam II	790-749	Evil	10. Uzziah	787-735	Good
14. Zechariah	748 6 Mo's	Evil	11. Jotham	749-734	Good
15. Shallum	748 1 Mo	Evil			
16. Menahem	748-738	Evil	12. Ahaz	741-726	Wicked
17. Pekahiah	738 -736	Evil			
18. Pekah	748-730	Evil			
19. Hoshea		Evil	13. Hezekiah	726 -697	Good
Assyrian Captivity 722 B.C. From this time onward, Judah is alone.			14. Manasseh	697-642	Evil
			15. Amon	641-640	Wicked
			16. Josiah	639-608	Best
			17. Jehoahaz	608	Bad
			Babylonian Captivity 606 B.C. - Nebakenezer		
			18. Jehoiakim	608-597	Wicked
			19. Jehoiachin	597	Bad
			20. Zedekiah	597-586	Bad

Assyria Destroys Israel In 722 B.C. Judah is now alone.

... 2 Chronicles 11: 5-17 After the nation split, some of the faithful priests and some from every tribe of Israel came to Judah in protest of the idolatry.

... 1 Kings 12:25-33 Israel immediately digresses into idolatry by setting up golden calves in Dan and Bethel.

... Israel goes through a number of kings, all of whom were evil in the sight of the Lord.



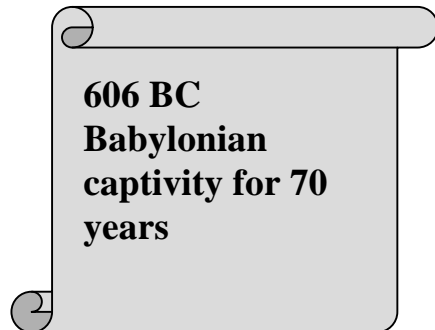
... *In 722 BC Assyria destroys Israel forever. (2 Kings 17:6-23). As a nation they never come into focus again but are swallowed up into the nations.*

Judah Alone

... *Judah is comprised of basically two tribes (Judah and Benjamin, along with the remnant from Israel). They go through a number of kings, both good and bad.*

... *Judah is never totally destroyed as Israel was, because of the tribe of Judah through which Christ was to enter the world.*

10. Babylonian Captivity



... *2 Kings 21:10-15 The nation becomes corrupt and is warned by God that they are about to be destroyed.*

... *2 Kings 24:1-16 Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon lays siege to Jerusalem in 606 BC.*

... *Jeremiah 25:8-14; 29:10-14 God sends Jeremiah the prophet to warn the nation to repent. They do not. God prophecies through Jeremiah that they will be in Babylon 70 years and then return to their land.*

... *Daniel 2:9 Daniel is carried into captivity and understands from Jeremiah's writings that the captivity would last 70 years.*

Taken into captivity in four sieges

Four Sieges of the deportation to Babylon.

1. 606 B.C.
2. 597 B.C.
3. 586 B.C.
4. 581 B.C.

... First siege is 606 BC in the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah (2 Kings 24:1-4). During this siege Daniel the prophet is taken into Babylon and begins to prophesy from Babylon (Daniel 1:1,6). Jeremiah is a contemporary prophet but he remains in Jerusalem and prophesies from there.

... Second siege is 597 BC in the reign of Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:10-16). All the valuables of the temple are taken at this time to fulfill Isaiah 39:1-8 which was written about 100 years earlier in the reign of Hezekiah. Ten thousand mighty men and Jehoiachin are taken in this siege. Jehoiachin is later released (2 Kings 25:27-37).

... Third siege is in 586 BC in the reign of Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:1-2; Jeremiah 39:1-10).

... All the remaining people are taken except for Jeremiah and the poorest of the land. Jeremiah stays in Jerusalem and prophesies from there (Jeremiah 40:1 ff.). The temple of Solomon is burned and destroyed in this siege (2 Kings 25:8-12) and all the articles of the temple are captured or destroyed.

... Fourth Siege: 581 BC, five years after the burning of Jerusalem, 745 more captives are deported (Jeremiah 52:30).

... From this time forward the land is known as Judea.

Fourth seighe was caused by Judah's alliance with Egypt (see Jer 43:4-7)

Special Attention



Babylonian Captivity
606 BC

The beginning of the nation of Israel's fall began with the conquest and settlement of Canaan. The people failed to obey God fully and intermingled with the foreign nations. God was trying to preserve a pure, unadulterated nation so that Christ could be brought into the world unhindered.

The people, however, wanted to be like the nations around them and cried out for a king. The Monarchs reigned, and Solomon's idolatry caused the nation to fall. Two separate nations emerged from the split, Israel to the North and Judah to the South. Israel was destroyed by Assyria in 722 BC and utterly abolished. Judah was deported into Babylonian Captivity in 606 BC in four sieges against Jerusalem.

11. Restoration Back To Canaan (Judea)



Daniel's Dream
of a statue which
foretells the
coming Kingdom
of Christ

Judah spent 70 years in Babylonian Captivity for their disobedience to God as the prophet Jeremiah predicted (Jeremiah 25:11-12). During that time, God did not forget His people and prophets continued to speak for God. It was during this time in history that God gave some of His most vivid portrayals of the coming Christ and His spiritual Kingdom.

The people were oppressed and heard encouraging words from God that they would return to their land and that God would richly bless them and set up His kingdom (Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 2:2-4 etc.).

The theme of the Old Testament continues to be "*Somebody is Coming*" and now the people look forward in hope for their Deliverer.

Three Stage Return To Judea

The deportation occurred in four stages and the restoration took place in three stages.

... *Isaiah 44:28; 45:13 A king named Cyrus was predicted to initiate the rebuilding and restoration. The interesting note here is that Isaiah wrote this approximately 200 years BEFORE Cyrus was even born!*

... *2 Chronicles 36:20-23 Records the general events of the restoration to Judea.*

The Restoration

Zerubabel, TEMPLE
512 BC – 514 BC

... *First Stage (536 BC) This restoration was led by a man named Zerubabel (Ezra 1:1; 3:1-2). During this stage the city was rebuilt and the temple restoration began.*

Ezra's Spiritual
Reform

... *Second Stage (458 BC) Led by Ezra. During this stage there was a religious restoration and a spiritual regeneration. In Nehemiah 8, the Law of Moses is read and the people weep at hearing the word of the Lord.*

Nehemiah Rebuilds
the Wall around
Jerusalem

... *Third Stage (445 BC) Led by Nehemiah. During this stage the wall of the city is rebuilt.*

The books that deal with the restoration back to Jerusalem are primarily Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and 1 & 2 Chronicles.

12. Period of Silence (440 years)

Between Malachi and Matthew, there were no records of inspiration being given. There was a "period of silence" in God speaking to His people through the prophets. Inspiration and prophetic utterance began to emerge once Christ was about to enter the world.

There are several significant historical events that occur between the testaments during this period of silence.

Antiochus Eppiphanes

A man named Antiochus Eppiphanes tried to destroy the Jewish religion during this time period. This caused a violent and bloody revolt, especially when Eppiphanes burned the temple and sacrificed a pig on the altar in the temple of God.

Maccabean Revolt

To oppose Eppiphanes, the Maccabees emerged to lead a revolt to uphold the sanctity of Judaism and overthrow Eppiphanes.

Greek Language is Established

Greek became the common language of commerce and trade. This made international trade easier and gave the people a common base of communication. "Koine" Greek is the language in which the bulk of the New Testament was written.

Jews Lose Hebrew Fluency

When Greek became established, the common Jew soon forgot the Hebrew dialect and lost the ability to read Hebrew. Needless to say, they forgot the Law of Moses as well since they could no longer read Hebrew. The only ones who stayed current in the Hebrew were the Scribes who were the copyist's of the Hebrew manuscripts. They became the "experts" in the law as a result.

The Septuagint Version (LXX)

Because the common Jew could not read Hebrew Eleazar appointed 72 translators to make a Greek translation of the Old Testament. The translation occurred in Alexandria. The Sanhedrin (Jewish Ruling Council) oversaw the making of the

translation. Once approved, the LXX version spread and became accessible to the people.

The Jews could now understand their Bible again and began looking for the coming Messiah as fulfillment of the prophets they were once again able to read. A religious revival occurred.

Targum

The Targum is an Aramaic paraphrase version of the Hebrew Bible which also includes commentary on passages.

Talmud and Mishna

This is a body of Hebrew civil and spiritual laws based on the Torah of Moses. It is a condensation of the thinking of rabbis from 300 BC to AD 500.

Talmudh, "the studying" or "the teaching," was in older times used for the discussions of the Amoraim; now it means the Mishna with the discussions thereupon.

Mishnah, "the oral doctrine and the study of it" (from shanah, "to repeat," "to learn," "to teach"), especially (a) the whole of the oral law which had come into existence up to the end of the 2nd century A.D.; (b) the whole of the teaching of one of the rabbis living during the first two centuries A.D. (tanna', plural tanna'im); (c) a single tenet; (d) a collection of such tenets; (e) above all, the collection made by Rabbi Jehudah (or Judah) ha-Nasi'.

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The Mishna, was the codification of traditional oral laws deduced from the written law of Moses itself.

Importance of the Talmud. - Commonly the Talmud is declared to be the Jewish code of Law. But this is not the case, even for the traditional or "orthodox" Jews. Really the Talmud is the source whence the Jewish Law is to be derived.

Whosoever wants to show what the Jewish Law says about a certain case (point, question) has to compare at first the Shulchan 'arukh with its commentary, then the other codices (Maimonides, Alfasi, etc.) and the Responsa, and finally the Talmudic discussions.

The Traditional Law until the Composition of the Mishna. -

The Law found in the Torah of Moses was the only written law which the Jews possessed after their return from the Babylonian exile. This law was neither complete nor sufficient

for all times. On account of the ever-changing conditions of life new ordinances became necessary. Who made these we do not know. An authority to do this must have existed; but the claim made by many that after the days of Ezra there existed a college of 120 men called the "Great Synagogue" cannot be proved. Entirely untenable also is the claim of the traditionally orthodox Jews, that ever since the days of Moses there had been in existence, side by side with the written Law, also an oral Law, with all necessary explanations and supplements to the written Law.

What was added to the Pentateuchal Torah was for a long time handed down orally, as can be plainly seen from Josephus and Philo. The increase of such material made it necessary to arrange it. An arrangement according to subject-matter can be traced back to the 1st century A.D.; very old, perhaps even older, is also the formal adjustment of this material to the Pentateuchal Law, the form of Exegesis (Midrash).

The Mishna (as also the Talmud) is divided into six "orders" (cedharim) or chief parts, the names of which indicate their chief contents, namely, Zera`im, Agriculture; Moe`dh, Feasts; Nashim, Women; Neziqin, Civil and Criminal Law; Qodhashim, Sacrifices; Teharoth, Unclean Things and Their Purification.

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These commentaries on scripture and legal traditions were written during this time to enlighten the common Jew on the meaning of the Old Testament Law. Prominent Rabbis wrote sections dealing with the practical implementation of the Law in areas like marriage, fasting, purity, holiness, and giving. A severe problem arose because of these commentaries as they developed into binding traditions. What started as practical suggestions and comments soon developed into binding tradition. These traditions soon superceded the Law itself (see Matthew 15:1-14; Mark 7:1-9).

Other Significant Factors:

The Scribes

After the restoration back to Jerusalem, and after the writing of Malachi, revelation from God ceased for a 440 year period. The Jews turned to a study of the written law. Men called

Scribes were professional students and copiers of the law who eventually grew into a leadership position because of their knowledge of the law. They became more and more the real leaders of the people.

The Sadducees

Antiochus Epiphanes, the Seleucid king, led an overthrow of Judaism in BC 175 - 164. He burned a pig on the altar and destroyed the temple and began "Hellenizing" the people (influencing them with Greek thought).

This led to a Jewish rebellion led by the family of the Maccabees (The Maccabean Revolt). This led to a period of Judean independence until the conquest by the Romans in BC 63. These episodes led to a division in Jewish life.

... The Maccabean rulers secured for themselves the high priesthood because of opposition to Hellenism.

... The office of High Priest gradually drifted back toward Hellenism and became purely a political ambition.

... An aristocratic party arose led by John Hyrcanus, a Maccabean ruler (BC 135 - 105). They became known as the Sadducees and the leading priestly families allied themselves with this group.

... Later on, the Sadducees basically had abandoned their religious and spiritual basis and were primarily political (see Acts 23:8).

The Pharisees

The common Jew stood strongly opposed to any foreign influence such as the Hellenists and Romans. A group arose in Judaism representing this thought - The Pharisees (Separated). They were not a political party as such, but were men who gave themselves to the study of the law as religious leaders. They were the "laymen restorationists" of their time.

They later became contemptuous toward the common people and puffed up over their "great" knowledge (see John 7:49). Their prime emphasis was on the exact keeping of the law as interpreted by tradition! (ie. Talmud, Mishna and others).

The Herodians

After the Roman overthrow of Greece (BC 63), a half Jewish adventurer named Herod, the son of the Idumean Antipater, held a vassal kingship under Roman overlordship (BC 37 - BC 4). He was viewed as a tool of the Romans and a Hellenizer and was disliked by the Sadducees and Pharisees alike. Upon Herod's death, his kingdom was divided between his three sons:

... *Archelaus became ethnarch of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea (BC 4 - 6 AD).*

... *Herod Antipas became ethnarch of Galilee and Perea (BC 4 - 39 AD).*

... *Phillip became tetrarch of the region East and Northeast of the Sea of Galilee.*

Archelaus aroused bitter enmity and was deposed by the Emperor Augustus and was succeeded by the Roman Procurator Pontius Pilate (AD 26 - 36).

The Zealots

The Zealots were a political activist party which grew out of the Pharisees. They believed strongly in the doctrine of separation from the people of the land, especially the Romans. They looked at the Romans as the enemies of God and set out to destroy Roman influence of Judaism. Viewing themselves as "Freedom Fighters," they were committed to kill Jews who cooperated with Romans (like the tax collectors).

The Messianic hope was viewed by the Zealots as one who would come to lead a triumphant overthrow of the Roman government. This misconception caused the people to reject Jesus after He refused to be appointed as their king in John 6:14-15, 66.

13. Period of the Messiah



... *The theme of the Bible now changes to "Somebody has come."*

... *This period is covered in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.*

... *The bulk of the Gospel accounts covers the three year ministry of Jesus. The purpose for His coming into the*

world was to fulfill the work that the Father had given Him to do. That work entailed establishing a new covenant, training twelve men to disciple the nations and preach the new covenant, and dying to pay for the sin problem and ratify the new covenant.



