SUMMARY OF THE BIBLE

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INTRODUCTION

This brief summary is not intended to replace the joy and benefit of reading the Bible but rather is intended as a reminder of what has previously been read. Another purpose of this summary is to help interested Christians to recall messages that are given to them by others.

Also, to those who have not read the Bible, I hope that the summary might inspire them, to further explore the life changing benefits that arise after reading the Bible.

I am a Chartered Accountant (equivalent to a Certified Public Accountant in USA) who has received no formal theology education and therefore, it could not be used by theology students to supplement their work and could only be a memory jogger to inspire further research.

My motivation in initially starting this project was to provide a short introduction to the Bible for my family members who have a full life and appear to spend very little time reading the Bible.

In completing this work, I was supported and helped by my wife, Vivienne who diligently read a draft and corrected many errors. I appreciate her significant contribution.

**GENESIS**

**Author and date**

This is the first book in the Bible. The author is unknown. We do not know the actual date of writing, but it could be 1000 B C

**Nature**

 The book contains ancient stories which took place in the world which appears foreign to ours. Upon reflection, it is clear that there are connections to every time in place. The characters struggle with family conflict, with fears, with violence, and with waiting on the promises of God. Some of the stories are frightening and raises the question what kind of God would wipe out a whole world leaving only one man’s family and a group of animals. Furthermore, what God would ask a man to sacrifice his son? Throughout the book it is clear that God is always trying to get closer to people, quite literally wrestling with Jacob letting Haggar name him.

**Love of God**

 Genesis celebrates the radical love of God who helps desperate, often sinful people showing this trust of God and putting their lives in danger. Abraham, as an example, he was made father of the Jewish people, Jacob cheats his brother, but God protects him and blesses him. No sins can disqualify us from God from God’s blessing unless we completely turn our backs on him.

**The Creation**

God, by His word, created the world in seven days out of nothing but a formless void. He plants a garden named Eden and He creates man to whom he says can do anything he wants, but he cannot eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God makes a woman, Eve out of man’s rib to be the men’s partner. A snake tempts the woman to eat from the tree. The man eats, as well and they hide from God. God punishes them by making them leave the garden. The man is Adam and the woman Eve.

**Cain & Abel**

Adam and Eve have two children Cain and Abel. Cain kills Abel and God punishes him and he is left to wander the earth**.**

**Noah**

People grow more and more evil and ignore God who decides to wipe out humanity. Noah is not evil, and God asks him to build a large boat. God then sends a flood and only Noah and his family plus two of each animal are saved on the boat. Noah’s family re-populates the world.

**Abram**

God tells Abram to take his family to a new land, as He plans a new nation. They pass through Egypt, but Abram is afraid the Egyptian’s will kill him in order to take his wife Sarai who was beautiful. He therefore pretends they are brother and sister. The Egyptian king sees them and kidnaps her, planning to marry her, and God strikes his house with plagues. The king, therefore let her go.

Abram asks God for children & God says he will have many descendants. Sarah is incapable of having children and suggests Abram has sex with servant Hagar. Her son is Ishmael. After Abram’s death Ishmael has many children as God promised.

God renames Abram, Abraham, meaning father of many children. In Gerar Abraham again claims Sarah is his sister and that King wants to marry her but is warned in a dream that she is married. Shortly after, Sarah has a son Isaac. To test Abraham, God suggests Abraham sacrifices Isaac which he was prepared to do but God stops him. Sarah dies and Abraham remarries while old but has more children.

**Lot**

Sodom and Gomorrah are two evil towns who capture Lot, Abraham’s nephew. Abraham leads an army to rescue Lot. God urges Lot to leave Sodom where he had returned, before God destroys the city. God warned them not to look back, but Lot’s wife looked back, and God turns her into a pillar of salt. Lot and his daughters get drunk, and he makes them pregnant.

**Isaac**

Abraham’s servant finds Rebekah as a wife for Isaac who has twin sons Esau & Jacob. Isaac is near death, and he asks Esau, his favorite, to go hunt meat for him. Rebekah tells Jacob to pretend to Isaac to be Esau. Isaac blesses him and promises the inheritance. Isaac and Esau find out and Jacob runs away to save his life.

**Jacob**

Jacob falls in love with Rachel and wants to marry her. After 7 years’ work, he is tricked by her father Laban into marrying Leah, her sister. But after another 7 years he and Rachel marry. Laban and his sons believe that Jacob is becoming too wealthy, and he takes his family back to Canaan.

Esau meets Jacob and with the help from an angel, they reconcile.

Jacob’s daughter Dinah is raped by a prince who agrees to be circumcised to have her and others in marriage, but he is killed by Dinah’s brothers.

God sends Jacob to Bethel and their youngest son Benjamin is born.

**Joseph**

Joseph is Jacob’s favorite son and gives him a special coat. Jacobs brothers are jealous and sell him into slavery and tell his father that he was killed by a stranger. Joseph becomes a servant of the king in Egypt and is jailed when the king’s wife claims he raped her. In prison he gets a reputation for interpreting dreams and interprets the kings dream as a warning for a famine. The king makes him governor of Egypt. Some years later Jacob and his family are hungry following the famine and heard they could buy grain in Egypt. Joseph recognizes his family, and they are reconciled, and Jacob blesses his 12 sons who stay in Egypt for some years.

**Analysis:** This book deals with the creation of man Verse 1.26 “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. and let them rule over …….” And 2. 23 “And the man said………. She shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man.”

This book was written in ancient times but clearly shows characters with family struggles, with fears and violence while waiting on the promises of God.

The book clearly shows the strong love of God albeit sometimes terrifying. This book demonstrates that God is sovereign and loves His creation.

**EXODUS**

**Author and date**

No one knows who was the author of Exodus and the best guess of the time that it was prepared range from 1446 BC and 1296 BC. . This book takes up where Genesis leaves off. shows that God saves us, claims us and guides us.

**Israel’s Adventure with God**.

The sons of Joseph followed him to Egypt. Joseph died but his family increased quicker and more prosperously than was acceptable to the Egyptians. and the land was filled with their descendants. A new Pharoah came to power and he feared the Hebrews so plotted to weaken them. He tried to arrange for Hebrew midwives to kill the sons born but they refused. The Egyptians were very harsh to the Hebrews who were treated like slaves. Pharaoh ( the Egyptian name for king) makes a rule that every Israelite baby boy is to be killed. One woman has a son and sends him down the river and leaves him near the reeds with the hope that he would be saved. Pharoah’s daughter found him and hired an Israeli woman to find a nurse and she found his mother to care for the baby. Pharaoh’s daughter named him “ Moses”. When Pharoah heard about this, he wanted Moses to be killed but Moses fled.

When Moses is tending the flock, God comes to him in a bush that burns but he’s not consumed, and He calls Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses pleads with God to pick someone else, but God refuses. Moses asks who should he say sent him to ask for the people to be freed , God replied, “ I AM WHO I AM” Moses wanted to know how he could show that he was sent by God and God tells him to throw his staff on the ground and it turns into a serpent and as instructed, he picked up the tail and it was a staff again. He also had his hand turn leprous and be healed. Pharoah was even more demanding of the Israeli workers Moses and his brother Aaron obeys God and asks Pharoah to let the Israelis go but Pharoah refuses. God then enables Moses to use his staff to turn the Nile to blood. Moses asks again and is refused again and with his staff, he struck the water and the fish all died. . God then sends frogs, and ten more plagues , insects and dust was turned into boils on the people but Pharoah hardened still refused to free them. Hail was brought to the area which killed livestock and locusts were also introduced but Pharaoh did not believe that this was done by God. God then tells Moses that the next plague will kill all firstborn sons.

God tells Israelite households to kill a lamb and smear its blood on their front door. When God passes through the land to kill the Egyptian sons, he will see the blood of the doors and not kill the Israeli sons. The holiday celebrating this night becomes known as PASSOVER which shall be celebrated as a feast to the Lord. For seven days the Israeli shall eat unleavened bread but whoever eats anything leavened from the first to the seventh day shall be cut off from Israel. Holy assemblies were also defined. .This was then to be the feast of the Unleavened bread which should be observed by future generations. There were other defined rules for eating leavened bread.

When the Egyptians saw the effect of the plague, the Israelis are allowed to leave and they do so by night, but pharaoh soon changed his mind and sent his soldiers after them. They cross the Red Sea which was parted when Moses stretched his hand over the sea so as to ease their passing. When the Israelis had crossed, Moses stretched out his hand and the waters rolled back over the pursuing Egyptian soldiers who are drowned. Moses and Miriam, his sister, lead the people in song praise to God.

God provided the people with water and bread from heaven and meat at night while they were travelling. Moses also taught them to observe the sabbath.

Moses had difficulties with the travelers and called on the Lord for help when they had needs.

Amalek came and fought against the Israelis, but Moses instructed Joshua to assemble men to fight against Amalek and Moses and Aaron sat on the hill. The Israelis prevailed when Moses raised his hand.

Moses was joined by Jethro his father-in-law and family including his daughter who was Moses’s wife. Jethro was a priest, and he counsels with Moses.

The Lord told Moses to prepare for Him to come down in a cloud on the third day on Mount Sinai. The people were forbidden from going on the mountain. The Lord descended on the mountain in fire and smoke and the mountain quaked violently as he called Moses to the top of the mountain with Aaron.

 He also gave them the ten commandments for right living. These commandments were as follows:

**1**.**You shall have no other gods. “I am” the Lord your God.**

**2. You shall not make yourself an idol or any likeness of what is in heaven. You shall not worship them or serve them.**

**3. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.**

**4. Remember the sabbath and keep it holy and while you work on 6 days you , your family and servants will not work on the 7th day and will keep it sabbath.**

**5. Honor your father and mother.**

**6. You shall not murder.**

**7. You shall not commit adultery.**

**8. You shall not steal.**

**9. You shall not bear false witness.**

**10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s house, his wife or servant or his possessions.**

There were other ordinances covering the time that a slave can serve, property rights , keeping trust, keeping an oath and honoring loan obligations. Also covering responsibility for woman who are seduced, not allowing sorceress to live and banning lying with an animal, making sacrifices to other gods, treating widows fairly and generally living a decent life within the expanded interpretation of the ten commandments.

You will celebrate three feasts each year and the males shall appear before the Lord:

1. The Feast of Unleavened Bread which must be eaten for seven days and none shall appear before him empty handed.
2. The Feast of Harvest of the first fruits of your labor with the choice fruits being brought to the Lord,
3. The Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year as they gather the fruit of their labors.

God promises an angel to guide them and if they obey, they will be protected.

God tells the people to give offerings, however much they feel moved to give, so as to build the tabernacle for worship. They also make an ark of the covenant. Details of sizes of the tabernacle, including the gold covering which were described as were the curtains , veil and screen, the bronze altar as well as the court for hangings . The clothes for the priests and God lays out many rules for tabernacle worship and the rules of priesthood as well as the sacrifices to be made , food for the priests and the use of incense.

While Moses is talking to God on the mountain some of the Israelites decide to melt the gold into a golden carvings to worship instead of God. God becomes angry and arranges for them to be killed. Moses was able to save the people of Israel from His wrath, but Moses angrily destroyed their gold idols and threw the Stone Commandments to the floor and they were broken. At Gods instructions, Moses made two similar tablets which he took up Mount Sinai. God makes a covenant with Moses requiring the people to love God who is jealous and molten idols are prohibited. When Moses returns from the mountain, his face shone, and the people were scared to come near him. Moses spoke to the people and explained the rules governing them. The tabernacle was completed, the priests’ clothes were made, and the tabernacle was opened, and a cloud covered the tent of meeting which was the place that Moses used to meet the people but now he could not enter the tent.

**Analysis:** This book shows God’s faithfulness to the covenant and provides Israel with guidelines for holy living. It also raises some questions as why God is so vicious. It is a clear message that sin hurts many people and us Christians do believe there is a Judgement Day beyond death. It is clear that we are now in a very different time. Jesus has come and was sacriced for our sins and now, we are waiting for His return.

The New Testament is our basis for not following all the rules in Exodus, and throughout Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. We do not follow the food rules nor animal sacrifices. Jesus is now the Christian path to Heaven. However, Exodus is part of God’s word and we should follow the principles set out. We should all consider and remind ourselves of the Ten Commandments and the need to follow them.

**LEVITICUS**

The name of this book pertains to the Levites and it presents God’s plans for His chosen people.

**Author and date**

We do not know who wrote Leviticus, but most scholars think it was written by the Priestly tradition. It was probably written between 200- and 500-years BC. Some believe it was written by Moses between 1446 and 1406 BC.

**Rules for Holiness**

This book starts with the word “Then” which implies that it is a continuation of Exodus, but the more prevalent view is that it is a book standing on its own. This is God’s plan for His people for them to live in a holy manner. Some describe it as a “Holiness Code” God requires absolute obedience from His people.

Rules are given for burnt offerings and the reasons for giving them are :

 For atonement where an animal is given in place of the person who has sinned and deserves to die, or

 To thank God and praise Him.

The offering should be the best the person has to offer and not a wounded or sick animal. Flour with oil on it and frankincense on it, is an option so that even the poor can make offerings.

Aaron and his sons, Nadab and Abihu, are ordained to priesthood. There are detailed instructions covering the actions that the priests will take in accepting offerings.

Guilt offerings are explained.

 Unfaithfulness to the Lord

 Deceiving by robbing or extorting a security entrusted in him, which the loss be restored

 Finding what was lost and lying about it, restitution must be made

 All these require an offering to the Lord.

 The role of the Priests is described in great detail.

The new priests Nadab and Abihu immediately break the rules about how incense is to be burned. God consumes them with fire as punishment for free misusing their power.

God gives rules covering:

 Which foods are to be consumed? An acceptable animal is one with a divided hoof and it

 chews the cud. An undivided hoof such as a camel, rock badger, rabbit and pig are not to

 be eaten. What is in the water with fins and scales are good but not those without fins &

 scales. Birds such as the eagle, vulture and buzzard, kite, falcon ostrich, owl the pelican

 the bat are all unacceptable for one to eat. Winged insects that walk on fours are not

 detestable. The locust, cricket and grasshopper are acceptable but not the crocodile,

 lizard or reptile. Crawling animals are detestable as well.

 Women to purify themselves after a male childbirth are unclean for 7 days and for two

 weeks after a female birth. The son shall be circumcised on the eighth day. Purification

 of the woman must take place. An offering of a lamb must be made. (Jesus became the sacrificial lamb in the New Testament.)

 People with skin diseases to be checked by Priests and if it is leprosy the person is unclean,

 other skin diseases require 7 days isolation before being re-checked. Similar rules for

 burns, boils, scales and head infections, bright spots and balding.

 Male genital discharges render them unclean, and rules are described to cleanse him

 Women with menstrual periods are unclean for seven days.

There is also a special day of atonement. A bull and goat must be sacrificed by those who have sinned. Aaron was required to do so.

Incest of any form is forbidden as is intercourse with your neighbors’ wife and homosexuality, sex with animals and sex with a woman having her menstrual period.

 Having idols or molten gods is forbidden.

 Do not reap crops so that nothing is left for the needy.