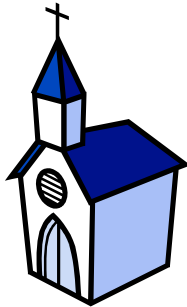
... This period is the center and focal point of all Biblical history. All the Old Testament History points to the coming Messiah and his ministry, and the remainder of the New Testament refer back to the Messiah's ministry and its results.

14. Period of the New Testament Church

This period is covered by Acts through Revelation. This period details many significant events



... Birth, spread, growth, and maturity of the church of Christ. Acts deals with the history of the beginning of the church and its growth throughout the world.



... Instruction for the stabilization & health of the church. The Epistles (letters) of Paul, Peter, James, John, & Jude address themselves to doctrinal teaching for the church as well as relationship issues within the churches. Instruction and teaching are given in order to keep the church true to Her Master and prevent her from falling prey to false teaching and the world's influence.

... The expectation of the second coming of Christ to fulfill God's plan for redeeming man.



Major Divisions Of The Bible

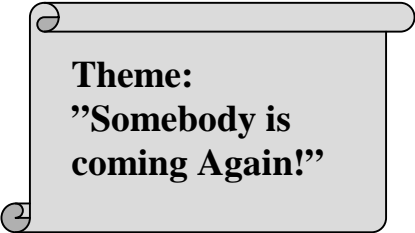
The Bible is divided into two major sections:

- A. The Old Testament
- B. The New Testament

The Old Testament

The OT was given only for a certain time and only to the Jews. (Galatians 3:16-27).

The New Testament



Theme:
"Somebody is
coming Again!"

The NT was initiated by Christ and went into effect upon the death of Jesus on the cross (Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 9:15-17; 8:6-13).

Jesus lived under the Old Testament jurisdiction, but upon his death the Old Testament was set aside forever and the New Testament went into force.

Divisions of the Old Testament (39 books)

The Old Testament is a library of 39 separate books. The books are arranged and organized into sections. The Jews had three sections into which they divided the Old Testament while we divide it into five sections.

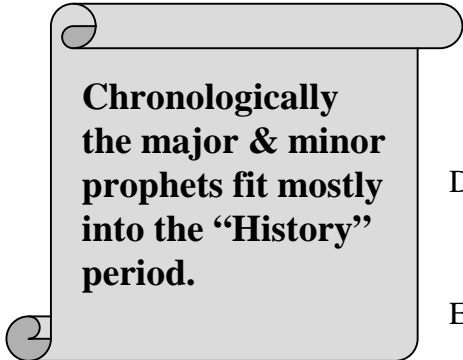
Jewish Divisions (Luke 24:44)

- A. The Law of Moses (Torah). These are the first five books in the Old Testament.
- B. The Prophets (historical books and the prophet's writings).
- C. The Psalms (wisdom literature and poetry: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon).

Modern Divisions

Our Old Testament Bible is divided into five major sections. 5,12,5,5,12. (This is the number of books in each section and an easy way to remember the books).

- A. The Law of Moses (first five books).



**Chronologically
the major & minor
prophets fit mostly
into the “History”
period.**

- B. History 12 books. (Joshua through Esther) Covers the history of the Jewish nation from the wilderness wanderings to the return from Babylon.
- C. Poetry 5 books. (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon). Includes the wisdom literature of Solomon and David and a collection by many other writers concerning the purpose of life, the greatness of the glory of God, and inspirational devotional material.
- D. Major Prophets 5 books. (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentation, Ezekiel, Daniel). The Major prophets are called "Major" simply because the content is bigger.
- E. Minor Prophets 12 books. (Hosea to Malachi) The prophets all deal with God's judgment of his disobedient people "in time".

Divisions of the New Testament (27 Books)

The New Testament is divided into four sections:

- A. The Gospels (biographical books about the Life of Christ).
- B. History: The book of Acts is a history of the establishment and spread of the Gospel message throughout the then known world. This covers about 30 years of church history.
- C. Letters (also epistles). Letters written to individuals and churches to correct problems and give instruction on living the Christian life.
- D. Prophecy: The Revelation. Revelation primarily deals with the fall of the Roman Empire and the immediate persecution that the seven churches of Asia would face. It prophesies of the ultimate outcome of the overcomers who will be victorious if they remain faithful to Jesus. The last two chapters of Revelation deal with the final judgment scene.

Introduction To Each Book In The Bible

The Law Of Moses

1. Genesis

Author: Moses

Date: Approximately 1440 - 1400 BC

"The Book Of Beginnings". This book lists the beginning of several significant items.

- A. Time (1:1)
- B. Universe and Matter (1:1)
- C. Mankind (1:26-27)
- D. Marriage (2:24)
- E. Human sin (3:6)
- F. Redemption's plan (3:15)
- G. Physical and spiritual death (3:22; 4:8)
- H. Nations (10)
- I. Human government (10:8-10)
- J. Different languages (11:7)
- K. The chosen Hebrew Family (12:1ff.)

Genesis introduces our origin and how we got to where we are socially and spiritually and demonstrates the need for God's redemptive work. Man was separated from the tree of life and death entered the world. In His infinite wisdom and purpose, God chose Abraham and raised up a nation through which the Messiah and the seed promise would come.

2. Exodus

This book signifies the "departure" or exit. It gives the account of the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, the event that marks the beginning of their national career. This event is referred to frequently throughout their history. They went into Egypt as the family of Jacob and came out as the nation of Israel (Exodus 1:1-7; 12:40ff; Numbers 1; Deuteronomy 26:5-10).

It should be remembered that from Jacob's migration into Egypt until the Exodus lies a 430 - year time span.

In Exodus we are introduced to Moses, the great deliverer and can see God's providence in raising up leaders to accomplish His will. In Exodus we also have the most talked about moral law known to man: The Ten Commandments.

Typology in Exodus

- A. Egyptian bondage is typical of sin (1:7-14)
 - B. Moses is a type of Christ (deliverer) (Exodus 3:7,8a; 10; cf Deuteronomy 18:15)
 - C. Passover Lamb and Christ's crucifixion (1 Corinthians 5:7)
 - D. Sabbath a type of heaven (Hebrews 4:1-10)
 - E. Crossing the red sea like baptism (Exodus 14:21,22,29; 1 Corinthians 10:2)
 - F. Smitten rock is typical of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4)
 - G. Manna is a type of Christ (John 6:31ff; Exodus 16:4)
 - H. Tabernacle a type of our salvation (Hebrews 9:24; 8:17-20)
-

3. Leviticus

Leviticus is a continuation of the events in Exodus. It gives the law from the time the tabernacle was completed. It has been called the "book of priests" (Peshitta) and the "priest law" (Mishna).

The book deals with the regulations concerning the Levitical priesthood and the offering of sacrifices. It introduces us to the system of atonement and sacrifice. It also introduces the idea of ceremonial purification and feast days. The most important feast day dealt with is "The Day Of Atonement" (16:1-34). In this annual ceremony, the High Priest made atonement for his sins and the sins of the whole people by entering into the "Most Holy Place" behind the veil in the tabernacle. Jesus, as our High Priest, did this for us one time for all time (Hebrews 9:11-12). As God's chosen nation that will eventually bring about the Messiah, Israel had to stay separated from the nations. The Book of Leviticus is given to stress the importance of separation from the world's influences in order to be useful by God for His divine purpose (see also 2 Corinthians 6:16-17).

4. Numbers

The name "Numbers" is taken from the double meaning in the LXX and the Latin Vulgate indicating "The Two Censuses" or numberings of the Israelites.

Numbers is a book primarily dealing with the Wilderness Wanderings. The book covers the period shortly after Sinai, the unbelief at Kadesh - barnea, and the reason for the wandering (chapter 14). It then focuses on the end of the forty year period primarily at Moab. There were two "numberings" listed in the book.

- A. The First Numbering (1:46). This census counted the male members 20 years and older who could go to war for the nation. Upon leaving Egypt, the number of these males was 603,550, not including the Levites.
- B. The Second Numbering (26:51). This census counted the male members 20 years and older who had now grown to become a new generation. Of the original 603,550 who left Egypt, only two (Joshua and Caleb) were allowed to enter the promised land. All the rest fell in the wilderness because of unbelief (see Hebrews 3:7 - 4:2). The new census showed 601,730 males.

5. Deuteronomy

The title of this book in the LXX means "Second Law". It is so named because it contains most of what is contained in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. This repetition of the law was necessary because a new generation grew up in the wilderness who had not heard the Law at Sinai.

The time covered in this book is the last few weeks of the period of the Wilderness Wanderings. The scene is laid in the Plain of Moab where the Israelites were in their last encampment before going into the promised land. Moses, their great leader and lawgiver, makes use of these final days to deliver his final address to the children of Israel. Moses, after delivering his address, commissions Joshua as the anointed leader of God, and then ascends Mt. Nebo where, viewing the promised land, he dies.

Deuteronomy reviews the nation's history and demonstrates God's purpose for them. It prepares them to enter the land that God promised them. The book divides itself into three main discourses:

- A. First Discourse (1:1 - 4:43) An Historical Sermon

B. Second Address (4:44 - 26:19) Review of Law

C. Third Address (27:1 - 30:20) Prophetic Discourse

The key verse in Deuteronomy is 18:15 looking forward to the coming Messiah as the New Deliverer yet to come.

History

6. Joshua

Joshua is the first of twelve historical books in the OT. It derives its name from the person around whom the book centers, Joshua the son of Nun. After the death of Moses, Joshua assumes the leadership of the nation and leads them into the promised land. This book deals with the conquest and settlement of Canaan.

OUTLINE:

A. Preparation for conquest (ch 1-5)

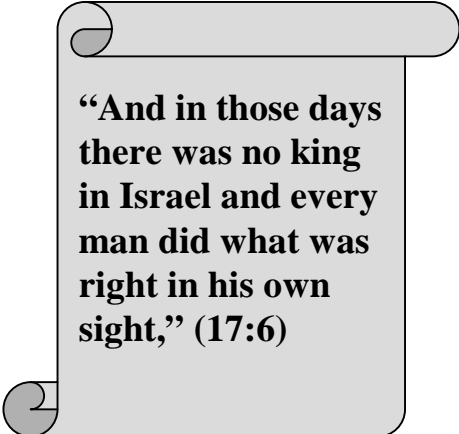
B. Land Taken By God and Israel (6-12)

C. Land Divided Among the Tribes (13-22)

D. Final Events in Joshua's life (23-24)

Joshua called the people to great obedience by example and they said they would follow (24:13-22). Soon after his death, however, they fell into idolatry and intermingled with the inhabitants of the land.

7. Judges



“And in those days there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own sight,” (17:6)

After the death of Joshua, the people were governed by judges. Judges were military, political and spiritual leaders whom God raised up to deliver the people when they fell into sin. This book deals with the administration of these judges over a 350-year period.

The nation goes through a cycle of disobedience and restoration in this period that will eventually cause their demise (2:10-19). The reason for their problem is found in Judges 17:6; 21:25. The nation did not listen to the voice of Moses or Joshua when they were told to purge the land of its inhabitants. This book shows the influence of evil upon God's people (Joshua 10:40; 11:15-20; 13:13; 15:63; 16:10; Judges 1:22-36; 2:1-3).

8. Ruth

Ruth occurs during the period of the judges (1:1). Ruth was a young Moabite woman. The book deals with the relationship between Ruth and an older Jewish woman named Naomi (1:22ff). This book is one of the greatest love stories ever told. A famine in the land of Canaan brings a young Moabite woman (Ruth) together with Naomi. The results of their relationship will be the marriage of Ruth to a man named Boaz. This is now the second Gentile woman in the lineage of the Messiah. There are only five women mentioned in the genealogy of Christ (Tamar, Rahab, Bethsheba, Ruth, and Mary). Of those five, Rahab and Ruth are Gentiles.

The purpose of the book may be to legitimize the existence of a Moabite woman in the politically important genealogy of David (cf. 4:17-22).

This book is remembered primarily for the section dealing with the discourse between Naomi and Ruth showing Ruth's loyalty and love toward Naomi and her people (1:16-17).

9. 1 Samuel

The book centers around three characters: Samuel the prophet, Saul the first Monarch, and David. The book records the change in government from the judges to the Hebrew Monarchy (8:1-9).

1 Samuel portrays God as the rejected King over Israel and shows the unravelling of a nation from within because they forsook the God of heaven.

Insights are given about the life of Saul and David and many lessons can be learned from a close study of them.

10. 2 Samuel

This book could properly be called, "The Life and Times of King David." David was chosen by God to succeed Saul because Saul had disobeyed God in 1 Samuel 15. David stands midway between Abraham and Christ - a thousand years from the beginning of the chosen race and a thousand years from the Messiah. Jesus is called the Son of David and Jesus was predicted to sit on the throne of David (cf Acts 2:25 -36).

11. 1 Kings

Theme: "Israel's Golden Age - its coronation and corrosion."
Historically, the book begins with the death of King David and his son Solomon become king. Solomon reaps the reward of David's military success. He inherits peace and security and so launches Israel's "Golden Age" their most prosperous time in history. Solomon, however, married 700 women and had 300 concubines. These foreign women led his heart away after other gods.

Following Solomon's death, the nation splits as God had predicted (ch. 11-12). This split now forms two separate nations, Israel to the north, and Judah to the south. Both nations now enter a period of decline.

12. 2 Kings

Theme: "Israel and Judah's spiral to destruction"
II Kings continues the historical narrative began in I Kings. It chronicles the succession of the kings in both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Both nations continue their moral and political decline. They are oppressed by their enemies, particularly Aram (Syria). The narrative witnesses the rise of Assyrian power which crushes Israel's capital, Samaria, in BC 722 (ch. 17).

The Babylonians succeed the Assyrians as the dominant power in that region. Babylon will destroy Judah in BC 606 and capture the capital of Jerusalem (25).

Both 1 & 2 Kings form one narrative beginning with the succession of Solomon, his moral decline being the reason for the nation's destruction, and the ultimate destruction of Israel and captivity of Judah by Babylon.

13. 1 Chronicles

Chronicles parallels 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings. The Chronicles were written *after* the Babylonian captivity, probably by Ezra. When the people were returning from exile, they were reminded of their past, and what caused the exile in the first place so they would be able to avoid repeating their costly mistake.