 Do not steal nor deal falsely with others nor swear in His name.

 Do not oppress your neighbor nor curse a deaf person or mistreat the blind. No injustice

 slander, vengeance, bearing grudge or breed together two kinds of animals.

 Witchcraft, mediums or spiritualists and rituals are forbidden.

 Kindness to the poor and strangers in your land is required and the aged are to be honored.

 Adultery, lying and cheating are forbidden.

 Blasphemy and murder are forbidden upon penalty of death.

 The Sabbath must be observed

Rules are prescribed for Priests covering defiling themselves, appearances, marrying as well as his living standards

The Sabbath must be observed and Holidays which must be celebrated are explained as follows:

 Passover to celebrate the exodus from Egypt

 The Feast of Unleavened Bread which must be eaten for seven days

 The Feast of the Harvest with full details of what must be eaten.

 The Day of Atonement when one must humble their souls and bring offerings. No work

 Is permitted

 Feast of Booths with no work on the first day

If a man kills another he will die and one who takes the life of an animal shall make good. If a neighbor is injured, he may respond in a like nature . i.e., an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth. People can vow to give gifts to God, but everyone must tithe so as to give 10% of what they have to God.

Moses then met with God on the mountain, and he explained how the sabbath will be kept by growing crops for 6 years and giving the land a sabbath and in the fifteenth year, having a jubilee year.

The law of Redemption in terms of which property owners are to be saved from being poor or being disadvantaged and the Levites have permanent right of redemption for their houses. Similarly, poor countrymen are to be saved and given silver at interest rates which are not usurious and food at cost. He shall not be enslaved but employed. Your slaves are to come from the pagan nations around you.

The Lord emphasized that He expects the people not to bow to idols and He expects the people to keep the Sabbaths, revere His sanctuary, walk in His statutes and keep His commandments. He promises good rains to produce good crops, peace in their land and He will eliminate harmful beasts and they will chase their larger enemies. But if they do not follow Him, He will appoint a fever over them, they will sow seed uselessly, you will waste away, and they will be struck down by their enemies. If the people act with hostility towards God, they will suffer plagues, beasts in the field which shall bereave your children and destroy your cattle and worse things will happen resulting in them perishing. But if the confess their iniquity, I will honor the commitment to their forefathers and not destroy them.

The Chapter ends with the Lord setting out rules for valuation of property which are the commandments for the sons of Israel.

**Analysis :** The rules in this book are God’s word and we should follow the principles but Jesus has given us Christians a basis to follow His word and examples and not the rituals of that time.

Giving an animal as a sacrifice was appropriate when most people were farming but to-day, we are not farming and should make other sacrifices. (In the New Testament we learn that Jesus became the sacrificial lamb for all believers, and we do not sacrifice animals.) Similarly, the food laws applied to a time when there were, not the same basis to clean animals and they are therefore not necessary now, but the principle is unchanged. The Bible also makes it clear that sex is not dirty but it is a gift of God to celebrate in marriage and in Romans 1.27 denounces man’s relationships with other men.

**NUMBERS**

**Author and date**

The author is generally attributed to Moses except for the account of Balaam. It is generally believed that the final form was edited by the priestly group. It was probably written in 1446 to 1406 BC. The bulk of this book deals with laws, regulation and experience of Israel in the wilderness.

**Living as Children of a Jealous God**

Moses is asked by God to take a census of all Israelis as the group have grown much larger people than they were in Egypt. He says adult men over 20 years of age can be included in Israel’s army. He names men who shall stand with Moses. The Levites were however exempted as they were to take care of the tabernacle.

God made arrangements for these large families to stay in camps.

Aaron’s sons were anointed into priesthood but two died when offering strange fire before the Lord.

God gives duties and rules for various tasks of the priests. He also defined the roles and duties of families --- the Kohathites, the Gershonites and the Merarites.

God instructed that the lepers and the those with a discharge as well as those who touched a dead person, should be moved out of the camp. God also required restitution for sins of mankind. A law of jealously is described to punish women who act unfaithfully to their husbands.

The Law of the Nazarites is described by the Lord. When they make a vow, there are rules for them shaving their heads, consuming wine and strong alcohol. Provisions are also made for them to make offerings.

Numbers chapter seven begins with a flashback to when the tabernacle was built recording the gifts each of the tribes of Israel offered to God. God gives rules for purification of the priests and celebration of Passover. The movement of the cloud and fire and Israelites were told whether God wanted them to move or to stay. To call meetings God told Moses to make two silver trumpets. Then God leads them out of Mount Sinai.

The people keep complaining about the manna and want to return to Egypt and get meat to eat with certain vegetables. Moses is tired of the people and asks God to kill him. God tells Moses to call 70 leaders to a meeting at which He tells Moses He will provide quail meat in such quantity for such a period, that they they’ll be sick of it and He gives Moses’ companions to be his leaders too.

Miriam and Aaron, his sister and brother, become jealous of Moses’ authority. God gives Miriam leprosy, but she was cured after being excluded for seven days. .

God sends spies to Canaan, the land he is giving Israel, and while they acknowledged the good qualities of the land, all the all of them, except Caleb, say will be too difficult to invade Canaan. The people weep and decide to go back to Egypt, but Caleb and Joshua tell the people not to do so and the people threaten to kill them. God considers abandoning Israel and Moses explains how this will be interpreted asks Him to reconsider. God decides to forgive the people but none of the spies will enter the promised land except Caleb and Joshua. They will stay in the wilderness for 40 years, a year for each day, the men spent spying, until all the adults and children will then go to the land. The men who said it would be too difficult to invade Canaan, all, but for Caleb’s son, died from a plague.

God gives more rules for proper offerings and sacrifices. The Lord also protected Moses and Aaron from a group who assembled in front of them.

Miriam died and was buried in Zin.

A group of Levites become angry with Moses and Aaron and try to test their authority. God responds that he will kill the whole congregation, but they beg him to reconsider. God decides just to kill the Levites who question Moses’ authority and by extension God’s authority.

God gives more rules to the priest about some of their offerings becoming theirs and for the purification of people who have touched a dead body and so become unclean.

The people then complain about lack of water and fruit and they want to return to Egypt. God tells Moses and Aaron to call water out of a rock, but they disobey and hit the rock with a rod instead. God then tells Moses and Aaron that they will not enter the promised land. Aaron died on the mountain as a result of them not obeying instructions for using the rod.

When the king of Arad heard that the Israelis were coming to Canaan, he fought them and took some captive. The people vowed to the Lord that they would destroy their cities. The people were again unhappy when Moses led them around the Red Sea. The Lord sent serpents against them and the people, but a bronze serpent made by Moses on the Lord’s instructions, saved those who looked at the bronze serpent.

Then Israel sent a message to king of the Amorites asking if they could pass through their land without using their water. This was refused and they gathered all their people against Israel who took all their cities. The king of Bashan came out against the Israel but were overcome.

The king of Moab, one of Israel’s enemies wants to pay a prophet , Balaam, to curse Israel but God tells Balaam not to do so. The king then asks Balaam to go to Moab again and God agrees. The angel of the Lord stands in the middle of the road, but Balaam cannot see the angel, but donkey keeps trying to go to the angel and he is beaten. The donkey talks and asks him to stop. The angel of the Lord tells Balaam to go to the kingdom but to say only what God commands. God tells Balaam to refuse to curse Israel and to bless him and praise God in front of the king, which Balaam does.

The Israelis began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab and the Lord told Moses to slay them. Phineas the grandson of Aaron killed the man from Israel and the Mediante woman he brought in and this pleased God. The Lord told Moses to strike the Mediante.

The Lord asked Moses to take a census of all males from 20 years of age, and rules about inheritance of property are agreed with the Lord. God gives more rules for offerings and vows in terms of which they are to be bound to their vows.

The Lord sends them to war against Medianites where they killed the king and every male but captured the woman and little ones. Moses was mad that they saved all the woman and directed that only those who had not known a man intimately be saved. The gold and other booty was shared among the people and cattle were allocated to the priests.

Some families wanted to stay in the acquired lands, but this was not acceptable to the Lord, so their wives and children remained in Gilead and they proceeded over the Jordan. The Law of Possessing the land was agreed before passing into Canaan. The Levites were to be given six cities of refuge and land was allocated and borders established.

**Analysis :** In this book, God kills people and threatens to abandon Israel. It is a reminder of what happens when people rebel against God. To us Christians, this is not the God portrayed by Jesus. God mercifully gives Israel many chances and He is patient with them. God involves Moses and Aaron to pray for the people and this is a clear example of the need for us all to pray to God. God wants to consume our lives and wants us to be involved in His work.

**DEUTERONOMY**

**Author and date**

Deuteronomy which means “a copy of the law” and some claim it to be Moses’ farewell address . It probably originated from many years of oral testimony it was possibly authored by the same historians who wrote Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings.

It is the book most often quoted by Jesus and there are more than eighty references in the New Testament.

**The History after exodus**

After 40 years of wondering, God tells the Israelis to go to the land He had promised their forefathers. Leaders for each tribe were appointed gives Israelis more laws and instructions. Cases will be tried righteously and impartially between fellow countrymen or aliens. They appointed a group to visit and evaluate the land which they described as good land the Lord was to give to them. Some did not want to follow God’s plan and only Caleb and Joshua who will lead them. They proceeded through the various lands under God’s protection.

**God’s laws**

They had the Ten Commandments which they were told they must keep. In addition, God tells them that he will bless them if they obey but punish them if they reject God. Moses reminded them of the opportunity they had to hear Gods words from the fire and reminded them that they will find God if they seek him. He is compassionate to those who do not forget His covenant. Moses repeated the Ten Commandments.

Moses emphasized that they must obey the Lord and keep all His statutes and commands to prosper. You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your might and you shall teach your sons to do so as well. They must only worship God and not worship other gods and, you must not put Him to test. When you enter the chosen land, you shall not intermarry with them.

 The Lord brought these people out of slavery, but it took forty years to be sure that that would follow his commandments and live His required life. The people were reminded of the sins they committed. They were told that God required –

 Fear the Lord and walk in His ways and love Him to serve Him with all your heart and soul

 Keep His commandments and His statutes. Exercise justice for all, including aliens.

They were told that the land they were entering was not like Egypt but a land of hills and valleys which will yield crops abundantly.

These are additional laws they were instructed to keep:

 Destroy all places, including altars, sacred pillars , engraved images and names where those nations served their gods.

 They were to seek the Lord at a place that He chooses. At that place, they shall bring burnt offerings, sacrifices , tithes, offerings and the first born of your herd. You will eat there as well but they must keep the food restrictions as specified.

 You must not listen to the words of a prophet, shun people who suggest serving other gods

In addition, God reviews the various celebration and reminds them of what belongs to God – the first born of all livestock.

The rules give particular emphasis to the following:

* They shall not eat detestable things, you may eat the ox, sheep and goat, the deer,

 roebuck, wild goat, ibex, antelope, or mountain sheep.

* You may eat the animal that has a hoof split in two and chews the cud.
* You may not eat the camel, rabbit, or rock badger nor pig
* Also, do not eat fish that do not have fins and scales
* You may eat clean birds but not an eagle, vulture, buzzard, kite,

 falcon, raven, ostrich, owl, sea gull, hawk, pelican, cormorant, stork, heron, hoopoe, and bat

* You may not eat anything that dies of itself.

 They shall tithe their crops

 At the end of each seven years, they shall grant a remission of debt except to a foreigner.

 Kindness to be shown to the poor and to foreigners

 Celebrate the Passover and eat no leavened bread for seven days and sacrifice to the Lord

 Justice must be carried out and with witnesses, purge themselves of evil.

 Levites will receive no inheritance but shall share in all except by inheritance.

 Three cities in the land you possess shall be a sanctuary to save innocent blood only.

 They shall not move a neighbor’s boundary.

 When in war, men who have a new house which has not been dedicated or planted a

 vineyard and not used its fruit, an engaged man who has not married or is afraid and

 fainthearted they shall return. All opposing men shall be destroyed but woman, children and

 animals will be the Israelis bounty.

 They may marry a captive woman who must first shave her head, trim her nails and mourn

 her parents for a month and if not pleased with her she may go her way but not be sold.

 Rules were prescribed for inheritance to children of two wives.

 Sundry laws for dealing with other people’s assets and with woman who are not virgins

 when they marry.

 Divorce is recognized

 Rules for taking pledges are defined as are the requirement for a surviving brother at time

 of death to perform the late husband’s duty to her.

 The first fruits of all produce shall be shared with the Lord.

Moses urged the people to follow the laws and receive His blessings or suffer the defined consequences of disobedience.

Moses also explained how restoration was possible if they return to God and obey him.

Moses was 120 years old, and he told the people that God had told him that he would not go to the promised land. He said Joshua would lead the people and He appeared in a cloud in the tent when this was announced. God said He would forsake the people who will be consumed if they play the harlot with strange gods. Moses told thew people in the words of “The Song of Moses”.

Moses blessed the sons of Israel and made mention of each tribe.

Moses did not enter the promised land as he disobeyed God’s command in drawing water from the rock. Moses is shown the promised land and then he dies.

**Analysis :** This book contains details of many laws which we Christians believe we do not have to follow. We interpret Jesus’ death as punishment for our sins BUT we should still obey God. We cannot “cherry pick” the laws we will follow but rather be led by our more knowledgeable leaders and pastors.

A key verse The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

**JOSHUA**

**Author and date**

The first book of “The Prophets” is named after Joshua. We do not know who wrote Joshua. It could be Joshua or Samuel. The book records events in about 1300 BC

**Gods Charge to Joshua**

Joshua was appointed to lead the people after Moses his death and God promises to help him lead the people. God says, “be strong and courageous, for you shall give the people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give to them.”

 Joshua sent two spies into the land of Canaan, the promised land. They go and stay at the house of Rahab, a non-Israelite. She knew what the Lord had done to help the Israelis and therefore, protects the spies when the king asks if she saw them. She and her family are promised to be saved when the Israelite army takes over.

God tells Joshua to send the Israelis to cross the Jordan River which parts as they enter so that they can carry the ark of the covenant to remind them of God’s promise. They build the memorial of 12 stones from the middle of the Jordan River, one for each tribe, to remember what God did that day. All the Israelite men are circumcised a second time as a reminder that they belong to God and they celebrate Passover

They march around Jericho for six days and on the seventh the wall fell down and they enter and kill all the people except for Rehab and her family. All the gold they find is supposed to be diverted to God, but some Israelites take it for themselves and many soldiers die in the next battle.

After that, they sent only 3,000 men to Ai who were defeated. God explained to Joshua that he was not with those men as the people had taken banned bounty. Joshua made the people give up banned things and they had to give them up. Achan who took a large amount of gold and silver and returned it, but the Israelis stoned him to death. The Israelis then totally destroy Ai by using a tactic to lure the soldiers from the city which was burned when they had no defense. The people then build an altar and make sacrifices to God. Joshua reads all of God’s law to the people again.