The chief purpose for 1 Chronicles is to give the Jews a family record to remind them of God's chosen king and their place in the restored Jerusalem.

- ... *Provides a correct genealogy*
- ... *Gives rank and order of priests and Levites to resume their official activities when captivity has ended*
- ... *Reviews distribution of the land so the families would come into possession of the proper land*
- ... *Highlights the reign of David as God's chosen king around whom the welfare of the nation revolves.*

14. 2 Chronicles

Begins the post exile review with Solomon up to the captivity. The nation is split by unrest and warfare, and they lose their national identity when they are totally destroyed. The kings recorded in 2 Chronicles, are evaluated on the basis of their response to God, especially as to worship to God and obedience to the Law. Those who introduce reforms are given top billing and the nature of their reforms is described in some detail.

15. Ezra

Theme: beginning again by building the second temple. There are 70 years between the fall of Jerusalem recorded in 2 Kings and the opening announcement in Ezra. The book deals with the first two returns of the nation of Israel back to Jerusalem. The book divides itself into two historical sections:

- A. Chapters 1-6: From Cyrus's decree that Israel return home under Zerubabel in 536 BC to the completion of the Temple in 515 BC (the 6th year of king Darius).
- B. Chapters 7-10: Artaxerxes gives Ezra permission to conduct a second expedition to Jerusalem (458 BC forward).

Ezra's purpose in coming to Jerusalem, as recorded in the book, was to bring religious reform among the Jews by reestablishing Mosaic traditions.

NOTE: One should read Esther between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra.

16. Nehemiah

Theme: The wall of Jerusalem is rebuilt.

This book deals with events immediately after the Jews return from Babylonian captivity and restoration back to Jerusalem. While Ezra and Zerubabel deal with the rebuilding of the spiritual well-being of the nation, Nehemiah deals with the refortification of the city through the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem. A city without walls was unfortified, and open to attack from its enemies.

This is one of the finest books on spiritual leadership and mobilization of a task force to accomplish a job.

OUTLINE:

- A. Nehemiah's Journey to Jerusalem (ch. 1-2)
- B. The Gates Repaired (ch. 3)
- C. The Wall Rebuilt (ch. 4-6)
- D. Public Reading of the Book of Law (ch. 7-8)
- E. Dedication of the Wall (ch. 9-12)
- F. Close of Nehemiah's Work (ch. 13)

17. Esther

Theme: The Jews deliverance from extermination by the providence of God.

The book of Esther probably falls chronologically between the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubabel and Ezra and the rebuilding of the wall by Nehemiah.

More than a generation had passed since Cyrus defeated the Babylonians and allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Still, many Jews remained spread throughout the known world, making their homes with their captors. The book of Esther deals with some of these expatriates.

The story revolves around ten banquets (1:3-4; 1:5-8; 1:9; 2:18; 3:15; 5:1-8; 7:1-10; 8:17; 9:17; 9:18-32).

This book doesn't mention God, but clearly shows His providential hand in protecting His people. In this book we see the Feast of Purim celebrated (the feast commemorating the deliverance of the Jews from the evil hand of Haman). See 9:18-32.

Poetry

18. Job

The date and author of Job are uncertain. Most authors place it anywhere from before the books of Moses to the restoration back to Canaan by Ezra.

It has been accepted as canonical from the time of the early Hebrew Canon.

The purpose of this book is to show why the righteous suffer. Suffering is sometimes God's demonstration of His faith in us. Job is a wealthy, leading citizen, reputed to be wise. When he loses herds, house, his family, and is struck down with a painful illness, we see an example of the suffering which afflicts so many. Satan is the accuser of the righteous, and is allowed to test Job.

When trying to understand why good people suffer, Job is the book to read.

19. Psalms

Psalms is a collection of 150 songs and praises written by David, Asaph, and possibly Moses. Psalms covers a period of over 1,000 years. In Psalms we see David, the sweet singer of Israel, on his knees pouring out his heart to God in repentance, thanksgiving, and faith. In his petitions, he asks God for assurance, strength, deliverance, and instruction. We see in Psalms the heart of "David, the man after God's own heart."

... *Psalms is the book most quoted in the New Testament.*

... *Jesus quoted Psalms often. Especially remembered is his quoting Psalm 22 while on the cross.*

... *No other book in the Bible more truly magnifies God, His word and magnificent glory.*

Psalms has been credited with this statement: "The book that has such scriptural range, that so distinguishes the glory and majesty of the Bible, that has plumbed the depths of the human soul and carries us to the bosom of the Father can never be outgrown or become obsolete."

20. Proverbs

A Book of wisdom. Proverbs is a list of proverbial sayings written in Hebrew prose called *Hebrew parallelism*. In parallelism, a statement made is again repeated in a different or

explanatory way. In authentic parallelism, the second part usually begins with the word "but", however this is not always the case in Proverbs.

In 1 Kings 4:32 we are told that Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs. Proverbs reflects the historical background of the age in which Solomon lived, and it speaks to the needs of the people. This was a time when great wealth and luxury in a privileged society brought the temptations to ignore the simple virtues that were the foundation stones upon which the fathers of the nation had built its growth and prosperity.

The Purpose of the book of Proverbs is given in 1:1-6. A chapter a day in Proverbs should be a steady part of every Christian's spiritual diet.

21. Ecclesiastes

This book is attested to the authorship of Solomon (1:12). It answers the soul searching questions:

... *What am I doing here in this life "Under the Sun?"*

... *What is man's purpose on earth (Under the Sun)?*

... *What really makes men happy(Under the Sun)?*

In his quest for the answers to these questions, Solomon experiments with every imaginable area of attempted satisfaction and excess. He finally concludes in the book that all is vanity and striving after the wind. Everything is meaningless! The only thing in life that makes any sense or brings any lasting satisfaction, is "To fear God and keep His commandments" (12:12-13).

22. Song of Solomon

This book is written by Solomon and is credited with the title "Song of Songs." The book deals with the subject of the beauty of love. Different authors disagree as to the exact nature of the dialogue and its intent.

Is it merely the beauty of married love taken in its literal sense, or is it to be projected prophetically to the mutual love of Christ, the bridegroom and His church, the bride? There is no difference of opinion, however, as to the unusual grandeur and beauty of this book of poetry.

Major Prophets

23. Isaiah

Isaiah's prophet ministry took place during the reign of four kings in Judah: Ussiah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Isaiah is the prophet primarily for the nation of Judah. Isaiah preached during a time of serious moral and spiritual degradation that would eventually end in Babylonian exile.

His message was from the Lord and shows special emphasis in exposing the emptiness of religious formality and the hypocrisy in offering outward sacrifices to God while inwardly rebelling. Judgment had been perverted among God's people and they could not even recognize right and wrong (cf. Isaiah 5:20).

Isaiah prophecies several "woes" upon the nation for their evil which is contrasted with the holiness of Jehovah (6:3). Isaiah also is very Messianic in his teaching and foresees the Messianic kingdom and the suffering Messiah in the background as the coming deliverer (Isaiah 2:2-4; 9:6ff; 7:14; cf. ch 53).

24. Jeremiah (the weeping prophet)

Theme: "God must punish sin"

After a short religious reform begun by Hezekiah and Isaiah, Judah digressed seriously into an "orgy of idolatry." Another reform is begun by king Josiah, but after his death, the nation will fall. Jeremiah begins his preaching ministry during the last 40 years of Judah's history. His mission was to testify to a stubborn people led astray by false prophets and to witness to their coming doom (1:4-19). He rebukes the nation for their false and empty worship (Jeremiah 7:4; 8ff; 21-24), and their hardness of heart toward their own sin (6:15; 8:12).

In 606 BC when Jerusalem fell, Jeremiah stayed in Jerusalem where he writes his later book (Lamentations). Jeremiah had a very distasteful message to preach and even tried to stop from preaching that message but could not (20:7-9).

He preached of the coming destruction (21:3ff; 25:8-11), and shows there is nothing they can do to prevent their punishment. Jeremiah is used by God to show the future restoration of men back to God through the coming Christ who would be "The branch of David" (23:1-8). He foresees the new covenant (31:31-40); and the Branch of Righteousness (33:14-26).

OUTLINE:

A. 1:1-19 Call of Jeremiah

- B. 3:6 - 4:4 Unfaithful Israel
- C. 7:1 - 29 Worthless Religion
- D. 8:4 - 9:1 Fountain of Tears
- E. 12:1 - 17 Jeremiah's Complaint
- F. 18:1 - 19:15 Potter and Clay
- G. 20:1 - 18 Pashur and Jeremiah
- H. 26:1 - 24 Jeremiah Threatened
- I. 30:1 - 24 Restoration of Israel
- J. 33:1 - 26 Promise of Renewal
- K. 37:1 - 21 Jeremiah in Prison
- L. 44:1-30 Jeremiah's Last Word
- M..52:1-30 Fall of Jerusalem

25. Lamentations

Theme: "Grief over Judah's fall and Jerusalem's destruction"
Jeremiah was an eye-witness to the fall of Jerusalem and Judah's forced exile into Babylon. Lamentations is a collection of funeral hymns written about the destruction and devastation of Jerusalem and the nation of Judah. It is used by Jews wailing at the Western Wall even to this day. It is actually a book where God weeps through His prophet to show His great sorrow for the nation's fall and the outcome of their ungodliness.

Lamentations is an acrostic poem in which the verses of each chapter each begin with the successive 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

What was divinely predicted in the earlier prophets has now come to its horrible fulfillment as the prophet views the burned ruins of the city of God (1:1-7).

In all the devastation, the prophet sees God's righteous judgment and justice. Jeremiah then sees restoration in the future. The prophet assures the people that they will return to Jerusalem after the entire 70 years are completed and the Temple will be rebuilt.

OUTLINE

- A. 1:1-22 Jerusalem: Unconsoled and Destroyed

- B. 2:1-22 The Desolate Daughter of Zion
- C. 3:1-66 Crushed, but not Consumed
- D. 4:1-22 The Precious Has Become Profane
- E. 5:1-22 Lord, Remember and Restore

26 Ezekiel

Theme: "God acts in the events of human history so men will come to know Him"

After Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 BC, only the Southern kingdom of Judah was left. Assyria as a nation was replaced as a world power by Babylon. Judah was a vassal state of Babylon, but rebelled, hoping for Egypt's support. Egypt proved unreliable and Judah was subdued by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 605 BC and again in 598 - 597 BC. He took thousands of Jews captive each time. Among those in the second wave of exiles was Ezekiel.

Ezekiel is a book of "unearthly visions" poems, parables and theater. Through Ezekiel's visions God allows the people to suffer. His message of imminent doom turns to ultimate hope in the end. While the people of God will suffer captivity because of their wickedness, God will ultimately deliver them for His own glory. He will use the nations to accomplish his will.

OUTLINE:

- A. 1:1-28 Glory of the Lord
- B. 2:1 - 3:15 Ezekiel's Call
- C. 4:1 - 5:17 Siege of Jerusalem
- D. 8:1 - 18 Idolatry in the Temple
- E. 16:1 - 63 Unfaithful Jerusalem
- F. 18:1-32 Sin and Death
- G. 22:1 - 31 Jerusalem's Sins
- H. 25:1 - 17 Nations in Prophecy
- I. 34:1-31 Shepherds and Sheep
- J. 36:1-28 Mountains of Israel
- K. 37:1-14 The Dry Bones
- L. 40:1-43:27 The New Temple

27. Daniel

Theme: "God is Sovereign over the kingdom's of men" (2:21; 5:21) and "God is able to deliver you" (4:17).

Daniel was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel rose quickly to prominence after interpreting the king's dream (ch. 2).

The book demonstrates that God is in control of the affairs of men and their kingdoms regardless of apparent circumstances that may seem otherwise. Daniel beckons the people to awaken and prepare for the unexpected intervention of God. God would establish His kingdom during the days of the kings of the fourth world power, Rome, (cf. Daniel 2:44), and His kingdom would last forever as contrasted with the temporal nature of the kingdoms of men. Though the nation was in peril and slavery, God would deliver them.

OUTLINE:

A. 1:1-21 Daniel Uncompromised

B. 2:24 - 49 Dream Interpreted

C. 3:1-30 God's Deliverance from Fire

D. 5:1-30 Handwriting on the Wall

E. 6:1-28 God's Deliverance from Lions

F. 7:1-14 Vision of Four Beasts

G. 8:1-27 Ram and a Goat

H. 9:1-19 Daniel's Prayer

I. 10:1-11:1 Heavenly Visitor

J. 11:2 - 35 History Prophesied

K. 12:1-13 Victory Promised

Minor Prophets

28. Hosea

Theme: "God's Faithful Love in spite of His people's unfaithfulness"

Hosea was a prophet to the Northern nation Israel. His great lover and wife was named Gomer. She was a prostitute. Her

prostitution is symbolic of Israel's sin in leaving God and "prostituting" themselves with the false gods of the nations. Even though Gomer was a harlot, Hosea kept taking her back because of his great love for her. Gomer, however, would not respond to this great love.

Finally, when she is old and being sold into slavery after being defiled and corrupted, Hosea still wants to take her back.

29 Joel

Theme: "The Day Of The Lord"

Written to Judah, Joel portrays the destructive power of the Lord's vengeance by a plague of locusts which devour everything in their path. Even so, God's wrath and judgment upon His people will be totally destructive and will devour them completely. There will be no escape (1:15). Joel foresees a restoration of the faithful of God after judgment (3:1). This would occur "in the last days" (2:28-32), and was fulfilled in Acts 2:16-21.

30. Amos

Theme: God's judgment on Israel and Injustice

Date: Amos ministered during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah (783 - 742 BC) and Jeroboam II of Israel (786 - 746 BC).

By 800 BC both the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern Kingdom (Judah) had reached new political and military heights. Peace reigned and business was booming. Religion was on the rise. However, the exterior calm disguised the inner disease of idolatry, extravagance, indulgence, and a corrupt judicial system. Amos calls for social and religious justice as the foundation for true piety (5:24).

Amos is a simple Judean farmer and is burdened with the materialistic nation of Israel (7:14-15). His prayers avert the total destruction of Israel (7:1-6), still his message is unpopular.

In Amos, God roars like a lion (1:2). The book is constantly shadowed with judgment as the Lord reacts to the cruel social events and polluted religion in the land (2:4-5; 2:6-16; 5:11-15).

Amos challenges us to examine ourselves and our society and to confront injustice wherever we find it. Complacency is abhorrent to the Lord (6:1-7).

Key phrase: "This is what the Lord says" (1:3,6,9,11,13; 2:4,6; 3:11,12,13; 5:3,4,16 etc).

The book finishes with expectation of future restoration and promise (9:11-15).

OUTLINE:

- A. 2:6-16 Judgment on Israel
- B. 3:1-15 Witness Against Israel
- C. 4:1-13 Cows of Bashan
- D. 5:18-27 Justice Like a River
- E. 6:8-14 Perversion of Justice
- F. 7:10-17 Amos Refutes Amaziah
- G. 8:1-14 Fruit Basket Upset
- H. 9:11-15 Good News, Finally!

31. Obadiah

Theme: "God's judgment on Edom and restoration of Israel"
The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, the brothers of Israel. The Edomites apparently took advantage of the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon in 586 BC. They plundered the land and pillaged the home of survivors. Obadiah speaks God's judgment on Edom for the way they took advantage of "brother Jacob" in his moment of weakness.

Edom was known for sitting smugly in her fortified cities atop rocky cliffs, and Obadiah prophesies against her for relying on this for her sense of security (1:3-4). In the 5th century the Edomites were driven out of their own land by the Nabateans.

History of Israel and Edom:

(Genesis 27:41-45; 32:1-21; 33:36; Exodus 15:15; Numbers 20:14-21; Deuteronomy 2:1-6; 23:7; 1 Samuel; 21; 2 Samuel 8:13-14; 2 Kings 8:20-22; 14:7; Psalms 52; 83; Ezekiel 35; Joel 3:18-19; Amos 1:11-12; 9:12).

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament.

32. Jonah

Theme "God's love for the Gentiles, even Nineveh"

The date of writing is before Nineveh's destruction (612 BC) and Samaria's fall (722 BC).

Historically, Israel had just restored her northern borders under Jeroboam (793 - 753 BC). As Jonah prophesied (2 Kings 14:25), Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, a ruthless empire which threatened tiny Israel and eventually conquered it in 722 BC. Nineveh was 500 miles east of Joppa in what is now Iraq.

Jonah the prophet was sent to preach to Nineveh and call them to repentance, but he boarded a ship heading 2000 miles west, revealing how far and fast Jonah wanted to get away from the people he dreaded (1:1-3). He knew that if he preached to them they would repent and escape God's judgment (3:1-2; 10; 4:1-3).

Jonah shows that God is concerned about the affairs of all men, even those who disbelieve in him (4:11).

Nineveh's revival was short - lived, however. Nahum the prophet tells of her coming destruction for being a wicked people which ultimately ended in her fall in 612 BC. She was never heard from again. God gave this evil nation a chance to repent, but eventually uses their wickedness to punish His nation Israel and then destroys them.

OUTLINE:

A. 1:1-17 On the boat: Jonah runs away from God

B. 2:1-10 In the fish: Jonah runs back to God

C. 3:1-10 At Nineveh: Jonah runs with God

D. 4:1-11 Under cover: Jonah runs behind God

Jonah's message finds later parallels in the messages of Peter (Acts 10:1-11:18) and Paul (Romans 9-11) and Jesus (Matthew 12:38-41).

33. Micah

Theme: "Judgment and restoration of Judah"

During the preaching ministry of Micah, the northern nation of Israel was being punished by the Assyrian invaders (1:1; see 2 Kings 15:32 - 20:21). Micah could see the same activities of idolatry, Baal worship, child sacrifice, and sorcery creeping into Judah and Jerusalem. As in the northern kingdom, this led to an increasing gap between the rich and the poor. The poor were oppressed with no recourse to the courts because of corrupt judges, so Micah champions their cause.

Religion flourished, but had little depth or reality. Micah draws a sharp contrast between this empty religion and true faith which involves justice, mercy, and walking with God (6:8).

Because of Judah's rebellion, judgment is inevitable. However, this judgment will be followed by restoration.

The characteristic of Micah's writing is interesting. One moment he is talking about the promised Messiah; in the next

fragment of verses he may focus on the imminent invasion of Assyria. It's rapid shift can be confusing if not recognized.

OUTLINE:

- A. 1:1-16 Judgment and shame
- B. 2:1-13 False prophets
- C. 3:1-12 True prophets
- D. 4:6-13 God's future reign
- E. 5:1-5a God's future ruler
- F. 6:1-8 God's accusation
- G. 7:14-20 Israel's restoration

34 Nahum

Theme: "Judgment on Nineveh"

About 700 BC the Assyrian king Sennacherib made Nineveh, which was the greatest city of its day, the capital of his empire. One hundred twenty five years earlier, Jonah had announced Nineveh's doom, but the people repented and were given a "stay of execution". However, they quickly returned to their evil ways.

Within a few years of Nahum's preaching, Nineveh fell so hard that it never rose again. Its site was obliterated and was only rediscovered some 2,500 years later! The book is a powerful indictment of a nation that seeks glory by aggression and oppression. The God of Israel hates violence and pride and "will not leave the guilty unpunished" (1:3).

OUTLINE:

- A. 1:1-15 Proclaiming God's anger against Nineveh
- B. 2:1-13 Predicting the fall of Nineveh
- C. 3:1-19 Portraying the woe of Nineveh

35. Habakkuk

Theme: "Faith triumphs over doubt." Why does God seem inactive in the face of evil and injustice?

Habakkuk is a contemporary of Jeremiah and Nahum and wrote during the latter part of the 7th century BC (610 - 605 BC).

The northern kingdom (Israel) had fallen to Assyria in 722BC and now the rising Chaldean Empire was on the horizon. In Habakkuk's day, the rulers of the southern kingdom (Judah)

were known to "do evil in the eyes of the Lord" (2 Kings 23:31-24:7). As an agent of judgment in God's hand, the Chaldeans invaded Judah in 605 BC. The king of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar) made the Judean king, Jehoiakim, his vassal. Habakkuk is unusual in that it contains no prophecy directed to Israel. Instead, it is a dialogue between the prophet and God. Habakkuk's complaint and petition are followed by the divine perspective on the problem. Habakkuk uses colorful images to convey his message which seems to be intended to be a song accompanied on the stringed instrument (3:19).

Habakkuk speaks for himself and on behalf of his people directly and only to God. He is in awe of the sovereign Lord God. Like Job, he receives no answer except that God is God! **God is holy, does care and will act as he sees fit, but only in his time.**

Habakkuk 2:4 is quoted by several New Testament authors (Romans 2:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38).

OUTLINE:

- A. 1:1-4 Habakkuk's Complaint: Do Something God!
- B. 1:5-11 God Answers: Babylon is My Instrument.
- C. 1:12 - 2:1 Habakkuk's Complaint: That's Not Fair!
- D. 2:2-20 God Answers: True Faith, Not Idolatry Will Be Rewarded! The Lord is Holy!
- E. 3:1-19 Habakkuk Prays: I Will Stand In Awe Before The Sovereign Lord And His Judgments.

36. Zephaniah

Theme: "The Coming Day Of The Lord"

Zephaniah was a great-great grandson of Hezekiah, the king of Judah from 715 - 686 BC (see 1:1). He prophesied during the reign of Josiah (640 - 609 BC). His preaching as recorded here may have contributed to Josiah's reforms, which took place in 621 BC. His message is two-fold:

1. Gloom and Doom for Judah and its neighbors (1:1-3:8).
2. The Lord's purging and purifying of a faithful remnant (3:9-20).

The historical situation in which Zephaniah preached is the same pervasive decadence that triggered King Josiah's reform movement (2 Chronicles 34-35). Josiah was spurred on by the evils of King Manasseh and King Amon, by the rediscovery of The Law Of Moses, and by hearing Jeremiah's early preaching, and quite possibly by hearing Zephaniah's preaching as well.

The ultimate fulfillment of Zephaniah's prophecies was the destruction of Judah which came at the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 612 BC.

Looking through the eyes of Zephaniah we see heavy gloom as he foresaw a world-wide catastrophe: the fall of Jerusalem. He sees the coming day of God's wrath in chapter 1. Chapter 2 contains an urgent call to repentance for the surviving remnant and judgment upon the neighboring heathen nations. The book concludes with a call to repentance, and looks beyond judgment to a time of restoration as he presents a beautiful picture of a God who delights in His people (3:14-20).

OUTLINE:

A. 1:1 - 2:3 The Day of the Lord Announced

B. 2:4 - 15 The Day of the Lord Implemented

C. 3:1-20 The Redemption of the Lord Promised

37. Haggai

Theme: "Rebuild My House, says the Lord!"

Haggai is quite specific as to the time of his messages in the year 520 BC:

August 29 (1:1)

September 15 (1:15)

October 17 (2:1)

December 18 (2:10, 20)

The book is set in the context of the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity and the subsequent rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. It was through the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah that the rebuilding of the temple began (Ezra 5:1-2). The problem, it seems, was not just with the neighboring Samaritans. The problem had to do with the lethargy of the people. Haggai's aim was to get the people moving on the project. The temple was completed and dedicated four years later in 516 BC. No other prophet had results as direct, immediate, and identifiable as Haggai.

OUTLINE:

A. 1:1-15 From Indifference to Rebuilding

B. 2:1-9 From Discouragement to Rebuilding

C. 2:10-19 From Defilement to Blessing

D. 2:20-23 A Signet Ring Signals the Lord's Day

38. Zechariah

Theme: Rebuilding the Lord's Temple and the Nation of Judah. Like Haggai, the book is set in the context of the return from Babylon and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple (Ezra 5:1-2). Zechariah was a younger contemporary of Haggai's, possibly into the reign of Atraxerxes I . Both prophets dealt with the same theme (rebuilding the temple) but in contrasting ways. Zechariah was an apocalyptic visionary, while Haggai was a practical doer. The book poses a study in contrasts between its parts: Part 1: (ch. 1-8), Part 2 (ch. 9-14) some 40 years later.

OUTLINE:

- A. 1:1-17 Call to Repent
- B. 1:18 - 2:13 Surveyor's Line: Measuring Up?
- C. 3:1 - 10 Priest's Garments
- D. 4:1 - 14 Lampstand and Trees
- E. 5:1 - 6:8 Wicked Basket Case Carried Off
- F. 6:9 - 15 Crown for Joshua
- G. 7:1 - 8:23 True Justice
- H. 9:1 - 17 New King for a New Day
- I. 10:1 - 11:17 Two Shepherds
- J. 12:1 - 13:6 God Purges His Own
- K. 13:7 - 14:21 God Punishes Nations

39. Malachi

Theme: "Indicators of Spiritual Decay Among God's People" In spite of strong opposition, the temple was finished under the leadership of Zerubabel and the prophecy of Haggai (516 BC) The community was strengthened through the restoration of the temple worship by Ezra (458 BC). In 445 BC Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem, rebuilt the walls, and brought back many religious reforms. With success behind them, the people now lapsed into religious indifference. Malachi addressed the sins of the people "just going through the motions" of their faith, doubting the love and justice of God. He uses a question - answer type of dialogue to develop his themes.

OUTLINE:

- A. 1:1-14 Indicator #1: Giving God Less Than The Best

- B. 2:1-9 Indicator #2: Ungodly Leadership
- C. 2:10-16 Indicator #3 Family Sin
- D. 3:6-18 Indicator #4: Poor Giving
- E. 4:1-6 Turn Back To Your God!

The New Testament

The New Testament is the "last will and testament of Jesus Christ" (Hebrews 9:15-17). It replaces the Old Testament in its entirety. There are 27 books in the New Testament.

The Gospels

There are four Gospel accounts of the life of Christ. While the theme of the Old Testament is "someone is coming," the theme of the Gospels is "someone is here."

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the synoptic Gospels, meaning that they are "able to be seen together." The synoptic Gospels cover much of the same material in the life of Christ. For that reason, many have "harmonized" the Gospel accounts and study Matthew, Mark, and Luke as one volume. This is a tragic mistake. The three Gospels are written to different audiences and portray Jesus in a different light to each. Harmonizing the Gospels loses the identity and intent which the author is attempting to reveal. If God had intended us to study the Gospels as one harmonized unit, then He most certainly would have inspired only one. But He gave us four Gospel accounts, each with its own character, audience, and message. Each Gospel account should be studied for its own uniqueness and portrayal of Christ.

40. Matthew



The Gospel for the Jew. The Kingdom and the coming of the Messiah

Theme: The Gospel for the Jew. Jesus is the Messiah, the fulfillment of the prophets, and ruler of the kingdom of God. Matthew was a tax collector who became an apostle (Matthew 9:9-13). Matthew slants his material to a Jewish readership as he cites numerous OT prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus' life and ministry.

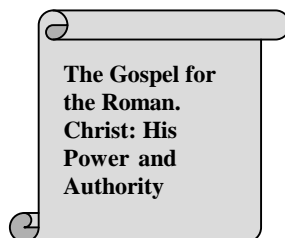
- A. Virgin birth 1:23; Isaiah 7:14
- B. Birth place 2:6; Mica 5:2
- C. Slaying of the children 2:18; Jeremiah 31:15

- D. Called out of Egypt 2:15; Hosea 11:1
- E. John the Baptist 3:3; 11:10; Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1
- F. A Great Light 4:15-16; Isaiah 9:1-2
- G. The burden bearer 8:17; Isaiah 53:4
- H. Healer of the blind and lame 11:5; Isaiah 61:1
- I. Servant of the Lord 12:18-21; Isaiah 42:1-4
- J. In the grave 12:40; Jonah 1:17
- K. Speaking in parables 13:35; Psalm 78:2
- L. Triumphant entry 21:5,9; Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:25-26
- M. Cleansing the temple 21:13; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11
- N. The rejected stone 21:42; Psalm 118:22-23
- O. Judas's betrayal for 30 pieces of silver 26:15; Zechariah 11:12
- P. The potter's field 27:9; Zechariah 11:13
- Q. Parting his garments 27:35; Psalm 22:18
- R. Giving vinegar to drink 27:48; Psalm 69:21

Matthew begins with "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (1:1). He then traces the genealogy back to David the king of Israel, and anchors him in the root of Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation. This approach immediately demonstrated to a Jewish audience that Jesus of Nazareth is truly the Messiah, the king of heaven's kingdom predicted throughout the Jewish scripture.

Matthew is built around five teaching sections: chapters 5-7, 10; 13; 18; 24-25) and highlights the kingdom of heaven (heaven's kingdom) and the king.