The Gibeonites have heard of all that God has done for the Israelites and what had happened in Jericho and Ai. They know that they will all die if God tells them to attack and they pretend to be from a faraway land and offer to be servants to the Israeli. The king of Jerusalem and four other kings hear about the destruction of Jericho and Ai, so they decide to attack Gibeon. Joshua and his warriors went out to meet these armies and struck them and they fled. The Lord threw stones from heaven on the fleeing soldiers. Five kings hid in a cave as their soldiers were destroyed. The kings were brought out of the cave and killed.

Makkedah was captured and then Joshua defeated Libnah, before proceeding to Lachish which was also captured. The king of Gezer also came to help Lachish and Joshua defeated them leaving no survivors. He went from Lachish to Eglon and destroyed everyone there. Hebron and Debir were the next targets and were lost in the same manner. Then Joshua struck Negev. He had struck the people as far as Gaza and all the country of Goshen.

Hazor, Shimron, Achshaph in the north hill country and Arabahin the South and Amorite, Hittite, Perizzite, Jebusite , Hivite combined to fight the Israeli people. They were all defeated and the fled but were pursued and eliminated and Northern Palestine was taken. Joshua took all the hill country and the Negev, the land of Goshen, the Arabah from Mount Halak in the valley of Lebanon at the foot of Mount Hermon.

Canaan was then divided among the tribes. With Hebron being given to Caleb.

The Lord then asked Joshua to nominate the Cities of Refuge as described to Moses. They set aside Kadesh in Galilee, Shechem in Ephraim and Kiriatharba in Judah. Beyond Jordan easy of Jericho, they designated Bezer from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead and Golan in Bashan.

The sons of Israel then allocated forty-eight cities to the Levites.

The tribes of Reuben, the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh had received land as promised beyond the Jordan. They had departed from the sons of Israel and built an altar to rebel against the Lord. They were challenged and acknowledged that they were not forsaking the Lord. They were saved from being destroyed.

Joshua reviewed Israel’s history from slavery in Egypt to being in the promised land. He had the people agree that they would serve the Lord and that He is a Holy God who will not forgive transgressions or your sins.

Joshua who was then 110 years old died and was buried in the territory of his inheritance.

**Analysis :** The essence of this book is found in verse 1.9 “ Have I not commanded you? Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

The Israelites kill foreign people surrounding land promised to the Israelites. This book makes it clear that Joshua is carrying out God’s judgements. Those who reject Gods are judged and some may argue that not all the people attacked knew that they were rejecting God’s intention to give the land to the Israel people. We are assured that none of the innocent are in hell.

**JUDGES**

**Author and date**

Most commentators think judges was assembled by the Deuteronomist historians who wrote several books of the Bible as well. This publication was probably completed during the 500 BC era.

**Jerusalem was conquere**d

After the death of Joshua, Judah and his brother fight against the Canaanites and defeated 10,000 men. The Sons of Judah then captured Jerusalem and followed for the Canaanites in the hill country and in the low land.

The Israelites then continued to take other inhabitants. The sons of Jebusites were not driven from Jerusalem. They did not take all cities and kept some Canaanites in forced labor. The Israelites did not destroy all the altars as instructed and God said they would remain as “ thorns in your side”.

Some Israelis served the Baal and forsook the Lord. The anger of the Lord burned against them and they were plundered and sold to their enemies. God appointed judges but they did not listen.

Idolatry led the people to servitude for the king of Mesopotamia for 8 years. When the people cried to the Lord, Caleb’s nephew Othniel as a judge to lead them to war and they prevailed over Mesopotamia. Forty years later, Othniel died, and the people did evil. The Lord help Moab conquer them, and the people of Israel served them for 18 years.

The people again seek the Lord and Ehud is delivered to them and he visits the king of Moab and then as he told them that with the Lord’s support they defeated the Moab. After that came Shamgar who struck down 600 Philistines.

When the people did evil again, they were sold to the king of Canaan. Deborah is delivered judge of the people of Israel. She promises that that God will give up the Canaanite king to a woman. The Israelite army wins the battle and Jael, a woman kills their king.

The people were evil again and the power of Median prevailed. The people again asked the Lord for help and He sent a prophet to them Gideon. Gideon tested the Lord who had an angel create fire in a rock . He had Gideon destroy the altar of Baal, belonging to his father. The Lord helped Gideon choose only 300 men and the Median people had a dream of being crushed so they did not stand against the 300. This land was undisturbed for 40 years. Gideon then died leaving 70 direct descendants. Then the people prayed to the harlot Baal and did not remember the Lord their God.

Abimelech who had killed sons of Jerubbaal ruled for three years and God strengthened others against him. Gaal was planning to remove Abimelech who was warned by Zabul a leader. Abimelech continued to take over people, but a woman threw a millstone and crushed his head, so he was killed by a servant. Then Tolo who judged the people for 23 years, saved the Israelites. Followed by Jair for two years. The sons of Israel were evil again and were taken over by the Philistines.

Then again, they pleaded with the Lord, but He reminded them of what He had done for them and told them to ask the other gods to whom they had turned. They put away the foreign gods and God appointed the 9th judge Jephthah a son of Gilead. He was driven away from his family but was called back to lead the people. He judged Israel for 6 years until he died. He was followed by Ibizan who judged for 7 years. Elon then judged for 10 years. Abdon followed and died after 8 years.

The Israel people did evil again. A barren woman is told that she will have a son who will deliver Israel from the Philistines. The woman gave birth to Samson. Samson identified a Philistine woman he wanted to marry. She told her people the answer to Samson’s riddle and he killed 30 of them and his wife was given to his friend.

Samson visited his wife and wanted sex with her. He then used foxes to burn the Philistines stock of food. They responded by taking him a prisoner, but he broke the ropes , found the jawbone of a donkey and killed 1,000 men. The Lord then gave him water.

Samson went to Gaza and went in a harlot and the people wanted to kill him. He arose at midnight and escaped.

He then loved Delilah and she was bribed to invite him so they could kill him. She bound him in cords which he broke. He told her he could be weakened if his hair was bound but while he slept, she had his hair cut. Samson was captured, his eyes were gouged out and they ridiculed him. His hair began to grow, and he was called from their prison and made to stand between the pillars. He asked to feel the pillars of the house was full of 3,000 men and woman. Samson asked God to strengthen him, and he grasped the pillars. He asked to die with those who gouged his eyes. He bent with all his might and the house fell on the people and killed them as well as Samson. His brothers buried him.

Micah stole 1,100 pieces of silver from his mother, and he owned up to his mother. He returned the silver and the mother dedicated it to the Lord and she gave 200 to a silversmith for him to make a graven image and a molten image. Other idols were also made. Micah met a young man Judah, a Levite who became his priest and lived in his house. The tribe of Danites wanted property and sent spies to seek out the land. They met Judah who approved the action as meeting Gods wishes. The five spies returned to Micah’s house and took the idols and Judah went with them to be their priest. These people then went to Laish and took over the city.

A Levite with a concubine and he stayed with her father for five days and then left. Near the city of Jebusites they were offered accommodation by an old man. That night while they were making merry, men of Gibeah arrived and wanted the Levite but the house owner refused. He offered his virgin daughter and the concubine. The men seized the concubine and raped and abused her. In the morning the man found his concubine on the threshold and could not answer him. He took a knife and cut her into 12 pieces and sent these parts throughout Israel. All the men of Israel try to combine but the sons of Benjamin did not agree, and Israel came against Gibeah and Benjamin. Israel first went against Gibeah. And the Benjamin army killed 22,000 Israeli. Israel asked the Lord for guidance and he said they should proceed. A further 18,000 were lost but with the support of the Lord they planned their attack and destroyed the sons of Benjamin and Gibeah.

Provision is then made for those that survived and peace was restored.

**Analysis:** The idea of a king is important to the understanding of this book. In those days there was no king in Israel and the ruler is the judge. Gideon refuses to be judge as he says God is in charge and there are woman raped and murders.

The message is clear. When we refuse to crown God the King and Lord of our hearts, evil will result.

**RUTH**

**Author and date**

The author is unknown as is the date which is estimated between 500 and 300 BC.

**Naomi widowed**

During a famine, Elimelech from Bethlehem went to Moab with his wife Naomi had two sons. Elimelech died and Naomi stayed with her two sons who married Moabite woman Orpha and Ruth. The sons also died and Naomi and her two daughters in law returned to Judah. She urged the two girls to leave her and seek new husbands. Oprah left her but Ruth clung to Naomi.

**Ruth’s loyalty**

Ruth would not leave and said she would die with Naomiand they went to Bethlehem together.

Naomi had a relative through marriage, a wealthy man called Boaz. Ruth went to work reaping in Boaz’s fields and was noticed by him. He told Ruth to stay on his lands and she would be protected as he was aware of the way Ruth cared for Naomi.

**Ruth redeemed**

After Boaz had eaten and drunk and went to lie down, she lay down at his feet. She told him that he was a relative and she was asked to stay the night and Boaz would redeem her in the morning. In the presence of city elders Boaz told a relative that Naomi had returned and the land that belonged to Elimelech should be redeemed, and he would acquire it if the relative agreed. He told the Elders that they witnessed his purchase of Naomi’s land and that he married Ruth. She then gave birth to a son. Naomi then became the boy’s nurse. The boy was Obed who was the grandfather of David.

**Analysis:** Ruth is a wonderful story which describes the true love that God desires of us. The message is that we should not be so occupied with our lives, our business or our interests that we do not really love others. We should not be afraid or shy and we should make that extra effort to love and support others, no matter the cost.

**SAMUEL 1**

**Author and date**

It is likely that Samuel wrote the earlier parts in about 1000 BC. Some believe that Abiatha wrote later chapters .

**Life and ministry of Samuel**

Hannah was one of two wives and she was provoked by the other wife because she was unable to have children. Her husband loved her and gave her double. Hannah wept and prayed to the Lord and promised that if she had a son, she would give him to the Lord and would ensure that a razor did not come on his head. Her prayers were heard by a priest Eli who initially thought she was drunk, but she was not, and he blessed her request. She then gave birth to a son who she named Samuel. After the boy was weaned, she went to Eli and confirmed that the boy was dedicated to the Lord. Samuel was ministering before the Lord and Eli blessed his parents and prayed that they would have more children in place of the one dedicated to the Lord. Ashe then gave birth to 3 sons and 2 daughters.

Eli’s sons disobeyed and Eli did not react strongly against them. The Lord appeared before Samuel and told him that he would carry out actions against Eli because he did not rebuke his sons and the sacrifices or offerings were not an adequate response. Eli knew that the Lord spoke to Samuel and asked him what message had been given. He asked that Samuel should not hold back and therefore, Samuel told him what the Lord had promised to do. Eli accepted this and said that the Lord must do what is good for the Lord. Thus, Samuel grew and was confirmed as a prophet of the Lord.

The Philistines met Israel in battle and Israel was defeated and they lost 4,000 men. The people then took the ark of covenant and Eli’s two sons were with the ark. The Lord came into the camp and with a great shout, so that the earth resounded. The Philistines heard the shout and realized that the Lord had come into the Israeli camp and they were afraid. The Philistines were afraid but decided to fight and defeated the Israelis of which 30,000 were felled. The ark was taken as well as Eli’s two sons. A man came from the battleground and reported that the ark was taken, and his sons killed, Eli fell and died. Eli’s daughter in law was pregnant and when she heard the news of the death of her husband and Eli, she kneeled and gave birth to a son.

The Philistines placed the ark near Dagan, in the morning they found that Dagan was facedown, on the ground. They reset him and the next morning again they found him facedown and that the head and both hands were cut off and only the trunk was left. The Lord also smote them with tumors, and they did not want to keep the ark. As the ark was moved, the people were killed. They needed to return the ark to Israel, but they needed to include a guilt offering.

Gold gifts are placed in the ark and cows are hitched to a cart carrying the ark which finds its way back to the people. The people were then called to a meeting by Samuel and the Philistines heard that there was the meeting and decided to attack the Israeli. While they were marching, the Lord thundered against them and they were routed by the Israeli. The Philistines did not come anywhere close to the Israel border and the captured cities were restored to Israel.

Samuel was old and he was to appoint judges of Israel, however, his sons had turned away from the Lord and took dishonest gains and we’re not appropriate. The elders wanted a king, but Samuel did not agree. He prayed to God who told him to listen to the people who were not turning from him but from the Lord. Samuel warned the people that the king would take their possessions and use their daughters as cook and bakers. Saul was a tall handsome man who his people suggested should meet Samuel. As they were coming to the city to find Samuel, he approached them as the Lord had told Samuel about his coming. When Saul left, he was directed to meet prophets who changed him into another man. Samuel called a meeting and introduced Saul as the Lords chosen. The people responded to wish the king a long life.

**Life and ministry of Saul**

Nahash the Ammonite came up against Jabesh who offered to serve him, but he insisted on gouging each right eye to save them. Saul became aware of this and obtained support of the people of Israel who struck down the Ammonite. Saul was then made king. Samuel urged the people to follow the Lord with the king. Follow the Lord with all your heart and if you do not, you and the king will be swept away.

Saul ruled for 32 years old and was 72. The Philistines assembled a large army, and the people of Israel hid in caves and other places. Samuel warned that the people had turned away from the Lord. Saul assembled a small group and his son Jonathon crossed over to the Philistine garrison. He approached the enemy and after putting some to death the earth trembled and in fear, the enemy melted away. The men of Israel who supported the Philistines changed and returned to Israel. Saul directed that the people should not eat before evening. As they entered the forest, they found honey and did not partake of it, but Jonathan did eat the honey. When challenged by the people, he responded that his eyes had brightened. They then went against the Philistines, but they greedily took bounty. Saul told the people to kill all the men and Saul built his first altar to the Lord. Saul and Jonathon disagreed over the honey. Saul then defeated the people of Amalek and destroyed them but spared the king Agag. Samuel regretted that he had made Saul king and he confronted him. Saul acknowledged that they had benefitted from the spoils from Amalek and Samuel told him that the Lord had rejected him as king. Saul pledged allegiance to God and killed Agag. Samuel then went to Bethlehem and a number of men were presented to him, but none were acceptable to the Lord. Samuel asked for the youngest who was tending the flock. When they found him, Samuel anointed David as the king.

**Life and ministry of David**

Samuel anointed David and the Lord departed Saul who was then terrorized but he was refreshed when David played his harp. The Philistines and Israel were ready for battle when one of the Philistines named Goliath came forward. He was a giant of a man and he challenged Israel to put forward a man to fight him. The men of Israel fled. Saul told David he should not get involved but David explained how he killed a lion to save a sheep and he killed a bear. Goliath ridiculed David who responded that Goliath comes to fight with a sword, spear and javelin but David comes in the name of Lord of hosts who will deliver you into my hands. As the Philistine approached, David took a stone and slung it and struck Goliath on the forehead and he fell on his face to the ground. David then ran to the Philistine, stood over him and killed him with his sword. The men of Israel then pursued the Philistines to the gates of Ekron.