41. Mark



Theme: Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. The Gospel of Power for the Roman.

Mark is the son of Mary, a Christian Jewess (Acts 12:12). Because of the many Jewish questions it leaves untouched, the Jew would not have been greatly impressed by Mark's presentation of Jesus' claims. This Gospel was not designed for the Jewish reader.

The Romans to whom it is written, would care little about the fulfillment of prophecy, and did not have the philosophical appreciation of Greek. Christ is therefore presented with the idea of divine power over the spirit world, action, law, and universal dominion. To the Roman mind, Jesus must appear as the man of power, the worker, the conqueror.

Mark is the Gospel of power, of action, of conquest over nature, the spirits, disease, and death. In the presence of these expressions of power, the people exclaim, "What kind of man is this?"

Jesus' birth and young life is ignored in Mark. He gets right to the ministry of Jesus. Chapters 1-10 cover three years of ministry, while Jesus' final week is covered in chapters 11-16.

42. Luke



**The Gospel for
the Jew The
Common Greek**

**Christ: The Son
of Man**

Theme: Jesus, the Savior of the whole world.

Luke was a Gentile physician and co-worker of Paul (Acts 16:10-17; Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11). The Gospel of Luke is the longest record in the New Testament and the most chronological. It is written to a wealthy Roman aristocrat named Theophilus (1:3) and is intended for a Gentile audience. Luke wrote the book of Acts and addressed it also to Theophilus. The two can be thought of as Volumes I and II. The Gospel of Luke is Volume I (The Story of Jesus) and The Acts of the Apostles, Volume II (The Story of the church). The Gospel of Luke is marked by joy (1:46-47; 15:8-32), praise (1:46-55; 68-79) and an interest in the relationship of Jesus with people considered outcasts by his fellow countrymen (women, children, the poor, tax collectors and Samaritans). Gentile orientation is seen in the fact that Jesus' genealogy is traced back to Adam, the founder of the human race, rather than back to Abraham, the founder of the Hebrew race (as Matthew does).

Luke seldom quotes the OT, and he translates Hebrew words into their Greek equivalents.

In the Roman Empire of the first century, there were three classes of people to whom our Lord was presented according to their needs and characteristics: The Jew, The Roman, and The Greek.

The Greeks were the intellectuals and attempted to create the perfect man by mental process. The Greek was a universal man and could come into sympathetic relations with man as man.

The Jew and Roman were by nature exclusive. The Jew could meet only with him who came from Abraham and received the prophets. The Roman could respect only him who wielded power in the empire or was born to a place in the empire. The full-grown Jew was a Pharisee; the full-grown Roman a Caesar, but the full-grown Greek could meet all the world on a common platform of humanity. The two characteristics of universality and perfection must be considered when presenting Jesus to the Greek. In Luke's Gospel Jesus is not presented as the Jewish Messiah. He is not presented as the world conqueror, the almighty power. He is presented as the perfect, universal man. In Luke Jesus is commonly known as the Son of Man, perfect humanity, the savior of all "ethnics" (nations, Gentiles). I refer to Luke as the "Gospel for Joe Lunchbox". It truly is the Good News of Jesus for the common man on the street.

43. John

The Gospel for the Jew The Philosopher

**Christ: The Way,
Truth, Light
Christ: The WORD**

Theme: The Gospel of faith (20:30-31).

John states the purpose for writing the Gospel in 20:30-31.

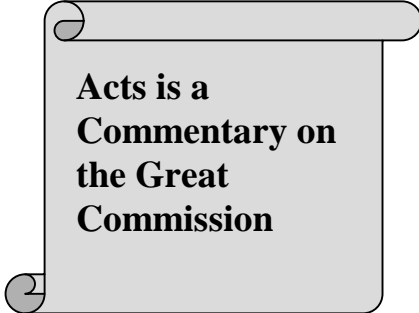
The Gospel of John is a discourse of signs intended to produce faith, resulting in life.

John's Gospel is intended for the Greek philosopher and Hellenistic Jew. Jesus' teaching is not outlined as in the other Gospel accounts. It cannot be included in a harmonizing context as can the synoptics. John highlights Jesus himself and portrays him philosophically on an intellectual and conceptual level.

- A. The Word (1:1-18)
- B. New Wine (2:1-11)
- C. Life Giver (3:1-21)
- D. Living Water (4:1-26)
- E. Equal with God (5:16-30)
- F. The Bread of Life (6:25-59)
- G. I Am (8:48-59)
- H. The Good Shepherd (10:1-21)
- I. The Resurrection and Life (11:17-43)
- J. The Vine (15:1-17)

History

44. Acts



**Acts is a
Commentary on
the Great
Commission**

Theme: Into all the world.

Acts is a divine commentary on the Great commission (Matthew 28:18-20). It demonstrates how the early disciples understood the marching orders of Jesus.

In 30 short years the church grew from what was considered an insignificant Jewish sect to a major force in the Roman Empire. Acts is noted for its continual mention of rapid growth as an identifying characteristic of the New Testament church.

The author is Luke, the physician (Acts 1:1 cf. Luke 1:3-4).

Luke wrote his gospel and Acts to a man named Theophilus, probably from Rome.

The key verse is Acts 1:8, "You shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest parts of the earth."

OUTLINE

- I. The Church Established In Jerusalem (ch. 1-7)
 - A. The church began with power (ch. 1-2)
 - B. The church grew in Jerusalem (ch. 3-7)
- II. The Church Scattered To Judea and Samaria (ch.8-12)
 - A. The church extended geographically (ch. 8-9)
 - B. The church expanded racially (ch. 10-12)
- III. The Church Spread To The Uttermost (ch. 13-28)
 - A. Paul's first missionary journey (ch. 13-14)
 - B. Paul's second missionary journey (ch. 15-18:22)
 - C. Paul's third missionary journey (18:23 - 21:26)
 - D. Paul's arrest and trial (ch. 21:27 - ch 26)
 - E. Paul's arrival in Rome (ch. 27 - 28)

The book can also be divided in two sections: The Gospel to the Jews through Peter (ch. 1-12); and the Gospel to the Gentiles through Paul (ch. 13 - 28).

Epistles: Paul writes 13 letters. Other letters written by James, Peter, John, then the final letter to John, the Revelation

45. Romans

Theme: Being right with God through obedient faith in Christ. Authored by Paul about 56 - 58 AD. Paul uses this book to introduce himself to the church at Rome because he had not yet

been there. His intent is to stop by Rome on the way to Spain (15:24).

It is obvious from chapter 16 that many of Paul's converts and friends in the Gospel were now in Rome. Aquila and Priscilla are thought to have led a team of disciples to Rome and planted the church. Another possibility is that some of the converts from the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10) may have planted the cause upon their return to Rome.

The big issue in Romans is how sinful man can be justified before a righteous and fair God. Chapters 1-3 conclude that all the world (both Jews and Gentiles) are guilty before the judgment tribunal. Sin has legal consequence in the court of heaven and the fine must be paid. If God does not demand payment, then He himself is unjust (see Romans 3:25-26).

Some key words are:

"Justification": a court term meaning to be pardoned and deemed innocent"

"Righteousness": the idea of being right, especially when compared to the holiness of God. The definition and explanation of righteousness are revealed through the Gospel of Christ (Romans 1:17).

"Faith": trusting obedience in the commandments of God. Faith is the basis upon which we receive pardon and the righteousness of God. This faith is revealed through the word of God (Romans 10:17).

46. 1 Corinthians

Theme: Christian lifestyle in a pagan society.

The church in Corinth was established in Acts 18 with Aquila and Priscilla being the first believers.

Corinth was a large, bustling, wealthy city. Because of its location, goods and people from around the world flowed in and out of its ports. It was a center for art, philosophy, and religion. It contained a number of pagan temples including large ones to Apollo and Aphrodite. The city had a reputation for vice, immorality, and debauchery.

Seduction by the surrounding pagan culture led this church into a host of problems. As a result, 1 Corinthians is full of information about how a Christian lifestyle differs from that of the culture as a whole.

Part one of the book (ch.1-6) deals with four problems reported to Paul (1:11). Part two of the book (ch. 7-15) deals with a variety of issues about which the Corinthians had written Paul (7:1).

OUTLINE:

- A. True Wisdom (1:18 - 2:5)
- B. Worldiness (3:1-23)
- C. Foolishness of division (4:1-21)
- D. Proud immorality (5:1-13)
- E. Sexuality (6:12-20)
- F. Sexual immorality and the marriage relationship (7:1-40)
- G. Proper use of Christian liberty (8:1-13)
- H. Run the race and don't quit (9:1-27)
- I. Glorifying God (10:14 - 11:1)
- J. The Lord's Supper and consideration for other believers (11:17 - 34)
- K. Proper use of spiritual gifts (12:1 - 31)
- L. Love is Supreme (13:1-13)
- M. Misunderstandings of the resurrection (15:12-34)

47. 2 Corinthians

Theme: The strength of weakness.

Since much of this letter is devoted to explaining Paul's actions since the time he wrote 1 Corinthians, it is important to have an idea of what happened in this time period. Paul promised to visit the church a second time (1 Corinthians 16:5-6). This visit apparently resulted in severe conflict with the "false apostles." Although they attacked Paul vigorously, what really hurt was the fact that the Corinthians did not rally to his support. This letter was written to prepare them for a third visit. Paul had written the church to withdraw from an immoral brother (1 Corinthians 5). This second letter encourages them to restore their fellowship since he has now repented (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). In 2 Corinthians Paul defends his apostleship which is obviously under attack by some in the Corinthian church (3:1; 6:3-13; 7:8-12; 10:1--2; 10:12 - 11:1-15). These opponents are apparently threatened by Paul's authority and by his message which challenged their mediocre and sinful lifestyle. He is warning them to repent before his third visit when he will bring severe judgment upon those who fail to repent (13:1-10).

47. Galatians

Theme: Justification by faith in Christ, not by works of the old law.

Paul planted the churches in Galatia during his first missionary journey (Acts ch. 13 - 14). After Paul left the area, apparently some Jewish Christians arrived. Accusing Paul of omitting crucial parts of the gospel, they said that the Galatians needed to submit to Jewish law and customs (such as circumcision, see 5:1-12, Acts 15). Paul issued a hard hitting rejection of any hint that salvation can be earned, especially by works of law and angrily proclaims that righteousness cannot be legislated by religious rules. The systems of law and grace are two vastly different and totally incompatible systems. By contrast Paul demonstrates that obedient faith in Christ is the means to the free gift of God. Paul declares that all who change or alter the Gospel or grace through faith will be eternally condemned (1:6-9, 3:1-2). And those who attempt to justify themselves by a law system verses a grace system have fallen from grace (5:4).

48. Ephesians

Theme: Our position in Christ and the responsibilities of our position.

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon were all written from prison about the same time (early AD 60's). Because over half the verses in Colossians and Ephesians are the same, it seems that Paul is dealing with the same problem in each setting. There was a more direct local problem in Colossia and along the Lycus river, but Ephesians towers to the mountaintops of Christian truth and invites a breathtaking view!

In Ephesians, Paul portrays Christ as the dominant power in the spiritual realm, subduing the hostile cosmic powers. We see him creating the church as her head, a new social order of life and unity which transcends the racial, ethnic, and social distinctions between people. In conveying this vision, Paul reaches into eternity past and eternity future to demonstrate how God, out of his love and glory, calls people to be reconciled to himself and to one another through the cross of Christ. In reconciling people, he unites them together (both Jews and Gentiles) in one body (the church) (2:11-18).

Part one of the book (ch. 1-3) focuses on our position in Christ. Part two of the book (ch. 4-6) focuses on our responsibility in

Christ. Part three focuses on our preparation needed to keep our position (6:10 - 20).

In Christ, we have all spiritual blessings, we are predestined, we are chosen, we are adopted, we are forgiven, we are sealed, and seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. We, who were once dead, are now alive and are part of God's household. Our "eyes" need to be opened in order to comprehend the magnitude of our position (1:18-20; 3:20-21). Our position is so impressive that God's wisdom is declared to the classifications of spirit beings through us, the church (3:10). Because of our position, we have an incredible responsibility to "walk worthily of our calling" (4:1), and imitate God (5:1). This responsibility impacts our personal actions and attitudes (4:1 - 5:21) as well as our relationships with others. Our responsibility impacts marriage relationships (5:22-25), child/parent relationships (6:1-4), slave/master relationships or employee /employer relationships (6:5-9). In order to fulfill our responsibility we need to equip ourselves to fight the battle (6:10-20).

OUTLINE:

- A. Our Spiritual position in Christ (1:1 3:21)
- B. Our responsibilities because of position (4:1 - 6:9)
- C. Our preparation to keep our position (6:10 - 20)

49. Philippians

Theme: Attitudes of the joyful disciple because of knowing Jesus Christ:

Paul was with Timothy when he wrote this letter to the church at Philippi (1:1). It was written around 61 - 63 AD, about 12 years or so after the establishment of the church in Philippi, the first church founded in Europe (see Acts 16). Lydia and her household were the first converts, followed by the Philippian jailer and his household.

At the writing of this letter, Paul is in prison (1:12-14); most likely at Rome (see Acts 28:11-31). Epaphroditus had arrived in Rome with a financial gift from the church at Philippi.

Philippi was an important Roman colony in Northern Greece, and a retirement colony for Roman soldiers.

Paul has four motives for writing this letter and sending it by Epaphroditus:

- A. A "thank you" note to them for their love and partnership in his ministry (1:5; 4:10-19).

- B. A report on his present situation and well-being (1:12-26; 4:10-19).
- C. Report of how false teachers with evil motives were bringing their damaging doctrines into the church and a warning for the Christians in Philippi to stand firm against these errors (2:27-28; 3:2-4, 18-19).
- D. Address a serious clash between two women in the church who had been his fellow workers. Their disagreement was apparently affecting the unity of the whole body (4:2-3).