The people sang about King Saul killing thousands but David killed ten thousand and Saul became jealous. He did not want to attack David as he knew he was protected by the Lord. Saul therefore offered his daughter Merab as a wife to David as a valiant man to fight the Lords battles as he thought the Philistines would kill him. David declined as he did not want to be the king’s son-in-law Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved David and Saul agreed they could marry for the same reason. David said he was not worthy, but Saul responded that he did not have pay any dowry but merely to deliver hundreds of foreskins of the Philistines to take vengeance on the kings enemies. David went out and killed 200 and brought their foreskins to Saul. Saul then realized that the Lord was with David and his daughter Michal loved him, so they’re married. However, Saul was in David’s memory continually. Saul told Jonathan, his son, and his servants that David should be killed. Jonathan did not agree and shared this message with David. He also then persuaded his father that David had helped them and should be saved. David was restored with Saul. David then joined the army against the Philistines and defeated them with great slaughter. An evil spirit from the Lord was in Saul and while David was sitting playing harp, Saul took a spear and tried to stab him, but David slipped away. Saul then planned to kill him at night but on Michal’s advice he fled at night. Michal tricked her father that David was in bed sick, but it was an idol in the bed. David went to Samuel and told, what had happened. Saul then sent messengers to collect David for him to kill but Samuel and prophets approach the messengers and prophesied them. Saul sent other messages who were similarly prophesied. Saul then decided to go on his own, but he too was prophesied and stripped of his clothes before Samuel lay down naked.

David met with Jonathan and said he did not understand what sin he had committed against Saul. The next day was a new moon and there was to be a feast and David and Saul arrange that Saul’s recognition of David’s absence or not would be a basis for them to recognize whether David was missed by Saul. Saul missed him on the second day and when Jonathon explained, Saul was mad and said his son had chosen David over his father. Jonathon then went and met David. David went to Ahimelech the priest and took consecrated bread and Goliath’s sword. He then went Achish the king of Gath but when his servants acknowledged David, the king called him a madman and he left. He then went on and his father and family and others joined him, so he captained over 400. Then he went to Moab and left his family and moved on as advised by a prophet. Saul continued to follow David and when he heard of his visit to Ahimelech he met with the priest. The priest supported David and Saul demanded his staff to kill the priest, but they refused. Doeg did however follow his command and killed many but Ahimelech’s son escaped and went to David. The Philistines were fighting Keilah and, with the support of the Lord, David proceeded and fought the Philistines and led them away. Saul planned to pursue him there, but he escaped. Saul was aware of David’s whereabouts and Jonathan came to warn him. The Ziphites agreed to surrender David to Saul who ask them to identify all his hiding places. Saul was then called back to his land as the Philistines were made a raid on their land. Saul then took 3,000 men into the wilderness to seek David and Saul entered a cave where David’s men were sitting. They delivered Saul to David who cut the edge of his robe and then regretted doing that and Saul was allowed to leave. Saul then accepted that David could have killed him and accepted him as a son who will be king.

Samuel died and David went into the wilderness.

A man Nabal in Maon whose wife was Abigail, was approached by David’s servants but he rebuked them. This was told to Abigail who then, without her husband’s knowledge, took wine and food to them and she met David and bowed before him. David accepted her wishes, accepted her gifts and sent her home. She told Nabal what she had done and his heart died within him. He died 10 days later. When David heard that Nabal was dead, he sent a proposal of marriage to her. He married her as well as Ahinoam, Saul gave his wife Michal to Palti from Gallim.

Saul then took 3,000 troops to pursue David again, Again Saul was found sleeping and one of David’s men wanted to destroy him but David responded that no one could stretch out his hand against one anointed by the Lord and feel no guilt. Saul was then made aware of this and again accepted David who went on his way.

David then went to the land of Philistines to avoid being pursued by Saul. He stayed there a year and 4 months before leaving and taking other lands.

After Samuel’s death, Saul removed all the mediums and spiritualists. Before going to war with the Philistines, Saul disguised himself and met a medium who he asked to bring Samuel to him. She recognized the king and Samuel appeared and explained that the Lord has departed him and will give his land to the Philistines. The Philistines did not trust David and returned him to the land of the Philistines. David then proceeded in taking other land. They met a starved Egyptian who helped them recover all that Amalekites had lost. The spoils received were shared with various peoples.

The Philistines overtook Saul and killed Jonathon and Abinadab and Saul was wounded and he took his own life when his armor bearer would not kill him. The armor bearer killed himself when he saw this. The Philistines came and saw that Saul and his sons were killed and they distributed his weapons throughout the land of the Philistines.

**Analysis :** This book appears to be a long history lesson but it is a summary of the way God deals with leaders who do not follow His Word and those who are followers.

Israel wants a king and He grants that even though He wants to be King. He is rejected but stays with the Israeli people. Saul repeatedly sins and God is hurt by Saul who was corrupted by his position as king and how he tries to kill David. David and Samuel are faithful to the Lord.

Samuel 1 should lead us to understand the need to follow God and the consequences. To obey is better than the sacrifices of burnt offerings.

**SAMUEL 2**

**Author and date**

This can be considered as part of Samuel 1 and it is best to treat them as one literary unit. It is likely that the author was close to David as it portrays intimate details about him. It was probably completely in 500 BC.

**David, a man of God, after blood.**

A man escaped from the Israel camp and told David about Saul’s and Jonathon’s death and in response, David fell to the ground.

With support from God, David went to Hebron with his two wives and his men. The men of Judah and anointed him as king of the house of Judah which was the Southern half of the nation. Ner, a commander, appointed Saul’s son Ish-bosheth as king of Israel being the Northern part. Abner and David’s armies fight for years but David’s soldiers won. Abner fought with Ish-bosheth over Saul’s concubines; David gets back his wife Michal.

Joab, David’s general kills Abner which David says was wrong and he weeps at Abner’s grave. Two of Saul’s leaders kill his son and bring his head to David who is angry and has them executed. David is then appointed King of the whole of Israel. He was 30 years old when appointed and he reigned for 40 years. While king, David took more wives and concubines and he fathered more sons and daughters.

Israel wins important battles over the Philistines after receiving guidance from God. and have the Ark of the Covenant which is evidence of God’s presence with the people. Michal saw David dancing before the Lord and she despised him and she makes fun of him. They never conceive a child together.

David plans to build a temple and Nathan gives him guidance. Nathan also tells David that God plans to give him a descendant who will be perfect and sit on the throne forever and make the kingdom have peace. (Some people believe this refers to Jesus). David also recognized Jonathon’s son, a cripple who took land from his grandfather and David arranged for the land to be farmed.

David has other important battles with the Philistines, Ammonites and Arameans. David stops participating in battles and meets a beautiful woman Bathsheba and he makes her pregnant even though she is married to Uriah a warrior in the Israel army. David tries to persuade Uriah to go home so he can think he is he father but he refuses, David asks Joab to put Uriah on the front line so that he would be killed and after his death, David marries the widow. David’s action was evil in the sight of the Lord. Nathan tells David that he has sinned and that God will punish him by raising his own people against him and the loss of his wives. The son of Bathsheba dies and his servants debated whether to tell him. David then comforted Bethsheba and she conceived another son who was named Solomon.

Joab fights other battles and David joins him and they win again. Then David’s son Amnon becomes infatuated with his half-sister Tamar and he pretends to be sick so that Tamar brings him food and he rapes her and sends her away yelling at her. Her father Absalom avenges the death and has his servants kill Amnon. Absalom then flees and David is heartbroken. Joab instructs a woman on the way to talk to David. She pretends to be mourning her son who killed his brother and she had David agree to protect her son. She then tells David that he is sinning by not also reconciling with his own son. David agrees and sends Joab to find Absalom. He moves back to Jerusalem but David does not see him and after two years Absalom’s servants burn Joab’s fields. He explains the reason is that Joab does not take him to the king. He was taken to the king, prostrated himself, face down and the king kissed him.

Absalom tells the people in the northern tribes that the king does not listen to them and the people. David is told that the people are supporting Absalom and he flees to Jerusalem. He left his 10 concubines to care for the house. Ahithophel, supports Absalom and suggests he openly rape David’s concubines. Hushai who supports David tells Absalom to delay his attack. David was able to retaliate and when Ahithophel saw that his advice would not be followed, he committed suicide.

The two tribes enter into battle but David is not involved but asks Joab to deal gently with Absalom. Joab is shown Absalom who is hiding in a tree and he kills him. Absalom’s army is beaten. David grieves the loss of his son and Joab tells him that he will lose the support of his soldiers if he does not praise them. David does so and tells the northern tribes that he wants to be their king. As David is upset with Joab for killing his son, he replaces him with Amasa and the people supported David as the king.

Sheba encouraged Israel not to support the king and they followed Sheba except the men of Judah from the Jordan to Jerusalem. David went to Jerusalem and placed his 10 concubines under guard but he did not have sex with them and they lived as widows. Amasa took his army against Sheba and they met Joab who showed friendship to Amasa and as he went to kiss him, he killed him. Joab then took the troops to pursue Sheba. A woman who is not in favor of the fighting prophesies that the people will throw Sheba’s head over the city gates and they do so.

Now there was a famine and David discovers it is a result of Saul killed many Gibeonites. At Gods request, David talks to the Gibeonites who were not sons of Israel but were the remnant of the Amorites. They agree to be re-united with Israel if the men responsible are given to them to hang them. David has 7 of Saul’s family handed over. In addition, the bones of Saul and his son Jonathon which were re-buried. The Philistines were at war again with Israel and David was weary. A descendant of the giant intended to kill David. He was struck down by Abishai. There were four descendants of the giant who were killed.

David spoke the words of a song of praise to God. The names of the mighty men whom David had were named. David took a census of men against God’s will. David went to Araunah for burnt offering to the Lord and was offered gifts to sacrifice but David insisted on paying for the sacrifice to the Lord.

**Analysis:** In 11 Samuel God speaks to us through violence and demonstrates the prominence of David’s line. As with David, our sins hurt others as well as ourselves. However, the cycle of hurt can be broken. David sets the example by not taking revenge against Saul. We should all avoid taking revenge against our enemies.

**1 KINGS**

**Author and date**

This was written by the Deuteronomist historians and covers the period from 970 to 852 BC finished in 500 to 600 BC.

**Kings after David**

Kings 1 shows the moral failures of many kings who see their power as more important than their relationship with God and their caring for the people. It also shows that the prophets value God above their popularity. The message is to devote yourselves completely to the Lord your God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day. Chapter 8: 61.

**Solomon**

David is very old and he is nursed by Abishag who is a beautiful young woman. Adonijah has plans to be king but David in his weak state confirms that he should be succeeded by his son Solomon. Before dying, he gives him urging to follow God and he warns him that Joab and Shimei will not be loyal to Solomon.

Solomon’s half-brother Adonijah then tried to take Abishag and Solomon has him killed and dismisses his supporting priest. Solomon also has Joab, who supported Adonijah, killed and as reported in Samuel 2, Joab killed Amasa. Shimei was located to Jerusalem by the king but he moves and was killed by Solomon’s servant.

Solomon follows God and leads well so God offers him to choose what he wants and he chooses wisdom. This is granted and he judges disputes. The best example of his talent was a dispute between two woman who claim a child to be theirs. Solomon suggests giving each half the child and the true mother agrees to giving the boy to the other rather than killing the boy. Solomon easily awards the boy to the true mother.

 He also receives fame and fortune. Solomon has an alliance with Hiram and their servants build a large temple. The ark was brought to the temple. Solomon prayed to the Lord and then blessed the people. The people obey Solomon and follow God so there is peace and prosperity. The Queen of Sheba comes to check out the king and she is impressed and gives him gifts. The kings home is lavishly supplied with gold and silver. He does, however, fall into sin and marries 700 and has 300 concubines and the woman turn him away from God and he worships other gods. God send enemies to fight Solomon and God chooses Jeroboam as king. Solomon tries to kill him, but he flees and stays in Egypt until the king dies.

**King Rehoboam and Jeroboam**

Solomon’s son Rehoboam becomes king and puts a heavy yoke on the people. The Northern tribes rebel and appoint Jeroboam as their king. Jeroboam is jealous that southern tribes are not supporting him so he gets many people to worship golden calves and he hires new priests. Jeroboam is warned by a prophet that God will tear down the alter which happens after he speaks. Jeroboam tries to grab the prophet but his hand begins to wither away. He begs for forgiveness, and his hand is restored. This prophet is invited for dinner and God tells him not to eat and he is attacked by a lion and dies. Others following Rehoboam and Jeroboam also commit evil by worshipping other gods.

Jeroboam’s son is sick and his wife visits Ahijah, a prophet who is old with limited eye site and she plans to disguise herself. The Lord warns Ahijah of her disguise plan and he welcomes her by name and warns her that Jeroboam has not followed the Lord as his father had done and warns of dire future. When she returns home, her son dies.

**Jehoboam**

He was in his 5th year as king when the king of Egypt came against Jerusalem. He was king for 17 years and his acts are described in the Book of Chronicles of the Kings of Judah.

**Abijam**

In the 18th year of Jeroboam, Abijam became king over Judah. He was king for three years and walked in the sins of his father , Nebat. There was war between him and Jeroboam which is described in the Book of Chronicles of the Kings of Judah. When he died, Asa succeeded him.

**Asa**

Asa was king of Judah and did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. He removed the idols and did all which pleased God. There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel and Asa took the silver and gold and gave it to his servants. He also gave silver to Hezion king of Aram asking for a treaty with his people. Hezion agreed and took his armies against Israel. Baasha then withdrew. Asa died and was replaced by Jehoshaphat.

**Nadab, Baasha , Elah and Zimri**

Nadab, son of Jeroboam was king of Israel and he did not follow the lord during the two years he reigned. In the third year of Asa’s reign Baasha killed him and was king. He struck down the households of Jeroboam. The Lord warned that Baasha made the people sin and the rest of his acts are written in the Book of Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. Baasha died and was succeeded by Elah, his son. Elah was king for two years and was replaced by Zimri a commander of half his chariots who killed Elah. The people did not accept him and after 7 days he burned his house over himself and died. His acts are also described in the Book of Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

**Omni**

In the 31st year of Asa as king, Omni became king of Israel and reigned for 6 years. He was more wicked than those before him and his son Ahab became king.

**King Ahab**

King Ahab is the worst of all. He marries Jezebel, a non-Jew and he worships Baal a foreign god and builds temples to these other gods. Elijah, a prophet, tells Ahab that there will be no more rain. God tells Elijah to hide and ravens feed him. God then sends Elijah to a widows house in Zarephath a Baal worshipping city. The woman worships God but has little food. Her son is dying and she believes she will die soon. Elijah tells her to cook all their food for the three of them. She follows and God provides more food and the son is healed.

There is little food in Ahab’s kingdom and the king blames Elijah for the drought. Elijah has Ahab assemble the people and he preaches to them challenging them to call on their god to consume a sacrifice with fire. The sacrificed bull remains untouched. Elijah then asks the Lord to consume the bull which he does. Elijah then has the Baal prophets killed and the drought ends. Jezebel threatens Elijah and he runs away and asks God to kill him. God sends an angel to comfort him and God tells him to anoint new kings. Elijah is a new prophet and thousands worship God. Israel goes to war against Aram’s people and God tells Ahab that Israel will win. Ahab disobeys God and does not kill the king of Aram. A prophet goes to Ahab and tells him that he will be punished for disobedience. Ahab decides he wants more land for the palace and asks Naboth to sell him land but he refuses. Jezebel falsely claims that Naboth is dead. God tells Elijah to warn Ahab that he will be punished but Ahab repents and God delays the disaster.

King Jehoshaphat of Judah plan to attack Aram and the prophets tell them that God will give them victory. Ahab asks for other nearby prophets, and he is told of Micaiah. Micaiah explains that God will not give them victory and will punish them and that other prophets are not speaking God’s words. They lose the battle and Ahab dies.

 **Jehoshaphat**

Asa’s son becomes king at 35 year of age and reigned for 25 years. He walked in the way of Asa and made peace with the king of Israel.

**Analysis :** The best quotation in this book is Chapter 8. 61 “ Therefore devote yourselves completely to the Lord your God, walking in his statutes and keeping his commandments, as this day.”

A temple is finally built but it causes conflict because the kings of a northern kingdom, try to prevent their subjects from going to the temple in Jerusalem.

We should pray that God makes us value God above power, popularity or our lives and helps us distinguish between right and wrong.

**2 KINGS**

**Author and date**

2 Kings was originally part of 1 Kings so its authorship and date are as summarized in 1 Kings.

**The legacies of kings**

King Ahjaziah and Elijah

King Ahaziah of Israel has a fall and asks the messengers to ask Baal-zebub whether he will recover. God sends the prophet Elijah to the king’s messengers to tell them that He is the true God in Israel and yet they are asking Baal. His message to the king was you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up but you shall die. Ahaziah then tries to have Elijah come to him but he warns the 50 soldiers and a fire from heaven consumes the king’s messengers. Ahaziah dies but has no son so Jehoram becomes king of Israel.

**King Jehoram**

King Jehoram was appointed king of Israel while Jehoshaphat had reigned in Judah for 12 years. Jehoram did evil but he put away the sacred pillar of Baal. The king of Moab rebelled against the payments he had been making to Israel. The three kings Jehoram, Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom understood the Lord wanted them to hand over to the king of Moab and they decided to ask Elisha.

**Elijah and Elisha**

Elijah accompanied Elisha and stayed supporting him even though he is told by prophets that he will die. Fifty men of the prophets stood opposite the two and Elijah divided the Jordan for them to cross. Elijah is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire. The sons of the prophets witnessed this and decided that the spirit of Elijah rests in Elisha who was then confirmed as a prophet. His first act is to purify the water so the land could be fruitful again. He then proceeded to Bethel and was mocked by 50 young lads, he cursed them in the name of the Lord and two bears tore up 42 of these lads.

The three kings approached Elisha but he did not agree to help them as they had not followed the Lord. The land of Moab was attacked and their king offered his oldest son as a burnt offering and they departed from their land.

Elisha also meets a widow whose late husband followed the Lord. She has trouble with creditors she cannot pay and has nothing to live on and he multiplies the oil in her house so she is no longer poor.

Another woman who is unable to produce a child invites him into her house and she then has a son. Years later, the son dies, and Elisha then revives the boy, and he lives.

 A famine strikes the town of Gilgal and a group of prophets realize that the food they are eating is poisonous. Elisha tells them to put flour on the pot and it will be edible. He also multiplies a few loaves of bread into enough to feed 100 .

 Namaan a military leader in Aram has leprosy, and he hears from a captive little girl about the prophet who could cure him. They ask the king to lead them to this cure and he destroys his clothes. Elisha heard about the kings action for help. Elisha send Namaan to wash in the Jordan River seven times which confuses and angers him but finally he follows the instruction and it cures him. He worships God and tries to give Elisha or his servant a gift, but he refuses to accept anything. However, his servant, Gahazi follows Namaan and asks for money which he joyfully gives to the servant. Elisha checks the whereabouts of his servant who denies that he went anywhere but the prophet knows about his action and the servant gets leprosy.

A group of prophets plan to build a place to live and one of them drops his axe in the water while building. Elisha makes it float so it is not ruined.

Elisha also advises the king of Israel with God’s advice on beating the Aramites who are attacking Israel the king of Aram tries to kill Elisha. His servants panic and God gives them a vision of chariots of fire around Elisha and they are filled with faith. Elisha prays for the Aramites to be made blind which God does. He then leads him to Samaria where God opens their eyes. Elisha’s servant is eager to kill them but instead prepares a feast for them and Israel is never attacked again.

 Years later, a different group of Aramite soldiers attacks Samaria part of the northern kingdom of Israel. The people have nothing to eat, turn to cannibalism and the king is angry and wants to kill Elisha. The king visits his home , he calmly told that the famine will end the next day. Also, a group of starving lepers who realize that their options are not good as they are starving. They then decide to go to the outskirts Aramean soldiers but they find that they have left and have not taken their food, livestock nor gold. They tell the king who ensures all are fed but the king is trampled by the people.

**King Jehu**

The king Jehoram restores Shunammite’s land and checks on the work done by Elisha. The servant explains this and the woman whose son was revived appears. It is the 5th year of Joram and Jesoshaphat then king of Judah. Edom revolted against the king. Joram was buried with his fathers the then king Jehoram and king Ahaziah of Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord and went to war against Hazael king of Aram.

Elisha sends a younger prophet to anoint Jehu , king of Israel. Joram and Ahaziah, king of Judah went to attack Jehu but he kills them both as well as their families and friends. Jezebel was trampled by the horses and her body was partially eaten by the dogs before she could be buried. These people had turned away from God and Jehu killed the priests and worshippers of Baal who knew God but turned away from him.

**King Joash (Jehoash)**

Athaliah, King of Ahaziah of Judah’s mother, started killing the royal offspring but Ahaziah’s sister hides Joash for six years while Athaliah reigns. In the seventh year, the high priest anoints Joash king of Israel and has Athaliah killed. Joash starts off as a good king, destroys Baal altars and images and obeys God. King Hazael of Aram then decides to attack Jerusalem and Jehoash gives him riches to persuade him from attacking.

Elisha becomes sick and Joash visited him. Elisha had the king shoot an arrow which he described as an arrow of victory over the Aram. Elisha then died but is resurrected.

The servants of Jehoash strike him down and he dies. He is replaced by Jehoahaz the son of Jehu becomes king.

**King Jehoahaz**

He was 23 when he became king and reigned for 3 months.

**King Amaziah**

He was appointed and he did the right things in the eyes of the Lord. As soon as he was firmly in place, he slain the servants who killed his father. He did not kill their sons as written by Moses. Amaziah killed Edom and wanted to fight the king of Israel, Jehoash who tried to avoid the battle. When it happened, Israel defeated Judah and each king fled to his tent. Jehoash then captured Amaziah and came to Jerusalem. He took the gold and silver. Jeroboam 11 succeeds Jehoash.

Amaziah then fled to Lachish but they went after him and killed him there.

The people of Judah then took Azariah who was 16 years of age as their king.

**Kings Azariah and the kings of Israel**

In the 38th year of Azariah, Zechariah became king of Israel. He did evil and he made Israel sin. Shallum then struck him and reigned in his place. He reigned for one month when Menalhem killed him. The rest of the acts of Shallum are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

**Menalhem, Pul and Pekahiah**

In the 39th year of Azariah, Menalhem became king and ruled for ten years. He did evil and when Pul, the king of Assyria came against him, he gave Pul silver which he exacted from his people. This was sufficient for them to withdraw. When he died Pekahiah became king. This was the 50th year of Azariah’s reign. He too did evil and was killed and replaced by Pekah in Azariah’s 52nd year. He too did evil and Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria came and captured land.

**Hoshea and Jotham**

Hoshea killed him and became king in his place.

**Other kings included Jotham king of Judah**.

He did right in terms of the Lord. When he died, he was succeeded by Ahaz, his son.

 Ahaz was 20 when appointed and reigned for 16 years. He also did not do right in the eyes of the Lord. The king Rezin of Aram and Pekah king of Israel started war. The besieged Ahaz but could not overcome him. Ahaz called Tiglath-pileser of Assyria asking for help and he sent him silver and gold belonging to the Lord. The king of Assyria helped and captured Damascus and killed Rezin. King Ahaz then went to Damascus and had his priest copy the altar they had in Damascus. Ahaz died in the 12th year of his reign and his son Hezekiah was appointed in his place in his place.

**Hezekiah**

Hezekiah did evil in sight of the Lord and king Shalmaneser of Assyria came against him and he became his servant. In Hoshea’s reign, Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away in exile and then settled them. In Hoshea’s third year that Hezekiah became king. He did right in the sight of the Lord and was supported by the Lord when he rebelled against Assyria. He defeated the Philistines. In his 4th year, the king of Assyria against Samaria which was besieged for three years before being captured. The king of Assyria carried the disobedient people of Israel in Halah. In his 14th year, Assyria came against Judah and they offered to withdraw for silver and gold. Hezekiah gave him silver from the house of the Lord and found gold from the temple doors. Then with the Assyria support they went up against Jerusalem. The Lord supported Hezekiah and sent support via Isaiah. At night, 185,000 Assyrian men were struck by the angel of the Lord. Hezekiah became mortally ill and Isaiah visited and told him that the Lord said he should set his house in order for he shall die. The king prayed to the Lord and wept and the Lord responded that he had heard his prayers and Hezekiah would live for fifteen more years.

The son of the Babylon king visited Hezekiah and he showed the son all the wealth that had been accumulated by him and his predecessors. Isaiah then visited and told him that the Lord had spoken that all in your house will be carried to Babylon as well as your sons who will become officials in the Babylon palace. Hezekiah then joined his fathers and his son Mamasseh became king in his place.

**Manasseh**

Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king of Judah and he reigned for 55 years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and rebuilt the high places his father had destroyed. He also had his son practice witchcraft. The Lord spoke to his prophets saying that as a result of the kings evil he will bring calamity to Jerusalem and deliver them to their enemies. Manasseh then died and was replaced by his son Amon.

**Amon and Josiah**

Amon was 22 when he became king and he followed his father and also did evil. He served idols and forsook the Lord. His servants then killed him and the people killed all those servants.

Josiah, Amon’s son, was 8 when he became king and he ruled for 31 years. He did right in the eyes of the Lord and walked in the way of David. In the 18th year, he requested the high priest Hilkiah to give the money which doorkeepers have gathered to the workers to repair the house of the Lord. Hilkiah distributed the wealth as instructed and sent the lost book to the king. King Josiah asked the priest to go to the prophets for guidance as the book shows the wrath of the Lord resulting from actions of their fathers. Huldah, the prophetess says the Lord will bring evil to Judah and its inhabitants. Josiah then gathered all the elders and the men of Judah and he read in their hearing the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord. The king agreed to walk after the Lord and keep His commandments, testimonies and statutes with all his heart and soul. He then had all the vessels made for Baal and Asheraf to be burnt. He also did away with the idols and defiled the places where incense had been burnt and destroyed all support for other gods. He reinstated the Passover celebration and he removed medians and spiritualists. There was no other king who turned to the Lord like Josiah. However, the Lord did not turn from the fierceness which resulted from Manasseh’s provocation. Josiah went to meet Neco, the king of Egypt who killed him. His servants returned his body to Jerusalem to be buried in his own tomb. The people took his son, Jehoahaz as the new king. He was 23 when appointed and after three months he was imprisoned by Neco.

**Johoiakim formerly Eliakim**

Pharaoh Neco appointed Josiah‘s son as king and changed his name to Jehoiakim. The new king gave gold and silver to the Pharoah and taxed the land. He was 25 when he started his 11 year reign. He also did evil in the eyes of the Lord and was a servant of Babylon for 3 years and then he rebelled. The Lord sent other nations against Judah to destroy it. Jehoiakim then died and was replaced by Jehoiachin who was 18 years old at that time.

Jehoiachin

At that time, Nebuchadnezzar , king of Babylon put Jerusalem under siege and their new king and his family and servants were captured in the 8th year of his reign. Nebuchadnezzar then appointed his uncle Mattaniah , who changed his name to Zedekiah as king. The new king was 21 years old and reigned for 11 years. He also did evil in the eyes of the Lord so they were cast from His presence. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in the 9th year and the city was under siege until the 11th year of Zedekiah’s reign and a famine broke out and people fled. The king had captured him and slaughtered his sons before his eyes. The Babylon army then went to Jerusalem, burned the house of the Lord and with help from the Chaldeans, they broke the walls around Jerusalem. The people either fled or were carried away into exile.

The king of Babylon appointed Gedaliah as governor. In the 7th month the governor was struck down by Ishmael. In the 37th year of the exile of Jehoiachin, he was released from prison. He lived in the Babylon king’s house and received an annual allowance for the rest of his life.

**Analysis :** 2 Kings sums up each kings life evaluating their walk with God. The benefit to a reader is to avoid being distracted by our interests and possessions rather than following God. The book demonstrates the value of obeying God.

**FIRST CHRONICLES**

**Author and date**

Chronicles do not state by whom and when it was published. It covers events from 1010 to 970 BC and was written 100 years after Kings. Hebrew tradition affirms that Ezra wrote Ezra as well as Chronicles. This is challenged and we do not know the author.

**Genealogy from Adam**

Chronicles begins with a genealogy starting with Adam the first man, descendants of Abraham and the 12 sons of Jacob (Israel). The genealogy of David who’s first born son was Ammon and second was Daniel, the third was Absalom etc. It also covers the line of Hur, Asher , the descendants of Simeon, the genealogy of Reuben as well as the Priestly, Issachar, Benjamin, Naphatali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher and King Saul. It summarizes how Saul fell on his sword rather than be killed by the uncircumcised Philistines.

**King David**

David was then appointed king over all of Israel. He went to Jerusalem and captured Zion which was called the City of David. The Lord was with David and made him powerful. David assembled all Israel together to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim which belongs to Judah. The ark was not taken to the City of David but after Uzza tried to stop the ark against God’s rules, he was killed and the ark was left with the family Obed-Edom. The Philistines made raids and with God’s help he defeated them. David then planned to bring the ark to Jerusalem but he declared that only the Levites should carry it. It was placed in a tent that David had built for it and the people were merry. David wanted the ark to be in a house not a tent but God told the prophet that he did not want that but that David’s son will build the temple. David worships God with joy and wins more battles. He cares very much about the people and rules well over them. David has every soldier in his army counted which is a sin because he does so out of pride of his power instead of trust in God. He asked God to forgive him and God says he will punish David but David may choose to punishment from three choices. He chooses a three year famine and 70,000 men die. David then pleads with God that he is the one who sinned and should be punished. David bought land and appointed his son Solomon to build a temple. When David reached an old age, he made his son Solomon king over Israel. David gathered all the leaders and explained that the Levites would not administer the tabernacle forever and assigns people according to the sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath and Merari. Duties were revised for the priests, gatekeepers, musicians, treasurers, commanders of the army, officers of the tribes, counsellors and various other duties. David addressed the people and gave huge amounts of gold and silver to God. He blessed the Lord in sight of the people. The next day he made burnt offering sacrifices to the Lord. Solomon was anointed as ruler for the Lord.

**King Solomon**

Solomon sat on the throne and officials pledged allegiance to the young king. The Lord exalted Solomon and bestowed royal majesty on him. David had reigned for 40 years when he died of old age.