Philippians is Paul's most upbeat letter! It radiates with joy in the Lord and with love for these people (who are old friends and financial supporters). Paul demonstrates joy in the Lord, even though in prison because of the following:

... *The presence of Jesus (1:21-24).*

... *His confidence that he is in Christ's hands (1:20; 2:9-13; 3:20-21).*

... *His joy over the advancement of the Gospel (1:12-14).*

... *His single-minded desire to know Christ (1:21 - 2:11).*

His concern is that the Philippians reflect the same attitudes which were to be demonstrated through a lifestyle of:

... *Mutual service (1:27 - 2:11).*

... *Imitating the mind of Christ (2:5-9).*

... *Steadfastness of truth (3:2 - 4:1).*

... *Dedication to the things of Christ.(4:4-9).*

Paul, in his instruction to these disciples, encourages them to focus their attitudes on the positive things in Christ (4:4-9). Paul encourages them, that though these attitudes and the accompanying peace of God are not natural, they can be learned and implemented so that the disciple of Jesus can learn the secret of being content in every situation (4:11-13).

OUTLINE:

- I. The Christian's Purpose (1:21).
- II. The Christian's Pattern (2:5-9).
- III. The Christian's Prize (3:7-14).
- IV. The Christian's Provision (4:8-13).

50. Colossians

Theme: You are complete in Christ; He's all you need!

Colossae was a town about 100 miles west of Ephesus. The church was probably established as a result of the extended ministry at Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10). Paul himself had never visited this town, at least at the writing of this letter.

While Paul was in prison, he was visited by Epaphras, a native of Colossae who may have established the church there. His report of a doctrinal problem in the church may have prompted Paul to write this letter. The church was being influenced by a "Hybrid Heresy", consisting of several pieces of different teaching all put together into one. It appears as though they were searching for "the best of the best" of several philosophies and teachings and putting them all together. This approach is called "Syncretism" (synchronizing parts of different teachings into one new philosophy). They apparently felt that this "new" philosophy made them "fuller" and more complete; perhaps with a more "spiritual" view of life? Jesus seemed to be one of several "deities" through which one approaches the Divine. Note how Paul unfolds these philosophies:

A. Greek philosophy (2:8-10).

B. Jewish practices (2:11-17).

C. Spiritism/ angel worship (2:18).

D. Cultic practices/ asceticism (2:22-23).

In combating this "Hybrid heresy", Paul exalts Christ and demonstrates that if you have Christ, you have it all, you are complete, you have all the fullness. He encourages them to seek true spiritual wisdom and understanding (1:9).

... *Christ is the One who rescued us from the dominion of darkness, and in whom we have forgiveness of sin (1:13-14).*

... *Jesus is the image of the Divine, the supreme One over all creation (1:15).*

... *Jesus is the creator and sustainer of all visible and invisible things (including classifications of spirit beings: thrones, dominions, powers, authorities) (1:16-17).*

... *Jesus has authority over death, and has supremacy in everything (1:18).*

... *All the "fullness" is in Christ (1:19).*

- ... *Jesus is God's reconciler through His blood and His Gospel (1:20-23).*
- ... *God's mystery, which has been hidden for ages past, is revealed in its fullness through the word of God (1:25-27).*
- ... *Everyone can be "perfect", complete, in Christ (1:28).*
- ... *The full riches of complete understanding are in the mystery of God, namely Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (2:2-3).*
- ... *In Christ, all the fullness of the Divine nature dwells in bodily form (2:9).*
- ... *In Christ, you have already been given the fullness that you are looking for. He alone is the head over EVERY power and authority (2:10).*
- ... *In Christ, you were raised from being dead in sin and made alive (2:11-13).*
- ... *Jesus disarmed all spiritual powers and made a public spectacle of them when He triumphed over them in the cross (2:15).*

In comparison to these other philosophies, Christ is supreme. You don't need Judaism, asceticism, Greek philosophy, spiritism, or any other belief. In Christ, you are absolutely, completely, totally full!

Since that is true, then implement the practical aspects of Christian living rather than seeking for some spiritual experience that has no value (2:23-4:6).

- ... *Seek the truly spiritual things in Christ (3:1-4).*
- ... *Put to death the old practices and put on the new man (3:5-19).*
- ... *Pay attention to your family relationships (3:18-21).*
- ... *Pay attention to your employee/employer responsibilities (3:22-4:1).*
- ... *Final greetings and exhortations (4:2-18).*

51. 1 Thessalonians

Theme: Living in light of the second coming of Christ
Paul planted the cause of Christ in the city of Thessalonica in Acts 17:1-9 during the second missionary journey. After preaching for only three weeks, he was forced to leave because of mob violence stirred up against him by certain Jewish leaders. They accused him of sedition against Caesar. Paul's enemies then used his departure as evidence that he was only a "fly by night" religious charlatan (2:3).

Concerned about the welfare of the new converts, Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to encourage them (3:6-10). Timothy reported a good overall stability of their faith but found two problems in the church there:

1. Some converts had not fully understood the ethical implications of the gospel. In particular, there was sexual immorality among the Christians (4:3-8).
2. Second, there was a problem with the work ethic of the disciples. They apparently had ceased working thinking that the second coming of Christ was imminent (4:11-12; 5:14).

In 1 Thessalonians we get a glimpse of Paul's approach to ministry (2:1-12; 2:17 - 3:10).

In this letter, Paul expresses his relief and joy at the good progress the new converts are making despite their lack of foundational teaching. He then goes on to instruct them about the life of holiness they ought to be leading as they await the return of Jesus.

OUTLINE:

- A. Legendary Model of Faith (1:1-10)
- B. Lasting Model of Ministry (2:1-16)
- C. Longing to Visit This Church (2:17 - 3:13)
- D. Living to Please God (4:1-12)
- E. Living In Light of His Coming (4:13 - 5:11)
- F. Living in Peace With Others (5:12 - 28)

52. 2 Thessalonians

Theme: Living in light of the coming of Christ
2 Thessalonians was written a very short time after the first letter. The second letter was necessary because of the lack of grounding in the disciples. Specifically, his teaching "that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night" (1

Thessalonians 5:2) may have encouraged people to abandon normal pursuits of daily living to prepare for the second coming. In addition to this misunderstanding, it appears as though someone had unsettled the disciples with false letters stating that the second coming had already come and perhaps they had missed it (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3).

Paul outlines the second coming events (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12), including the great rebellion or apostasy (falling away), which must come before the coming of the Lord. The second coming is not so imminent that they have to stop everything. He then goes on to restate what he said in his earlier letter: Stand firm and do not be idle.

Thus Paul encourages the Thessalonians to live responsible, productive Christian lives as well as trying to correct some misunderstandings that they had about the nature and implications of the second coming of Christ.

OUTLINE:

A. Perseverance and God's Judgment (1:1-12).

B. Lawlessness and Christ's Coming (2:1-17).

C. Idleness and Paul's Authority (3:1-18).

53. 1 Timothy

Theme: A Faithful Minister of Christ Jesus

Timothy, a young man from Lystra, was apparently converted during Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 16). When Paul returned to the area a year or two later, Timothy was recommended to him as a faithful disciple who would make a good travelling companion. From that time on, Timothy is associated with Paul.

Timothy, at the time of Paul's writing of 1 Timothy, was the evangelist in Ephesus. Paul discovered that heresy was rotting the church there. It seems that the false teaching involved speculation about obscure matters rather than exposition about Christ and the Christian lifestyle of love. These teachers were characterized as proud, contentious, and greedy. As a result, Paul withdrew fellowship from two of the men, who one author claims were elders of the church there (1:19-20). Paul then puts Timothy in charge of helping the church recover from its problems (1:3-4).

1 and 2 Timothy are called "pastoral epistles". Timothy was not the "pastor" (elder, shepherd, overseer), but the book contains instruction for the appointing of elder/pastors (3:1-7).

1 Timothy is not so much a manual on church structure as some have alluded. It seems to be more of an instruction manual for proper conduct in determining the character of people who ought to be in leadership and influential ministries in the church.

OUTLINE:

- A. False Teachers of the Law (1:1-11).
- B. True Mercy For Sinners (1:12-20).
- C. Orderly Worship (2:1-15).
- D. Faithful Leadership (3:1-16).
- E. Redemptive Ministry (4:1-16).
- F. Widows, Elders, and Slaves (5:1 - 6:2).
- G. Love of Money (6:3-10).
- H. Fighting the Good Fight (6:11-21).

54. 2 Timothy

Theme: "Guard The Gospel And Don't Give Up"

In the spring following the writing of 1 Timothy, Paul was on his way to Ephesus when he was arrested, taken back to Rome, and thrown into prison. This was the time of Nero's insane persecution of Christians, so he was put in a dungeon "like a criminal" (2:9). He had a preliminary trial (4:16). His full trial was ahead, but Paul did not expect to be released (4:6).

In this letter, Paul writes to Timothy encouraging him to hold onto the faith no matter what happened, and to come to him as soon as he could. Whether he ever saw Timothy again is not known. According to tradition, Paul was beheaded shortly after this, the last letter that he ever wrote.

The letter of 2 Timothy reveals the life and heart of Paul, a man who had invested his life in the cause of Christ. He wishes to pass on that commitment to a younger man who will carry the torch further. Timothy was the logical choice. He had been a trusted and loyal co-worker for Christ along side Paul for over fifteen years.

This was a critical time for the churches in Europe and Asia. Under Nero's persecution, Rome, which had previously protected the rights of Christians whom they viewed simply as a sect of Jews, had turned against Christianity. Furthermore, there had been widespread apostasy in Asia (1:15).

Paul the missionary, who had spent himself working so hard to establish these churches, was now facing death. Now it would be up to Timothy and others to guard the Gospel and admonish those who would opt for a more tolerable and easy form of teaching (4:1-5).

Paul encourages Timothy to keep the faith in the face of adversity and discharge all the duties of his ministry regardless of who listens. Don't give up, don't quit working hard, don't be ashamed of what you are doing (1:6-8; 12-14; 2:1-13).

Despite the serious tone in the book, Paul triumphs in this letter. The gospel cannot be chained (2:9)! The church will prevail (4:8). And, Paul will be with the Lord, as will all those who love his appearing (4:18).

OUTLINE:

A. Be Strong In Christ (1:3 - 2:13).

B. Be A Good Workman (2:14 - 26).

C. Be Faithful (3:10 - 4:8).

D. To God Be The Glory (4:9 - 22).

55. Titus

Theme: Instructions for the unorganized and undisciplined
Titus was a Gentile who was probably converted through Paul's ministry. He accompanied Paul on his crucial visit to Jerusalem when the question was raised about whether Gentiles had to follow Jewish customs in order to be genuine Christians (Galatians 2:1-10). Titus was Paul's trusted friend and one of his special envoys sent on difficult assignments. On this trip he was also charged with the responsibility of arranging for the collection to be given to the poor in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:19-20).

After Paul was released from prison in Rome, Titus and Timothy traveled with him to Crete as part of a preaching tour. Titus was left behind to establish the church they planted there and to correct some errors in behavior and attitudes.

The church in Crete was planted in a lazy, undisciplined culture. "Cretan" was slang for a sluggard, rebellious lifestyle (1:12-13), much like "Corinthian" was slang for the immoral extremist. It would only be logical that the church members were quite careless, undisciplined and unorganized in their behavior. In addition to their undisciplined life, they were also subject to an undisciplined tongue, with little discernment in believing fables and myths. (1:13-16, 3:14).

In Crete, we see the opposite extreme from the error attacking the churches of Galatia. In Galatia, legalism to law was the overbearing dilemma. In Crete, moral, ethical, and religious laziness was the outcome of their false teachers. Both extremes are wrong.

OUTLINE

A. The Source of Sound (healthy) Doctrine (1:1-4).

B. The Administration of Sound Doctrine (1:5-16).

* Get Organized With Elders (1:5-9).

* Get Serious With False Teachers (1:10-16).

C. The Application of Sound Doctrine (2:1-15).

* Aged Men (2:2).

* Aged Women (2:3).

* Young Women (2:4-5).

* Young Men and Titus (2: 6-8).

* Slaves (2:9-10).

* Hold People Accountable To This Pattern (2:15).

D. Counselling By Sound Doctrine (3:1-11)

* Submission and Obedience to Authorities (3:1-2).

* Grace Motivates Sensible Living (3:3-8).

* Don't Tolerate a Divisive Person (3:9-11).

E. V. Conclusion (3:12-15).

56. Philemon

Theme: Christian Compassion In Action

Although this letter is personal rather than theological, it contains the finest picture of the meaning of forgiveness that can be found in the New Testament.

Philemon was a prominent business man in the city of Colosse. Paul obviously had converted Philemon. One of Philemon's slaves (Onesimus) had stolen some valuables from his master and fled to the big city of Rome, probably to get lost in the crowd and gain some freedom.

At this point in history, the 60,000,000 slaves in the Roman Empire made up a critical component of Rome's social and economic structure. An unpunished, runaway slave was seen as a threat to the whole structure. As a result, runaways were considered criminals who were punished by severe measures including death.

Onesimus, when in Rome, crossed paths with Paul and became a Christian. Realizing the necessity of making right the wrongs that Onesimus had done, Paul sent him back to his former

master with this note that he be received back, not as merely a runaway slave, but now as a brother in Christ.

Paul levered his relationship with Philemon in a most unique and delightful way. Onesimus is now "my son" (1:10). The name Onesimus means useful, and Paul also uses the name, "He is now "useful" to both you and me (1:11). He "is my very heart" (1:12). "I wanted to keep him here to help me, but not without your consent, so that any favor you do (suggesting being merciful to him) will be spontaneous, not forced," (1:14). Maybe his leaving had a purpose, so he would come back better than a mere slave, but as your brother, (indicating: "so treat him as such"). (1:16). "If he owes you anything, put it on my tab" (even though you owe me your very life, and even though I am in prison, but don't let me make you feel guilty... charge it to me!) (1:17-21). "Oh, by the way, I'll be dropping by to visit with you two brothers so get a bed ready for me will you? I just know you've been praying that God will allow you to see me again." (:22).

57. Hebrews

Theme: Hold On With Endurance To Your Superior Faith In Christ.

The writer of Hebrews is nowhere mentioned, though some have assumed that Paul may have written it. It appears to be written sometime just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus Vespation, the Roman General, in 70 AD, "As you see the day approaching" (10:25). This is the day of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 24:15-34 (this generation will not pass away until all these things happen (Matthew 24:34).

As Jesus had indicated, persecution was heating up violently (see Matthew 24:9-13) but those who endured to the end would be saved. These Jewish (Hebrew) Christians, probably mostly in Jerusalem, were experiencing first hand the devastating effect of real persecution (10:32-34). They appear to have been subjected to the temptation to look for an "easier way" and tone down their zeal for Christ. It seems obvious from the book that they were tempted to slip back to the Jewish system of the Old Testament, and abandon their faith in Christ. After all, wasn't Moses God's appointed leader too? Weren't the messages delivered by angels from heaven too? Didn't the Levitical priests deliver sacrifices for us according to God's law? Why should we tolerate such persecution when we had a God - ordained religion to begin with?