**Analysis :** This book gives a different account of David’s life. In 2 Samuel, we saw David’s mistakes while in this book, it celebrates his faith in God. As we await for God to fulfill His promise to David, we know that his descendant is Jesus Christ who will bring eternal peace to His followers.

**SECOND CHRONICLES**

**Author and date**

See the information for First Chronicles

**King Solomon**

Solomon establishes himself securely over his kingdom and with an assembly, he goes to a high place to worship God. He offered burnt offerings to God and that night, God offered to give Solomon anything he wants, and he initially declined any offer but then he asked for wisdom to be a good king. God gives it and also wealth and fame.

Laborers from Trye help build the temple. It is a beautiful building and the people come together to worship God there. The king also decides to bring the ark from City of David to the temple. Solomon praises God and blessed the nation. A fire came down from heaven and consumed the offerings God’s glory filled the temple.

God reminds Solomon that he must follow Him or he will be punished. Solomon make sure the temple worship and upkeep remains in accordance with God’s law.

The Queen of Sheba sees that Solomon is the wisest man in the world and goes to visit him with some difficult questions which he answered and she was breathless. . She gives him lavish gifts and he in return gives her gifts and becomes wealthy and well-known. Eventually he dies and is buried with his father David. .

**King Rehoboam**

Solomon’s son becomes king. The people plead that Solomon had placed too tight a yoke on them and asked Rehoboam to lighten it, but he took advice from friends and tells them that he will not be acceded to their request. Levite priests were excluded by him and the king set up his own priests. Rehoboam married and had three sons and a second wife who gave him four sons. He had 18 wives and 60 concubines. The king was unfaithful to the Lord and Egypt came up against them with success until the Lord saved them. Rehoboam died and was replaced by his son Abijah.

**King Abijah**.

As king of Judah stood on Mount Zemaraim and acknowledged the Lord their God and when Judah attacked, the Lord helped them conquer Israel. Abijah became strong and powerful. He took 14 wives and fathered 22 sons and 16 daughters. He died and Asa succeeds him.

**King Asa**

Asa did right in the eyes of the Lord, he removed foreign altars and tore down sacred pillars. The Ethiopians attack Judah and Asa prays for help, which is given by God, so they beat the enemy. God sends a prophet, Azariah to encourage Asa. Asa changed his ways and there were no more wars until Asa’s 35th year of reign. In the 36th year, Baasha King of Israel came up against Israel. He had a wall to prevent people going into or coming out of Judah. Asa asks King of Aran for help instead of praying and he dies. Asa was warned by a seer but instead of listening, he imprisoned the seer. In his 39th year Asa became diseased and even then, he did not call on the Lord and he died.

**King Jehoshaphat**

The son of Asa became king. He followed David’s example and the Lord was pleased with him. Jehoshaphat had great riches and he allied himself my marriage to Ahab king of Israel. Ahab and Jehoshaphat were planning an attack on Ramoth- gilead but Jehoshaphat wanted a prophet to enquire of the Lord. They visited with prophet Micaiah who Ahab said made prophesies about him. The prophet warned of defeat but Ahab despised him and decided to go into battle with Ahab going in disguise. The Lord helped Jehoshaphat but Ahab was killed.

Jehoshaphat returned to Jerusalem where a seer met him and rebuked him for supporting a wicked person who hated the Lord. The king then went to the country and brought people back to God. He appointed judges, fortified cities and appointed Levites and priests.

Judah was to be attacked by the sons of Moab and Ammon. The king was afraid and prayed. God responded that the people should stand to face the much stronger larger force knowing that the Lord was with them. The people of Judah were victorious and the enemy had left leaving valuables behind.

Jehoshaphat ruled for 35 years and Jerusalem for 25 years. He was succeeded by his son Jehoram.

**King Jehoram**

When he took over the kingdom, he killed all his brothers and some rulers in Israel. He was married to Ahab’s daughter and walked the same way which was evil in the eyes of the Lord.

Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and King Jehoram struck the Edomites who were surrounding him. Edom and Libnah tribes revolted as he had forsaken the Lord. Elijah warned him that he had not followed his father’s ways, the Lord will strike your sons and families. The Lord stirred up the Philistines and the Arabs who carried away possessions of the kings house, his wives and sons except for the youngest Jehoahaz. He ruled for eight years and there was no regret when he died.

**King Ahaziah**

The inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son the king. He was 22 years old at the time and reigned for one year. He also went to war against the Aram and he went against Jehu who was anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. So that she could be queen, his mother Athaliah then destroyed all royal offspring but Joash was saved by the kings daughter. Athaliah is queen for two years.

**King Joash**

A group of priests led by Jehoiada, decide to make Joash king and they kill the queen. He was 7 years old when he was appointed. He was guided by priest Jehoiada and followed the Lord. He restored the levy fixed by Moses so as to repair the temple as Athaliah had used the holy things in the temple. After Jehoida dies, Joash listens to his officials who convinced him to worship false gods and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem. Zechariah, Jehoiada’s son, says God has abandoned King Joash. He responds by killing Zechariah.

The Arameans attack Judah and Jerusalem and sent their spoils to the king of Damascas.King Joash whose servants leave him to die because they are so disgusted with the killing of Zechariah. He died in the city of David but was not buried in the tombs of kings.

**King Amaziah**

He was 25 when he became king and reigned for 29 years. He did right in the eyes of the Lord. He assembled Judah and appointed them according to their fathers households. He hired 100,000 warriors from Israel but a man of God warned him that the Lord is not with Israel. Amaziah listened but they strengthened themselves and struck down the sons of Seir and also threw 10,000 from a cliff. The troops that were rejected raided Judah, from Samaria to Bethhoron. Amaziah took idols from Seir and set them up as his gods. He was warned by a prophet but did not listen. Amaziah then suggested that he and Joash, king of Israel, should face each other. Joash tried to avoid this but he went and Judah was defeated by Israel with each king fleeing to their tents. Then Joash captured Amaziah and tore down the wall of Jerusalem and took all the gold and silver and hostages were returned to Samaria.

**King Uzziah**

He succeeded Amaziah and was 16 at the time. He built Eloth and restored it to Judah. He did the right thing in the eyes of the Lord. He warred against the Philistines, the Arabians and the Meunites. The Ammonites gave tribute to him and his fame extended to the border of Egypt. He had an elite army but his heart was so proud that he was unfaithful to the Lord. It was an only the priests that could burn incense to the Lord but Uzziah did so against the priests advice and leprosy broke out on his forehead which he had until his death. He died and his son Jotham became king.

**King Jotham**

King Jotham is 25 years old when he is made king and reigned in Jerusalem for 16 years. He did the right thing in the eyes of the Lord but he did not enter the temple of the Lord. He has many military and political victories and dies while still following God. Ahaz his son is the next king.

**King Ahaz**

Ahaz was 20 when he became king and reigned for 16 years. He did not follow the Lord , he had idols, burned incense, burned his sons in fire. He is defeated by the king of Aram who takes captives to Damascus. He suffers more military losses and others he refuses to follow God even to the point of stealing from the temple to give to the king of Assyria. He was buried in Jerusalem.

**King Hezekiah**

King Hezekiah is the next king who repents his father’s sins. In his first year, he opens the doors of the temple so that worship is restored to comply with God’s laws. He called the priests and Levites and asked them to consecrate themselves. The house of the Lord was cleansed. He invited all to come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover and they came from far and wide. Hezekiah has all idols and objects of worship for other gods destroyed. He commanded that people in Jerusalem give the portion due to the priests. As soon as the word spread, the sons of Israel provided in abundance.

After these acts of faithfulness, the king of Assyria invaded Judah and besieged the fortified cities. King Hezekiah thought Assyria intended to make war with Jerusalem so he cut off the water supply so the Assyrians would not find water. He assembled the people and told them that they had God on their side. The Assyrian king sent messengers to Jerusalem telling the people that God could not save them. King Hezekiah prayed to heaven and the Lord sent an angel who destroyed the Assyrian warriors and when he returned to his temple, the King of Assyria was killed by his own people. Hezekiah had great wealth. The rest of his acts are written in the book of Kings.

**King Manasseh**

Upon his death, his 12 year old son Manasseh became king and reigned for 55 years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and rebuilt altars which his father had broken down and altars to Baal and he practiced witchcraft. The Lord spoke to Manasseh but he would not listen. He then brought the army of Assyria against them and they captured him and bound him in chains. He then humbled himself before God who he acknowledged. He removed all the foreign gods and idols and he ordered Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. He died and his son Amon became king.

**King Amon**

He was 22 when he became king and reigned for 2 years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and his servants killed him in his own house.

**King Josiah**

He was 8 years old when he became king and ruled for 31years. He walked the way of David.

He purged molten images and tore down the altars of the Baals. He repaired the temple and while they were bringing money to the house of the Lord, they found The Lost Book of the Law. He asked that the priest inquire of the Lord for direction as their fathers had not followed the law. The Lord said he would bring evil to the people and all the curses written. However, for the king who asked the question, he will be gathered with his family so he does not see the evil. Josiah gathered all the elders and he made a covenant with the Lord to follow Him and he urged all to be with him. The Passover was observed again and he placed the holy ark in the house of the Lord. After all this, Neco king of Egypt came to make war and Josiah went out to face him. Neco told him that he was not coming after him but against the house , Joshia would not stop and disguised himself to make war. He was shot by an archer and returned to Jerusalem where he died. The rest of Joshiah is written in the Book of Kings.

**Kings Jehoiakim (Jeahoz)**

Jeahoz was 23 years old when he became king and ruled for 3 years when the king of Egypt deposed him and made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem and changed his name to Jehoiakim. He was 25 years old at the time and ruled for 11 years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came against him and bound him in bronze as he took him to Babylon. The Egyptian king appointed his kinsman Zedekiah as the new king. The new king was 21 and reigned for 11 years. He too did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

He also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and the officials defiled the house of the Lord. The king of the Chaldeans slew their young men, virgins and elderly and the valuable were taken to Babylon. They burned down the house of the Lord

The Cyrus king of Persia came to fulfill the word of the Lord and build Him a house in Jerusalem.

**Analysis :** The most memorable quotation is Chapter 15.4 “ But whenever they were in trouble and turned to the Lord, the God of Israel, and sought Him out, they found Him.” This summarizes the events surrounding the reign of each of the kings.

There are some interesting contradictions with 2 Kings which shows Solomon worshipping other gods in the end of his reign while 2 Chronicles shows him as a great king and leader.

**EZRA**

**Author and date**

This book was named after Ezra and the Jews thought it was one book with Nehemiah but the repetition of Ezra in Nehemiah, indicates that they were separate works. The author was probably Ezra himself. The likely date of writing was between 458 BC and 444 BC.

**Cyrus proclamation**

God had told Cyrus, king of Persia, through the prophet Jeremiah that Cyrus was to rebuild Him a house in Jerusalem which is in Judah. The people of Judah who were exiled in the Babylon were freed to return and to go back and rebuild the temple. The king returned the sacred artifacts to the Temple and gave them to Mithredath the treasurer to the people.

The book of Ezra gives a long list of names of people returning from exile. These included many families, priests and Levites. The ancestral registration of the sons of certain priests could not be found and they were excluded from priesthood.

In the seventh month, the sons of Israel gathered as one in Jerusalem. The people and the priests worship and set up an altar to offer burnt offerings and celebrated the feast of Booths. They also followed all the fixed festivals. In the second year, Zerubbabel and Joshua and their brothers and the Levites oversees the plans to build a new temple. After the foundation building is laid the priest lead the people in singing praise to God.

 A group of enemies of Judah, pretend to want to help build the temple in hopes that they can actually stop it. Zerubbabel and Joshua refuse them and the people scare the Jews about building the temple. These people then write a letter to King Ahasuerus the king of Persia saying the Jews are rebellious people who will build their temple but once built, they will not pay taxes to Persia. The king forces the Jews to stop rebuilding and the people from Samaria went and stopped them by force. The prophets guided Zerubbabel and Joshua to re-start the building. The adversaries approached Persian governor over Judah to ask King Darius to stop the building. The Jews reply that they will not stop because they’re serving God and King Cyrus had given them permission years ago. The decree from King Cyrus is found and King Darius allows the building to continue and returns gold and silver previously taken and authorizes the use of tax revenue to pay for the entire temple. People complete the temple which is dedicated to the glory of God. They also celebrate Passover.

The Persian king appointed Ezra a priest and an expert on Jewish law who is deeply devoted to God to manage the funds used to build the temple. Ezra is also to appoint judges and officials to handover the land. Israel praise God that the Persian king is so eager to obey God and take courage for the task God in the king have given him. Ezra asked the people to fast and pray for safety and chooses 12 priests to be the leaders over the rest of the priests. Ezra then finds that some people have married non-Jews who are leading them away from God. He begs God to forgive them and other people cry with him over this evil. They agree to send away the foreign wives out of Israel.

**Analysis :** Why did Ezra send away the foreign wives?We cannot interpret this book to show that God only cared about the Jews as non-Jewish Persian kings helped build the temple. The most likely explanation is that these foreign wives were worshipping other gods which was a problem having them in Israel. Christians are guided by 2 Corinthians 6.14 shows that God’s peoples are to be devoted to God above anything else and marrying a non-Christian makes this difficult.

Ezra is a leader who gets the people involved in the decision making ---- he prays, then gathers the people to pray together before making decisions.

**NEHEMIAH**

**Author and date**

The use of first person singular implies that Nehemiah was the author. Some commentators believe that this book was originally part of Ezra. The book covers at least 20 years from 445 BC to 400 BC.

**Grief for exiles**

After the Jews who escaped and survived captivity are distressed and see the wall of Jerusalem burned down. Nehemiah, Royal official for the Persian king, learns that the city walls of Jerusalem have been burned on and prays for help.

**Prayer answered**

The king Artaxerxes of Persia sees that Nehemiah is sad and allows him to go back to Judah to help rebuild the wall. Named groups begin to do the rebuilding with each group taking different responsibilities. The Samaritans make fun of the Jews rebuilding and plot to break it again. The people are exhausted, financially battling but Nehemiah was angry when he heard their outcry. Nehemiah and his kinsmen did not eat the food allowance from the governor and he prayed to God for support.

**Enemy’s plot**

The enemy asked to meet Nehemiah and planned to harm him. He responded that he was doing a great work which he would not stop. They then tried to portray Nehemiah as setting himself up as king of Judah. With faith that they were supported by the Lord, they completed the wall. The enemies realized that God had supported what was done and they lost confidence.

**Census of exiles**

Guards were placed at the gates under the control of his brother Hanani. A census by genealogy was made totaling 42,360 plus7,337 servants and 245 singers. The families contributed to the treasury.

**The law**

Ezra read the law of Moses and blessed the Lord. Nehemiah was their governor and Ezra the chief priest. The feasts were restored and the people bought booths where they lived on the square. The people then confessed their sins and a covenant was signed. When the wall was dedicated, the Levites were sought out to celebrate as well.

Procedures were established by Nehemiah for the temple. The book of Moses prescribed that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God because they brought Balaam against Israel. Tithes were restored and those working on the sabbath were rebuked by Nehemiah. Some Jews had married woman from other nations and future mixed marriages were forbidden.

**Analysis :** Nehemiah is a great role model in faith as God does not go to him but, he prays and is worried about God’s people and is drawn in to help. We should all be like Nehemiah and be humble and willing to fight evil for the Lord. Do not grieve for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

**ESTHER**

**Author and date**

This book is named after Esther , a Persian name which means “star”, her Hebrew name was Hadassah. The book was written after 465 BC possibly about 400 BC.

**The Banquets of the king**

King Ahasuerus of Persia in the third year of his reign, has a banquet for princes, attendants, and army officers. He displayed his riches. When full of wine, he calls out Queen Vashati to display her beauty. She refuses and the embarrassed king and his princes were concerned that she was creating a precedent for other wives. He proposes that she should not come into the presence of the king and her royal position be given to another.

Mordecai is a Jew who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem. He took Esther as his own daughter after the loss of her parents and she was taken to the palace where a group of women trying to be the next queen. The king likes her to join his harem. She did not disclose that she was a Jew as instructed by Mordecai. The king chose Esther to be his wife. Mordecai learns that there is a plot to kill the king and he tells Esther who warns the king. The plot was investigated and confirmed so the plotters were hanged.

Haman is promoted by the king and he has authority over all the princes. The kings servants bow to him but Mordecai refuses and explains that he is a Jew and only bows to God. Haman then sought to destroy all the Jews. Haman persuaded the king that there were people who do not observe the kings laws and he wanted them destroyed. The king agreed. Mordecai heard of this plot and tells Esther who asks Mordecai to have all the Jews assemble and fast for three days as she and her maidens will do. The king saw Esther and offered to meet any request she made. She asked for Haman to be brought to the banquet. Haman planned to hang Mordecai before the banquet. The king saw the record that Mordecai had caused him to be alerted of the plot to kill him and he wanted Mordecai to be honored at the banquet. Haman entered the court to talk about his plan to kill Mordecai but the king tells him that Mordecai is to be honored and gives him robes to give him to wear at his honoring. In the second day of the banquet the king asks for her petition and she responds to have her life and the life of her people. She names Haman as her foe and the king has him hanged on the gallows he has made for Mordecai. The king then promoted Mordecai. At Esther’s request, the king issues a decree granting the Jews the right to defend themselves. The Jews assembled throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus and destroyed all the enemies of the Jews. These deaths were reported to the king who offered more help and Haman’s ten sons were hanged on the gallows. Mordecai recorded all these events and the Jews celebrated. All the accomplishments of Mordecai and his greatness is not written.

**Analysis:** God is not mentioned by name in this book but the book demonstrates that, in all circumstances, God is in control. God is present to Esther and He works through people as He will work through us if we let Him in. When we pray, we are working together with God to accomplish a lot more than we could ever do on our own.

**JOB**

**Author and date**

The name of the book and its hero appear in biblical texts as early as 2000 B C. Identification of the author is complicated by doubts as to the unity of the book. There is also no certainty as to the date it was written.

**Job’s character and wealth**

There was a man in Uz whose name was Job. He was wealthy and had 7 sons and 3 daughters. The Lord met with Satan and told him that his servant Job was a blameless man who feared God and turned away from evil. Satan tested Job by sending a messenger to tell him foreign invaders had taken his livestock and a fire from heaven destroyed his sheep and servants. Also, his family were struck by wind and killed. Job still did not sin or blame God. Satan then makes Job break out in sore boils and his friends could not recognize him. Job’s wife tells him to give up God but he refuses.

Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth and laments the turmoil he is suffering. His friend Eliphaz tells him that he is being punished for some sin and that this is part of God’s grand plan. Job’s friends are of no help and his life is futile. Bildad tells him that God rewards the good. Job responds that there is no arbitrator between God and man. He is desperate and pleads with God as he has little cheer in his life. Job is rebuked by Zophur and tells him to spread out his hand to God. Job speaks about the power of God and he is sure he will be vindicated. He speaks about the finality of death and Eliphaz responds that he presumes too much. Job feels insulted and everything is against him. He asks his friends for pity but declares he knows his redeemer lives. Zophur responds that the triumph of the wicked is short and he does not retain what he desires. Job responds that God will deal with the wicked. Eliphaz accuses and admonishes Job.

Job responds that he loves God and desires to be at His seat. His love has not been silenced by the darkness which covers him. Job further says God does ignore some wrongs. Bildad says man is inferior but Job rebukes him. Job continues that as long as life is within him, he will uphold his righteousness. Job tells of earths treasures being worthless but wisdom and understanding has a value beyond man’s understanding and it cannot be bought. Job summarizes the glorious past while God watched over him and his humiliated state but asserts his integrity. Then some three men ceased answering Job as he was righteous in his own eyes but Elihu angered against the three friends as they condemned Job but had no answer. Elihu claimed to speak for God and emphasized the power of God and what he does for His followers.

The Lord speaks to Job and establishes what the Lord has made and His mighty power as well as knowledge He has of nature and animals. God questions Job as to his ability to do many things. Job confesses that he knows God’s power and knowledge and declared what he did not understand. Job repented his errors.

Eliphaz and his friends had displeased God as they had not spoken to God as Job had. They took a burnt offering and Job was to pray for them. They all followed God’s instructions and the Lord accepted Job. After Job prayed for his friends, the Lord increased all that Job had twofold. Job’s brothers and sisters and all that had known him before came and ate bread with him and consoled him and gave him money and gold. The Lord blessed him more than before and he had seven sons and three daughters. Job lived 140 years and saw his grandsons , four generations. He died as old man.

**Analysis:** Some bad things happen to good people and this book is intended to show us that in many cases, bad events are not punishments but are part of a bigger plan which we do not understand at the time of happening. An important verse is “I know my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. (Job 19:25- 26)

**PSALMS**

**Author and date**

The psalms are a collection of 150 poems about God, most of them are prayers and cover many subjects. Nobody knows who wrote them but many are presumed to be written by King David. They were probably written early in Israel’s history in 1,000 - 450 BC but the trend to-day is to believe earlier dates.

**Classification**

The poems have not been grouped by subject matter. Five dominant themes can be recognized as follows:

1. Realization of God’s presence
2. Recognition of a need for thanksgiving
3. Personal communion with God
4. Remembrance of God’s part in history
5. Sense of deliverance from enemies

**Psalm 1:** The Righteous and Wicked Contrasted

**Psalm 2:** The Reign of the Lord’s Anointed.

**Psalm 3:** Morning Prayer of Trust in God.

**Psalm 4:** Evening Prayer of Trust in God

**Psalm 5:** Power of protection from the wicked

**Psalm 6:**Prayer for Mercy in Time of Trouble

**Psalm 7:** The Lord Implored to Defend the Palmist against the Wicked.

**Psalm 8:** The Lord’s Glory and Man’s Dignity

**Psalm 9:** A Psalm of Thanksgiving for God’s Justice

**Psalm 10:** A Prayer for the Overthrow of the Wicked

**Psalm 11:** The Lord a Refuge and Defense

**Psalm 12:** God a Helper against the Treacherous

**Psalm 13:** Prayer for Help in Trouble

**Psalm 14:** Folly and Wickedness of Man

**Psalm 15:** Description of a Citizen of Zion

**Psalm 16:** The Lord the Palmists Portion in Life and

 Deliverer in Death

**Psalm 17:** Prayer for Protection against Oppressors

**Psalm 18:** The Lord Praised for Giving Deliverance

**Psalm 19:** The Works and Word of Gods

**Psal**m 20: Prayer for Victory over Enemies

**Psalm 21:** Praise for Deliverance

**Psalm 22:** A Cry of Anguish and a Song of Praise

**Psalm 23:** The Lord the Palmist’s Shepard

**Psalm 24:** A psalm of David

**Psalm 25:** Power for Protection , Guidance and Pardon

**Psalm 26:** Protestation of Integrity and Prayer for Protection

**Psalm 27:** A Psalm of Fearless Trust in God

**Psalm 28:** A Psalm of David

**Psalm 29:** A Voice of the Lord in a Storm

**Psalm 30:**Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Death

**Psalm 31:**A Psalm of Complaint and of Praise

**Psalm 32:** Blessedness of Forgiveness and of Trust in God

**Psalm 33:** Praise to the Creator and Preserver

**Psalm 34:** The Lord a Provider and Deliverer

**Psalm 35:** Prayer for Rescue from Enemies

**Psalm 36:** Wickedness of Man and Lovingkindness of God

**Psalm 37:** Security of Those Who Trust in the Lord and the Insecurity of the Wicked

**Psalm 38:**Prayer of Suffering Penitent

**Psalm 39:** A Vanity of Life

**Psalm 40:** God Sustains His Servant

**Psalm 41:**The Psalmist in Sickness Complains of Enemiesand False Friends

**Psalm 42:** Thirsting for Gods in Trouble and Exile

**Psalm 43:** Prayer for Deliverance

**Psalm 44:**Former Deliverances and Present Troubles

**Psalm 45:** A Song Celebrating the King’s Marriage

**Psalm 46:**God the Refuge of His People

**Psalm 47:** God the King of the Earth

**Psalm 48:** The Beauty and Glory of Zion

**Psalm 49:** The Folly of Trusting in Riches

**Psalm 50:** God the Judge of the Righteous and the Wicked

**Psalm 51:** A Contrite Sinner’s Prayer for Pardon

**Psalm 52:** Futility of Boastful Wickedness

**Psalm 53:** Folly and Wickedness on Men

**Psalm 54:** Prayer for Defense against enemies

**Psalm 55:** Prayer for the Destruction of the Treacherous

**Psalm 56:** Supplication for Deliverance, and Grateful Trust in God

**Psalm 57:** Prayer for Rescue from Persecutors

**Psalm 58:**Prayer for the Punishment of the Wicked

**Psalm 59:** Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies

**Psalm 60:** Lament over Defeat in Battle, and Prayer for Help

**Psalm 61:** Confidence in God’s Protection

**Psalm 62:** God Alone a Bridge from Treachery and Oppression

**Psalm 63:** The Thirsting Soul Satisfied in God

**Psalm 64:** Prayer for Deliverance from Secret Enemies

**Psalm 65:** God’s Abundant Favor to Earth and Man

**Psalm 66:** For the Choir Director . A Song

**Psalm 67:** The Nations Exhorted to Praise God

**Psalm 68:** The God of Sinai and of the Sanctuary

**Psalm 69:** A Cry of Distress and Imprecation on Adversaries

**Psalm 70:** Prayer for Help against Persecutors

**Psalm 71:** Prayer of an Old Man for Deliverance

**Psalm 72:** The Reign of the Righteous King

**Psalm 73:** The End of Wicked Contrasted With That of the Righteous

**Psalm 74:** An Appeal Against the Devastation of the Land by the Enemy

**Psalm 75:** God Abases the Proud but Exalts the Righteous

**Psalm 76:** The Victorious Power of the God of Jacob

**Psalm 77:** Comfort in Trouble from Recalling God’s Mighty Deeds

**Psalm 78:** God’s Guidance of His People in Spite of Their Unfaithfulness

**Psalm 79:** A Lament over the Destruction of Jerusalem and Prayer for Help

**Psalm 80:** God Implored to Rescue His People from Their Calamities

**Psalm 81:** God’s Goodness and Israel’s Waywardness

**Psalm 82 :** Unjust Judgements Rebuked

**Psalm 83:** God Implored to Confound His Enemies

**Psalm 84:** Longing for the Temple Worship

**Psalm 85:** Prayer for God’s Mercy upon a Nation

**Psalm 86:** A Psalm of Supplication and Trust

**Psalm 87:** The Privileges of Citizenship in Zion

**Psalm 88:** A Petition to be Saved from Death

**Psalm 89:** The Lord’s Covenant with David and Israel’s Afflictions

**Psalm 90:** God’s Eternity and Man’s Transitoriness

**Psalm 91:** Security of the One Who Trusts in the Lord

**Psalm 92:** Praise for the Lord’s Goodness

**Psalm 93:** The Majesty of the Lord

**Psalm 94:** The Lord Implored to Avenge His People

**Psalm 95:** Praise to the Lord and Warning Against Unbelief

**Psalm 96:** A Call to Worship the Lord the Righteous Judge

**Psalm 97:** The Lords Power and Dominion

**Psalm 98:** A Call to Praise the Lord and His Righteousness

**Psalm 99:** Praise to the Lord for His Fidelity to Israel

**Psalm 100:** A Man Exhorted to Praise

**Psalm 101:** The Psalmists Profession of Uprightness

**Psalm 102:** Prayer of an Afflicted Man for Mercy on Himself and on Zion

**Psalm 103:** Praise for the Lord’s Mercies

Psa**lm 104:** The Lord’s Care over All His Works

**Psalm 105:** The Lord’s Wonderful Works on the Behalf of Israel

**Psalm 106:** Israel’s Rebelliousness and the Lord’s Deliverances

**Psalm 107:** The Lord Delivers Men from Manifold Troubles

**Psalm 108:** God Praised and Supplication to Give Victory

**Psalm 109:** Vengeance Invoked upon Adversaries

**Psalm 110:** The Lord gives Dominion to the King

**Psalm 111:** The Lord Praised for His Goodness

**Psalm 112:** Prosperity of the One Who Fears the Lord

**Psalm 113:** The Lord Exalts the Humble

**Psalm 114:** God’s Deliverance of Israel from Egypt

**Psalm 115:** Heathen Idols Contrasted with the Lord

**Psalm 116:** Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Death

**Psalm 117:** A Psalm of Praise

**Psalm 118:** Thanksgiving for the Lords Saving Goodness

**Psalm 119:** Meditations and Prayers Relating to the Law of God

**Psalm 120:** Prayer of Deliverance from the Treacherous

**Psalm 121**: The Lord the Keeper of Israel

**Psalm 122 :** Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem

**Psalm 123 :** Prayer for the Lord’s Help

**Psalm 124:** Praise for Rescue from Enemies

**Psalm 125:** The Lord Surrounds His People

**Psalm 126:** Thanksgiving for Return from Captivity

**Psalm 127:** Prosperity Comes from the Lord

**Psalm 128:** Blessedness of the Fear of the Lor

**Psalm 129:** Prayer for the Overthrow of Zion’s Enemies

**Psalm 130:** Hope in the Lords Forgiving Love

**Psalm 131:** Childlike Trust in the Lord

**Psalm 132:** Prayer for the Blessing upon the Sanctuary

**Psalm 133:** The Excellency of Brotherly Unity

**Psalm 134:** Greetings of Night Watchers

**Psalm 135:**Praise the Lord’s Wonderful Works Vanity of Idols

**Psalm 136:** Thanks for the Lords Goodness to Israel

**Psalm 137:** An Experience of the Captivity

P**salm 138:** Thanksgiving for the Lord’s Favor

**Psalm 139:** God’s Omnipresence and Omniscience

**Psalm 140:** Prayer for the Protection against the Wicked

**Psalm 141:** An Evening Prayer for Sanctification and Protection

**Psalm 142:** Prayer for Help in Trouble

**Psalm 143:** Prayer for Deliverance and Guidance

**Psalm 144:** Prayer for Rescue and Prosperity

**Psalm 145:** The Lord Extolled for His Goodness

**Psalm 146:**The Lord an Abundant Helper

**Psalm 147:** Praise for Jerusalem’s Restoration and Prosperity

**Psalm 148:** The Whole Creation Invoked to Praise the Lord

**Psalm 149:** Israel Invoked to Praise the Lord

**Psalm 150:** A Psalm of Praise

**Analysis :** Psalms are our best guide to learn to pray. These are wells selected words and show that we trust Him to handle what we are and all we feel. Let every creature praise His holy name for ever and ever. (Psalm 145:21)

**PROVERBS**

**Author and date**

We do not know the author of Proverbs. Many claim that it was written by king Solomon but most scholars think this is unlikely. More likely, is the different sections were written by different people at different times. The essence of Proverbs is the teaching of moral and ethical principles is wisdom which is a moral quality. King Solomon’s name is mentioned in three parts of the book and he is deemed the writer as he was given special wisdom by God. This was probably put together in about 400 BC.