The Hebrews writer demonstrates throughout the book the superiority of their faith in Christ and shows that the entire

purpose of that old, worn out, obsolete, now invalid system was to provide this superior, perfect, complete covenant in Christ, of which they are now a part. If they slip back they abandon everything, there is nothing left to go back to, there is nothing better (Hebrew 6:4-12). They have need of confident endurance in these hard times so that they will receive what was promised (10:35-39).

OUTLINE:

- A. Hold On To Your Superior Faith In Christ Because:
- B. Jesus Is FAR Superior To Angels (1:1 - 2:4).
- C. Jesus Is THE Human Solution (2:5-18).
- D. Jesus Is FAR Superior to Moses (3:1-6).
- E. Jesus Promised a WAY Better Rest (3:7-4:16).
- F. Jesus Is a FOREVER Priest In Heaven!! (6:19-8:6).
- G. Jesus Provides a SUPERIOR Covenant (8:7-13).
- H. Jesus Serves in THE Tabernacle in Heaven (9:1-14).
- I. Jesus Offered a PERFECT, ONE TIME FOR ALL TIME SACRIFICE (9:12-10:18).
- J. Your Faith Will Pay Off If You Endure, It ALWAYS Does (Hebrews 11)
- K. Jesus Went Through Trials Too, So Don't Quit (12:1- 13).
- L. If You Refuse God's Will, You Refuse Everything That Is Promised and Unshakeable (12:14 - 29).
- M. Jesus Offers You A Practical Way To Live (13:1-25).

59. James

Theme: "Faith that Works!"

Authored by James (most probably the Lord's own brother) this book is somewhat unclear as to its destination. It is addressed to "The twelve tribes scattered among the nations," (1:1). The Dispersion can refer to:

- A. Those Jews scattered as a result of the Assyrian defeat in 722 B.C. who have become Christians.
- B. Those Jewish Christians scattered as a result of the persecution in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1-4).

C. A term referring to both Jews and Gentiles who are the "New Israel", that is, those who are Abraham's offspring by promise, who are grafted into "true Israel" (Romans 9:6-8, 25-26; 11:13-31; cf. Galatians 3:26-29; 6:16; Philippians 3:3; Colossians 2:11-12).

Regardless of the recipients, James is writing to Christians about true standards of Christian living.

OUTLINE:

I. Salutation (1:1)

II. The Nature of True religion (1:2-27)

- Stability (1:2-11)
- Endurance (1:12-18)
- Action rather than dead faith (1:19-27)

III. The Nature of True Faith (2:1 - 3:12)

- Does not show favoritism (2:1-13)
- Active obedience (2:14-26)
- Faith demonstrated in the tongue (3:1-12)

IV. The Nature of True Wisdom (3:12 - 5:18)

- Wisdom manifests itself in action (3:13-18)
- Wisdom is submissive, not proud (4:1-10)
- Wisdom doesn't condemn others (4:11-12)
- Wisdom knows what is temporary (4:13-17)
- Wisdom understands true value (5:1-6)
- Wisdom patiently endures (5:7-11)
- Wisdom keeps its word (5:12)
- Wisdom depends on prayer (5:13-18)

V. The Nature of Your Mission (5:19-20)

- Helps others spiritually (5:19-20)

Another outline that may be helpful in your own personal study is:

... *Trials and Temptations (1:1-18)*

... *Listening and Doing (1:19-27)*

... *Mercy and Judgment of Others (2:1-13)*

... *Faith in Action (2:14-26)*

... *True and False Wisdom (3:13-18)*

... *Friendship With God vrs The World (4:1-12)*

... *Invest In Your Future (4:13 - 5:12)*

... *Power of Prayer (5:13-18)*

... *Help Each Other Out (5:19-20)*

60. 1 Peter

Theme: Hope in the midst of suffering.

This letter seems to have been written sometime between the great fire in Rome (AD 64) and Peter's death (AD 68).

In the summer of AD 64, a great fire destroyed much of Rome. It was believed that the insane Emperor, Nero, was responsible for this. Needing a scapegoat to take the blame, Nero pointed the finger at the Christian movement, which was under increasing suspicion as a sect in the Empire anyway. Up to this point, Christianity was simply viewed as an off-shoot sect of Judaism, a legal recognized religion under the Roman system. However, Christianity was now judged to be distinct from Judaism and it was prohibited as a forbidden religion.

Suddenly, to be a Christian was to be criminal. Waves of opposition, oppression, and persecution began in Rome and spread over the whole Empire. This persecution would later be intensified as opposition to Christianity became more violently heated. (John's Revelation will discuss this persecution). It was during this time that Peter was supposedly crucified upside down after witnessing his wife's death by crucifixion.

Before his death, Peter, clearly predicting the coming onslaught of persecution, wrote this circular letter to the Christians in the Roman provinces in what is now modern Turkey (1:1). They were beginning to experience the first fruits of persecution.

The presence of hope in the midst of suffering is the theme that runs throughout this letter. Peter addresses the question of how to live as a Christian in the face of ultimate issues like death, ridicule, persecution, and Satanic attack. Throughout this letter, Jesus is held out as their living hope (1:3), their Savior (deliverer) 1:18-19), their example in suffering (2:21-24), and their Master (Lord) (3:15, 21-22). In 1 Peter there are numerous OT quotes and allusions, as well as passages that echo Peter's own sermons as recorded in Acts.

Especially noteworthy is his symbolic usage of "Babylon" (5:13). Babylon was the enemy nation of God's people in the time of Judah's deportation by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon (about 606-586 BC). Peter is now paralleling Babylon and Rome, as enemy nations of God's kingdom people.

Interestingly, Rome is pictured in Daniel 2:44 and Daniel 7.

Just as Babylon was destroyed for harming God's people, even so Rome will be brought down. Meanwhile, the Christians suffering the impending persecution are called upon to endure faithfully, and act, rather than react, as God's elect, strangers in the world, chosen (1:1-2)

OUTLINE

- I. Christ is Our Hope (1:1-12)
- II. Christ is Our Sacrifice (1:13 - 2:3)
- III. Christ is Our Foundation (2:4-12)
- IV. Christ is Our Example (2:13-25)
- V. Christ is An Example in Relationships (3:1-7)
- VI. Christ is Our Lord (3:8-22)
- VII. Christ is Our Strength (4:1-11)
- VIII. Christ is Our Joy (4:12-19)
- IX. Christ is Our Shepherd (5:1-14)

DIFFICULT TEXT (1 Peter 3:18-21)

Helps: 1 Peter 1:10-11 The salvation that has now been revealed to you, was announced beforehand by the prophets in the OT by the Spirit of Christ within them (the Holy Spirit) (see also 2 Peter 1:19-21). It was Christ's Spirit (the Holy Spirit) that inspired all the OT prophets to write about the suffering Messiah that was to come and bring salvation.

Noah was one of the prophets who spoke by inspiration of the Spirit of Christ within him. Therefore, Christ (via the Holy Spirit) in reality preached repentance to those souls in the time of Noah. They rejected the message and died. Those dead souls at the time of the writing of 1 Peter were "in prison" awaiting the coming judgment.

1 Peter 3:18-ff says, "Christ was made alive by the Spirit. Through this Spirit (the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Christ 1:11) he also preached through Noah (long ago that is) to those spirits that now are in prison (because they rejected the message of the Spirit when they had opportunity in Noah's time).

POINT: The same Spirit has also preached the message to you - the message of deliverance (salvation) by the plan of salvation (baptism). You will be delivered and saved, if you accept the message. Don't be like those who once rejected the Spirit of Christ (in Noah's time), or you, too, will end up in "prison" rather than receiving deliverance.

61. 2 Peter

Theme: Be On Guard Against False Teachers

2 Peter was written probably near the death of Peter (68 AD). While the theme of 1 Peter is suffering, the theme of 2 Peter is an exhortation to true knowledge that opposes false teaching. The fact that Jesus had not yet returned was being interpreted as evidence that the apostles (like Peter and Paul) were not to be trusted (cf. 3:3-5). These false teachers were insinuating

that the Second Coming was a sort of "moral beating club" invented by the apostles to inhibit so called "freedom". For the false teachers (both then and now), "freedom" meant claiming the right to indulge in sexual immorality, drunkenness, and hedonistic pleasures (2:2,10, 13-14). Morally speaking, they were "PRO CHOICE". They seem to present their heresy in an attitude that "if you weren't so ignorant, you'd be open minded and free like us." To be self - controlled and morally disciplined is to be ignorant, unenlightened.

In this letter we see a sharp contrast between the character of the apostles and the character of the false teachers whose lives are marked by their denial of Jesus, immorality, rejection of authority, enslavement to sin, and misuse of Scripture.

Peter counters this heresy with a number of swift blows:

... Apostolic teaching is not a matter of cleverly invented stories, but is inspired of God by the Holy Spirit (1:16-20)

... False teachers are not new, they've been around before (2:1)

... The nature of their operation is "secretly" to introduce heresy (2:1)

... Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the truth into disrepute (2:2)

... Destruction clearly awaits them (2:3)

... God did not spare angels who sinned, and he will not spare those who teach or follow false doctrine (2:4-10)

... False Teacher's character: follow corrupt desires, despise authority, bold and arrogant, not afraid to slander celestial beings, they are like brute beasts, led by instinct not intelligence and morally corrupted (2:10-19)

This letter can be summed up with Peter's urge not to be "carried away by the error of lawless men" and to "keep on growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

OUTLINE

I. The Nature of True Knowledge (1:1-21)

- A Gift From God (1:2-4)
- Demonstrated by Growth in Virtue (1:5-11)
- Grounded in Inspired Scripture (1:12-21)

II. The Danger of Abandoning Knowledge (2:1-22)

- The Nature of Error (2:1-3)

- God Punished Error In The Past (2:4-10a)
 - God Will Punish Error Again (2:10b - 19)
 - D. Don't Get Involved With It (2:20-22)
- III. The Hope In True Knowledge (3:1-18)
- The Word Was Fulfilled in the Past (3:1-7)
 - God is Being Patient (3:8-9)
 - God's Word Will Come To Pass!! (3:10-13)
 - Prepare Yourselves with True Knowledge (3:14-18)

62. 1 John

Theme: Walking In The Light

The Gospel of John was written to arouse faith in Christ (John 20:30-31). The first letter of John was written to establish assurance and certainty of that faith (1 John 5:13). John wrote the Gospel, 1,2,& 3 John and the Revelation. He was also the best friend of Jesus.

The letters of 1,2,& 3 John were all written around the mid 90's AD and were sent most likely to the church in Ephesus. Edgar Goodspeed suggests that the second and third letters may have been "covering letters", one to the church addressed as the "elect lady" (2 John 1), and the other to Gaius, the preacher (3 John 1).

The controversey over law and works and circumcision is seemingly over by this time since John does not even allude to them. This would further suggest a later date of writing, since Jerusalem would have been destroyed by this time (70 AD), and the relationship between Jews and Christians was no longer a controversial issue.

With the influx of Gentiles into the church, there was a heritage of philosophical thought emerging that affected doctrinal teaching.

The main controversey with which John is dealing is that of **GNOSTICISM**. It dealt with the question of the humanity of Christ. Who was He? If He was God, how could He die? If He died, how could He be God? The debate over the nature of Christ occupied the thinking of church leaders down through the fifth century.

Gnosticism was a philosophy of religion, rather than a single issue. It was based on the premise that spirit is good, matter is evil, and that the two can have no enduring relation with the other. Salvation consists of escape from the realm of matter into the realm of the spirit. The MEANS of escape were numerous.

Primary among the means of escape from the material to the spiritual was KNOWLEDGE, by which man can rise above the earth bound chains of matter into the heavenly apprehension of truth (enlightenment). This KNOWLEDGE or *gnosis* (the Greek term which gave the philosophy its name) could only be attained by those who were initiated into the "*INNER SECRETS OF THE GROUP*".

To be spiritual, one had to escape the material, because matter is inherently evil.

This led to an explosive conflict when dealing with the nature of Christ. How, asked the Gnostics, could the infinite, pure spirit (God, the *Logos*), have anything to do with a material body? They proposed two solutions:

- A. Either Christ was not really human, but only *APPEARED* so (called Docetism, or "seemism") or
- B. The Christ-spirit did not actually inhabit the human Jesus until baptism, and left Him before His death on the cross (called Cerinthianism, from Cerinthis, its chief advocate in the first century). This view saw the Spirit descend on Jesus at His Baptism, and saw the Christ-Spirit departing when Jesus cried on the cross, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me". Therefore, the Christ really was not human flesh, but only inhabited human flesh for a period of time, then departed.

Both of these views were advocated by those who appeared to have "Special knowledge" that others did not have. John addressed this preconception in his Gospel in John 1:14 when he said that the Word became flesh. These letters counter this heresy as it enters the church and obviously draws away followers (1 John 2:19).

John refutes this teaching in the following ways:

1. *The Christ whom he preached was audible, visible, and tangible (1 John 1:1).*
2. *Whoever denies the Father and Son is antichrist (2:22).*
3. *Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come "IN THE FLESH" is not of God (4:2,3).*
4. *Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist (2 John 7, 10-11).*

Since "knowledge" (or perceived knowledge) is the issue, John uses the term knowledge or "we know" 13 times in 1 John (2:3,5,29, 4:13,16,19,24; 4:13,16; 5:15, 18,19,20). John's conclusion to the readers is that God is light (1:5); God is love (4:16); Jesus is the Messiah (2:22); the son of God (4:15); who has come in the flesh (4:2) to make us his children (3:1). As such, we have eternal life (2:25) and are called not to sin (2:1) but to love one another (3:11; 4:7-12).

OUTLINE

- I. Walking in the Light (1:1 - 2:14)
- II. Warning Against Antichrist (2:15-27)
- III. Doing What is Right (2:28-3:10)
- IV. Loving One Another (3:11-24)
- V. Testing the Spirits (4:1-6)
- VI. Loving God (4:7-21)
- VII. Believing Christ (5:1-21)

Difficult Texts in 1 John

1 John 3:6-8; 5:16-18

From a casual reading in some English translations there appears to be a contradiction from 1:8,10 and 3:6-8; 5:16-19. However, John is combating two extremes: the *PERFECTIONIST*, and the *IMMORALIST*.

The perfectionist Gnostic believed that he had risen above sin. John assures the believer that those who claim that they have not sinned and do not sin are deceiving themselves (1:8). He then gives the solution for the Christian who does sin occasionally (1:7- 2:2).

The other extreme is addressed in 3:6-8. The immoralist believed that since he was born again sin had no more impact on his spiritual nature (3:3-10; see also Romans 6:1ff). Sinlessness is the standard consistent with the nature of sonship.

John uses two different Greek tenses in the discussion which will relate to the passages in 3:6-8 and 5:16-19. The perfect tense (which is a present resulting condition based upon a past act) and the present indicative active tense (continuous action or case of habitual action).

In essence John is saying the following: "*No one who continues to abide in him, continues to habitually sin; no one who habitually sins has either seen him or knows him*" (3:6). "*He who habitually commits sin is of the devil*" (3:8). "*We know that no one born of God (in the past with continuous results to the present) continually, habitually keeps on sinning* (5:18).

THE SIN UNTO DEATH:

5:16 The "Mortal sin" (literally "sin unto death") is not a particular type or class of sin. Rather, it means a sin from which there is no hope of recovery. This is a sin which is deliberate, continual, habitual, with no intention of repentance (see Heb 6:4ff; 10:26-29). Prayer is recommended for the brother who sins occasionally but has a heart of repentance and desire to change (cf. 1 John 1:7-9). However, prayer is not recommended for the brother who keeps on sinning and has no plans of recovery. That is the sin unto death.

In other words, the one born of God does sin at times, and that can be forgiven provided confession and walking in the light is observed (1:7-10). But, sin is not the rule or natural thing with him. The one who continually sins is not born of God

63. 2 John

Theme: To My Elect Lady: the church

Goodspeed considers this to be a cover letter for 1 John sent to the church, perhaps in Ephesus. John has refuted GNOSTICISM in 1 John and now includes some practical instruction for the church.

The false teachers were apparently seeking room and board from the churches as they travelled from place to place spreading their heresy. 2 & 3 John were written to help certain local churches sort out the problem. In 2 John, the author warns the church to beware of those who teach false doctrines, "Do not welcome such," (:9-11)

64. 3 John

Theme: To my friend Gaius

While 2 John warns Christians not to entertain false teachers, 3 John addresses the opposite problem: the failure of Christians to provide hospitality for genuine teachers. Here John commends a friend by the name of Gaius who opened his house even to strangers. By doing so, he was entering into the work of spreading the truth.

However, another "brother" by the name of Diotrephes had a problem with wanting to run and control things. He loved "first place" and wanted everyone to obey his edicts. He obviously had a problem with authority. (:9-10). Diotrephes wanted to control the situation and shunned people who offered hospitality to visiting Christians without his "approval".

In this letter, John encourages Gaius, (who Goodspeed considers the preacher for the congregation) to keep doing what

is right regardless of Diotrephes. He encourages Gaius and the church to participate in the financial support of those traveling preachers who are doing good (:5-8).

65. Jude

Theme: Contend For The Faith

This is a sermon letter meant to be read to a congregation, warning them against false teachers. Jude's opponents are a band of smooth talking teachers who go from church to church, receiving hospitality in return for their instruction. Such itinerant teachers were often a source of trouble in the early church (cf. Matthew 7:15; 2 Corinthians 10-11; 1 John 4:1; 2 John 10).

The character of the false teaching can be gleaned from reading the text. They reject moral standards and indulge in immoral sexual behavior (verses 4-10). They obviously had twisted the doctrine of grace into a license to sin (:4 cf. Romans 6:1), and taught that people could, therefore, do whatever they liked morally. These teachers rooted their authority largely in their own "Ecstatic experiences" (God told me). They are arrogant in the face of the spirit world (:8-10). They are noted for their grumbling and faultfinding and governed by their own passionate desires. They think highly of themselves and flatter others to gain advantage for themselves (:16).

The term "Contend for the faith" (:3) means to stand opposed to those who altar the doctrine of grace with perversion of doctrine and immorality. It does not give permission, as some have assumed, to be contentious for the faith. Some have used this verse as a proof text to uphold church traditions of men rather than the doctrine of Christ.

Jude's themes are packed with quotes from the OT and from the Apocrypha (religious books written by Jews between the testaments). For a Biblical writer to quote from an extra-biblical source is not uncommon and does not in any way question its inspiration (1 Corinthians 10:4; 2 Timothy 3:8; Acts 17:28; 1 Corinthians 15:32-33; Titus 1:12). Fifteen (15) of Jude's 25 verses are also found in part or whole in 2 Peter.

66. Revelation

Theme: Victory to Those Who Overcome.

Revelation was written during the time of Roman oppression, probably during the reign of Emperor Domitian (AD 90-95). Irenaeus, a second century church leader said, "John received the revelation no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian's reign." (Irenaeus, *Against Heresy* V, xxx,3.)

The end of Roman opposition to Judaism came with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Empire began to oppose Christianity and to be Christian became criminal. Christianity was opposed, not so much on religious grounds, but on pseudo- political grounds. Emperor worship came to be an accepted religion and the Caesars (particularly Nero, Dometian, and later Diocletian) thought themselves gods. Busts of the Caesars were carried from village to village during tax time. The inhabitants of the Empire lined up to pay tribute to Caesar, both financially and religiously. Incense was to be pinched and placed in the fire before the bust of Caesar while stating the phrase, "Caesar is Lord". To refuse either the taxation or homage was equal with treason, and punishable by death.

A sharp dilemma arose for the adherents of Christianity. Jesus is Lord, not Caesar. The words of Jesus came to mind, "*He who confesses me before men, I will also confess before my Father in heaven, but he who rejects me before men, I will reject before my Father in heaven,*" (Matthew 10:32-33). To confess Caesar as Lord was to disown Jesus as Lord. To reject Caesar as Lord was to die on grounds of treason against the Empire. It is against this background that the book of Revelation is written.

The Book is written specifically to the seven churches of the Province of Asia (1:11). They were to be among the first to experience the intense persecution from the Roman government for their confession of Christ (2:10; 13; 3:10). The main message of the book is: "Be faithful even if it means your death in doing so. The Empire will fall, God will bring them into judgment in time. If you overcome, you will receive the blessings of God.

NATURE OF THE BOOK

The book of Revelation is written in *Apocalyptic* (visionary) language. Other contemporary books of that time were also written in this literary style. Apocalyptic literature was commonly produced in times of persecution and opposition as

a means of encouraging those who were suffering for their faith. It is characterized by:

... *an intense despair of present circumstance and an equally intense hope of divine intervention*

... *the use of symbolic language, dreams, and visions*

... *by the introduction of celestial and demonic powers as messengers and agents in the process of God's purpose*

... *by supernatural deliverance for the righteous and*

... *frequently by the pseudonymous ascription of the writing to a prominent character of Biblical history (such as the book of II Esdras attributed to Ezra, and The Book of Enoch, attributed to Enoch).*

The book utilizes many common symbols from the Old Testament, such as the beast with 10 horns, taken from Daniel 7:7-8;15-25. In Daniel's time, the fourth beast was a fourth kingdom. The horns were kings in the kingdom. From Daniel's writing it seems clear that the fourth beast is the Roman Empire, which, at the time of the writing of Daniel, was yet 600 years in the future. In the Revelation, we see the great Harlot (Babylon the Great, the city representing the enemies of the followers of God; see Revelation 17:1-6; 18:10) sitting on the back of the beast with ten horns (The Empire; see Revelation 17:8-18, and compare Daniel 7:7-25). The city of Rome, which is set on 7 hills (17:9) is the seat of Rome's power and basically directs the beast. She is pictured drinking the blood of the saints (17:6).

The beast had "authority over every tribe and people, and tongue and nation" (13:7), which is the universal rule of Rome under the Caesars. The "Mark" which men would be compelled to carry in order to buy or sell (13:16,17) was the term used for the imperial seal which was stamped upon wills, contracts, bills of sale, and other documents to give them legal standing (G.A. Deissmann,). Irenaeus also alludes to the fact in his writings that some of the Christians had been prevented from buying and selling legally in the Empire because of their denial that Caesar is Lord. They did not have "the mark of the beast" or the seal of Rome.

The main thrust of the book is to demonstrate that the prophecies about Rome in Daniel (written 600 years previously) were still valid and God had every intention of protecting the saints and His Kingdom. He would prevail, as would all who remain faithful to Him and the testimony of Jesus.

OUTLINE

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2-3 The need for the 7 churches of Asia to prepare to overcome

Chapters 4-5 The apocalyptic section. Comfort for people who were to see the beginning of the persecution which would stretch for over two centuries.

Chapter 6: The seals

Chapter 7 Comfort for the people of God. The righteous receive the seal which preserves them through tribulation

Chapters 8-9 The seven trumpets which come under the 7th seal. The trumpets in the O.T. were to gain attention and an assembly for war. The trumpets are warnings on the ungodly, the oppressors of God's people who expressly refuse to repent.

Chapters 10-12 Conflict and Comfort. The saints are assured of ultimate judgment on the oppressors. Chapter 11 speaks of the conflict which at times "appears" to be going in favor of the enemy. Ultimately, triumph for the church will occur. Chapter 12 makes it very clear that the Devil is a three time loser. All this comfort is needed because of the horrors of what is about to be shown.

Chapter 13 Spells out clearly the three enemies of the church. The Dragon (Devil), and "sea beast" (Rome - the civil power), and the "earth beast" (Rome - the religious movement of Emperor worship). A fearsome trio, shown for the purpose of warning the saints.

Chapters 14-15 More assurance. In spite of the nature of the enemy, the 144,000 are singing a "new song", and the enemies are trampled in the winepress of the fierce wrath of God, and the 144,000 (a symbolic number) are declared victorious!

Chapter 16 The seven bowls of the wrath of God. These come under the heading of the 7th seal. All the wrath of God is poured out and complete victory is accomplished, even though the **details** of the victory are left for later chapters

Chapter 17-18 The fall of the city which ruled the world in John's day (17:9,18). Chapter 17 tells how she falls, and chapter 18 gives a description of her fall.

Chapter 19 The joy (likened to a wedding feast) of the saints at the fall of the enemy and speaks of the fall of that enemy from the divine point of view. The fall was at the hands of Jesus. Her own internal strife which was emphasized in chapter 17 is marked here as the result of Jesus' work. The enemy died in conflict with Jesus, not by accident!

Chapter 20 Describes the utter defeat of Satan in a matter of using Rome against the church. Total and complete victory is

told in terms of a resurrection of the martyred saints; a resurrection to thrones on which they reign a thousand years. The enemies are thrown into the lake of fire.

Chapters 21-22 The glorious description of the victorious "New Jerusalem", the bride of the Lamb. Her glorious vindication is described in terms of a super city made of gold and jewels. There is a river of life and the tree of life. The book closes with a solemn warning that its message is to be taken seriously and not changed (22:18-19).

Introduction To The Bible Test

1. Who were the first two people?

2. How many books make up the Bible?
3. How many sons did Noah have? What were their names?
4. What man was the beginning of the Jewish nation?
5. What was his first wife's name?
6. What was the name of his first son? Who was the mother of the child?
7. How many sons did Jacob have? Name them.
8. How many books are in The Law Of Moses? Name them.
9. How long was Israel in Egypt?
10. What was the purpose of the Egyptian bondage?
11. Who was the man whom God used to deliver Israel out of Egyptian bondage?
12. How long did Israel wander in the wilderness?
13. What was the cause of the wilderness wanderings? Where is this incident recorded in the Bible?

14. Who was the appointed leader of Israel after Moses?
15. What was the first city that Israel conquered as they entered Canaan during the period known as "Conquest and Settlement of Canaan?"
16. What book in the Bible records this event?
17. Upon their entrance into Canaan, Israel failed to do one major item that eventually caused their demise. What was it?
18. Who were judges and what was their function?
19. Who were the kings that ruled Israel during the period of the United Kingdom? How long was that period?
20. Why did Israel have these kings?
21. What caused the Kingdom of Israel to divide? Where is this event recorded in the Bible?
22. What were the names of the two divisions during the Divided Kingdom?
23. What were the names of the first two kings of these two divisions?
24. What nation conquered Israel and took them captive? What year did this occur?
25. What was the major reason for the demise and eventual destruction of Israel?
26. What nation took Judah captive and in what year?

27. How long was Judah in captivity?
28. What prophet was left in Jerusalem during this captivity? What two books in the Bible did he write?
29. What two prophets were taken into captivity in this time period and what books did they write?
30. What was the name of the king who issued the edict for the Jews to return to Jerusalem after the captivity?
31. Who was the man who led the rebuilding of the temple after the captivity?
32. The people hesitated in rebuilding the temple, so God raised up a prophet to call them to repentance and to refocus their attention on the temple project. Who was the prophet?
33. Who was the religious reformer after the Babylonian captivity?
32. Who led the Jews in the project to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem?
33. How long did it take the Jews to rebuild the walls? Where is this recorded?
34. There are four Gospel accounts of the life of Christ. Why are there four and to whom are they primarily addressed?
35. What book in the Bible records the first 33 years of the church?
36. How many missionary journeys did Paul complete? Where are they recorded?
37. Can you list three problems Paul attempts to correct in the book of 1 Corinthians?

38. Can you list three problems Paul addresses in the church at Colossae?
39. What is the major problem Paul addresses in 1 Thessalonians?
40. What is the topic Paul addresses in the book of Philemon?
41. While Paul was in prison in Rome, he wrote four books known as The Prison Epistles. What are those four books?
42. What is the major problem Paul corrects in the book of Galatians?
43. Hosea 1:1 says, "*The word of the LORD that came to Hosea son of Beeri during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel*" What period of Biblical history is this written in and how do you know that?

Place these events in chronological order #1 - #14

- Egyptian bondage
- Period of Silence
- Beginning of the Hebrew family
- Period of the Messiah
- Babylonian Captivity
- Hebrew Monarchy (United Kingdom)
- Period of the Judges
- Period of the New Testament Church
- Wilderness Wanderings
- The Divided Kingdom
- Period of the Beginnings
- Restoration Back to Canaan
- The Exodus
- Conquest and Settlement of Canaan

List the Books of the Bible in Order

<i>1</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>9</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>11</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>12</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>13</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>14</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>15</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>16</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>17</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>18</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>19</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>20</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>21</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>22</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>66</i>