**Solomon’s tribute to wisdom**

Usefulness of Proverbs: A man of understanding will acquire wise counsel. Fear of the Lord is beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

The waywardness of the naïve shall kill them and complacency of fools shall destroy them. He who listens to the Lord shall live securely and be at ease from the dread of evil.

Make your ear attentive to the Lord for He gives wisdom. He is a shield to those who walk in integrity. Understanding will watch over you.

Trust the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.

The man that finds wisdom gains understanding and profits better than the profit of silver or gold. Do not be afraid for the Lord will be your confidence.

Sons, listen to your father to gain understanding which is the beginning of wisdom.

Observe discretion and do not be trapped in adultery.

If you give surety for your neighbor or a pledge for a stranger, deliver yourself.

There are things which the Lord hates:

 Abomination to Him

 Haughty eyes and a Lying tongue,

 Hands that shed innocent blood,

 A heart that devises wicked plans,

 Feet that run rapidly to evil,

 False witness,

 One that spreads strife among brothers

Observe the commandments of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother.

Do not despise a thief who steals for food but he must repay sevenfold.

Keep away from an adulteress and do not be deceived by her as it is descending to the chambers of death.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, walk in the way of righteousness. Blessed is the man who listens. Knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

**Solomon’s single verse proverbs**

Contrasting the righteous and the wicked.

 A wise man makes his father glad anda fool son is grief to his mother.

 Poor is he who works with a negligent hand but a diligent hand makes rich.

 He who walks in integrity walks securely but he who perverts his way will be found out.

 Love covers all transgression and spreading slander is foolish.

 The fear of the Lord prolongs life but the life of the wicked will be shortened.

Contrast the upright and the wicked.

 When pride comes then comes dishonor.

 Righteousness delivers from death and smooths the way of the blameless.

 A gracious woman attains honor.

 He who pursues evil will not go unpunished and will bring about his own death.

The generous man will prosper

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband but shaming him is rottenness in his bones.

He who pursues vain things lacks sense.

 The deeds of a man’s hands will return to him.

 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil.

 No harm befalls the righteous but the wicked are filled with trouble.

 Lying is the abomination of the Lord and faithfulness is His delight.

 A righteous man hates falsehood but the wicked acts disgustingly & shamefully.

 Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles but labor increases it.

 He who spares his rod hates his son but he who loves him, disciplines him diligently.

 Fear of the Lord is a fountain of life

 He who is quick-tempered exalts folly, slow to anger has great understanding.

 Her who is slow to anger is better than the mighty.

 A liar pays attention to the destructive tongue.

 He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul but the careless will die.

 Listen to counsel and accept discipline.

 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler and being intoxicated is not wise.

A good name is to be more desired than great riches.

**The words of the wise**

Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise.

 Do not eat the bread of a selfish man or desire his delicacies

 Do not hold back discipline from a child

 Do not let your heart envy sinners but live in fear of the Lord

 Do not be with heavy drinkers or gluttonous eaters of meat as poverty will come

 The father of the righteous will rejoice and your mother be glad she gave birth to you

Do not rejoice when your enemy falls or stumbles

**Proverbs transcribed by Hezekiah’s men**

Similitudes and instructions

 The glory of God to conceal a matter but glory of kings is to search it out.

 When your neighbor puts you to shame, argue your case without revealing a secret

 Like snow in summer , honor is not fitting for a fool

 Do not boast, let another praise you, not your mouth.

 The wicked flea when not pursued, the righteous are bold as a lion.

**Analysis:** Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in your ways acknowledge Him and he will make your paths straight.

 Proverbs talks about wisdom as being female and some commentators read the passage and think of Jesus. Perhaps, we should think of Jesus as wisdom to show us the way to God.

**ECCLESIASTES**

**Author and date**

Some claim Solomon as the author but the author is unknown.

The futility of Endeavor, Wisdom, Pleasure and Possessions, Labor

Life seems meaningless and working hard, being wise without knowing all, and having possessions does not make one happier but rather sadder. Wisdom excels folly. There is a time for everything from birth, a time to do all , to weep, mourn, to embrace, to be silent etc.

God has set eternity in the heart of man and man will not find out what God has done.

The acts of oppression results in tears to the oppressed, power to the oppressors but no comfort. Every labor or skill is the vanity of man.

Let your words be few and honor your vows to God.

He who loves money or abundance will not be satisfied with money as this is vanity. Life is futile in that men are not satisfied with riches, children, even life of a thousand years, what the eyes sees is better than the soul desires. No one knows what is good for a man during his lifetime. There is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness and is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his wickedness. Do not be excessively wicked, righteous , serious or wise.

The deeds of all men are in the hand of God. There is one fate for the righteous and another for the wicked. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might. Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.

Remember your creator and fear God and keep His commandments because this applies to every person. God will bring every act to judgement , everything which is hidden whether it is good or evil.

**Analysis:** This book emphasizes that life is pointless without God. It is a search to find the truth for God will bring every deed into judgement.

**SONG OF SONGS (SOLOMON)**

**Author and date**

Originally this book was read on the eighth day of Passover.

Traditionally thought to be authored by King Solomon but this is now doubted by most scholars. Probably written in about 200 BC

**Falling in love**

A young bride praises her beloved and Solomon speak about her beauty. They exchange compliments all expressing expressions of love and mutual delight in each other. The book illustrates the joy of authentic love found in marriage.

**Analysis:** Some people interpret this book as explaining Jesus’ relationship to the church. The Holy Spirit can guide us in many readings of the scriptures.

**ISAIAH**

**Author and date**

Isaiah was an esteemed citizen of Jerusalem who was a trusted advisor to kings from Uzziah, through Hezekiah to Manasseh. The book was possibly written in 701 – 681 BC.

Serm**ons of rebuke and promise**

Isaiah preached to the people who had turned away from God. He warned that God has had enough of their pretending to worship and He is weary of them. He warned that the Lord would turn His hand against them but the repenting would be redeemed with righteousness. Isiah had a vision of God and he was forgiven and given a commission.

Isaiah was sent out by the Lord to meet Ahaz and warn him of the evil planned against him. Damascus and Samaria fall and a child is born. God is anger with Israel’s arrogance but He does not turn away from them.

Nations are judged and their burdens are described. Nations covered are Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Samaria, Cush and Egypt. Babylon is conquered and idols destroyed, Edom defeated by Israel, Dedan and Kedar are be routed and Jerusalem fall is foreseen.

Sermons also covered universal judgement on sin and oppressors to be punished but God’s people preserved.

Sermons of woes upon unbelievers of Israel. Judgement of Ephraimite drunkards and Jewish scoffers, Judah and Jerusalem are warned. Beware God will judge. His wrath will be brought against some nations , glory of Lebanon will be given to it and Zion will have a happy future.

King Sennacherib of Assyria came up against Judah cities and pleaded with the people to come to their land and not rely on king Hezekiah. The king seeks Isaiah’s help and the king is told not to be afraid. Hezekiah prayed and an angel of the Lord killed 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. Hezekiah became ill and Isaiah told him that he should get his house in order or die. The king prayed and was saved. Hezekiah foolishly showed off his treasures. Through Isaiah the Lord told him those to whom he had shown his treasures will return to carry them to Babylon.

The purpose of peace was to show that the Lord is sovereign and Israel’s witness to God.

God introduces himself to Cyrus and declares that to Him every knee shall bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. The Israelis are told again that there is only one God and their obstinacy and they are reminded that there is only one God. To people afar, Isaiah also describes the power of the Lord and He lifts up His hand to all the peoples. God helps His servants. Israel is encouraged to trust God and to return to God’s favor. God’s free offer of mercy to repentant sinners. The foreigner ( non-Israeli) who has joined himself to the Lord, He gives His house and a memorial to them on His walls as well as an everlasting name and they will be joyful in My house. Their burnt offerings will be acceptable at His altar. His house will be a house of prayer for all peoples. Corrupt leaders are condemned.

Observe the fasts and if you give yourself to the hungry, the Lord will guide you and give you strength, you will be like a watered garden. Keep the sabbath and you will take delight in the Lord.

The Lord will hear your confessions and a redeemer will come to Zion and save you. Foreigners will come and build up your walls. Isaiah sermon covered that the spirit of the Lord is upon him and he brought good news to the afflicted as he would build up broken hearted, proclaim liberty to captives and comfort to all that mourn. Zion’s glory will be re-built and there will be a prayer for mercy and help.

Those who do not ask for the Lord will be hungry. Heaven is God’s throne.

Hypocrisy is rebuked. Joy is Jerusalem’s future.

**Analysis:** This book takes one into God’s thinking. It shows Gods pain resulting from people turning away from him and the book clearly shows His love for His people. God’s anger is also shown. He punishes those who might return to Him. Isaiah is sometimes referred to as the fifth gospel reporting on the life of Jesus. The book does not refer to Jesus but is does refer to God’s chosen servant. These prophecies so long before Jesus’ birth adds credibility to Him being God’s Son.

**JEREMIAH**

**Author and date**

The history of the kingdom of Judah after the death of Solomon and the division of kingdom has been sitting for religious declines and three revivals.

 Josiah was a is a good king and in his reign was well known revival and finding of the scroll.

 Jehoiakim was a wicked man and he tried to silence Jeremiah

 Jehoiachin succeeded but he was carried off by the Babylonians

 Zedekiah was appointed by king Nebuchadnezzar, he was weak but protected Jeremiah

 From the nobles

No one knows who wrote this book or the date.

**The prophet**

During Josiah’s reign, the words of the Lord came through the prophet Jeremiah. Similarly, in the days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah.

God calls Jeremiah to be a prophet but he protests that he is too young, but God replies that he will be with him and will direct him. Jeremiah was tested and then told that he must tell the people that the Lord has told him that after following Him through the wilderness, to the people that disaster is coming because they have worshiped a god instead of the true God. God told Jeremiah that the people should circumcise themselves to the Lord and pledge themselves to the true God. He warned of the enemy from the North who are cruel and have no mercy. Jeremiah stood at the temple gate telling the people to amend their ways and deeds. They were warned against stealing, murder, committing adultery, swearing falsely and offering sacrifices to Baal and walking after other gods. In summary, he told the people to obey God’s voice and He will protect them. The people ignored the warning.

God again told Jeremiah to warn the people in Judah and Jerusalem. The Lord made it known to Jeremiah that there were plots against him but the Lord said he will punish them. Jeremiah prays to the Lord for explanations as to why the wicked prosper, and the Lord answers that He will uproot those but He will bring them back and reinstate their inheritance and land.

God tells Jeremiah to buy a linen waistband which you must take and hide in the crevice of a rock. God explains that he wants his people as close to him. When he went and retrieved the waistband, it was totally worthless and he realized the importance and meaning of God’s word that He would destroy the pride of Judah and Jerusalem. God instructs Jeremiah to go out and spread that message.

There was a drought in Jerusalem and Jeremiah at this time, prophets were telling the people that and the Lord pointed out that these prophets are prophesying falsehood in His name. Jeremiah prays to the Lord for support and He replies that He will support those who return to Him, and they will be protected. The Lord foretells of distress but He will restore the people to their land but first he will punish iniquity. Jeremiah is made aware of the shortcomings of the people of Judah and he is told by the Lord to tell the people to keep the Sabbath and he warns of the consequences of not doing so.

The Lord asks if he cannot deal with people like the potter does viz discard his errors and pick up new clay. The Lord warns Judah and Jerusalem that He will bring calamity to them if they do not change their ways. The people rejected this warning and planned action against Jeremiah. Jeremiah is told to take a potters jar and break it and to tell the people that this is how the Lord will break them. Pashhur, a priest had Jeremiah beaten and put in custody, the next day he was released Jeremiah warned him of his captivity and death.

King Zedekiah asks Jeremiah to ask the Lord for help against the warring king of Babylon. His response was that the Lord would allow them to be desolated if they do not follow His word. He denounces the false prophets. Hananiah falsely prophecies that God will actually take away the yoke of the Babylonians and will bring back the exiled kings. Jeremiah gently disagrees with him and Hananiah takes away his yoke and breaks it and he continued with his false prophesy. As further warned by the Lord through Jeremiah, Hananiah died that year.

Jeremiah writes a letter to the people in exile explaining that after 70 years in Babylon, God will gently take them out. The people who stayed behind in Judah have not followed the Lord and will be punished but those saved by God in Babylon will be rewarded. God confirms that he has always loved them. The Lord declares that He will make a new covenant with the house of Judah and the house of Israel to write God’s laws in their hearts.

The Lord told Jeremiah that he was giving his city to the king of Babylon who will burn it and that he should tell Zedekiah and also tell him that he will not die by the sword but in peace. Jerusalem falls and Jeremiah chooses to stay behind in Judah under Babylonian rule.

God asks Jeremiah to write down all the messages God has given him, hoping the people might hear these messages and be persuaded to turn away from their sins. Jeremiah is not allowed inside the temple because the priests do not like his prophecies so he asks a man named Baruch to read the messages on the scroll. Baruch reads the messages in the temple. The officials of the palace, then called for him to read to the Royal officials. King Zedekiah burns the scrolls and Baruch and Jeremiah go to hiding. God asked Jeremiah to write the scroll again and explains that the king will soon die.

King Zedekiah sent a message to Jeremiah asking him to pray to his God for the king. Meanwhile the Pharaoh’s army had set out from Egypt. Jeremiah was told by the Lord that the Egyptian army had come out but would return to their own land and the Chaldeans will capture and burn Judah. The Chaldeans army had lifted their siege on Jerusalem because of Pharoah’s army. Jeremiah was then arrested. He was then taken to the king who asked him secretly whether there was any word from God. Jeremiah pleaded his case for being imprisoned and was then sent to a guardhouse where he was fed a loaf of bread daily. A number of priests then condemned Jeremiah into a cistern where there was no water only mud. He is then freed and taken to the king. Jeremiah warned that the king could meet the officers of Babylon and save himself and the city from being burned. Instead, they try to escape and are captured, his sons killed and the king was blinded. The Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, took care of Jeremiah.

God promises the people in Judah that he will rebuild them and then stay instead of trying to escape to Egypt. Johanan, a military commander plans to take the people to Egypt including Jeremiah. Jeremiah says the Lord wants the people to stay and he prophesies the Babylon will conquer Egypt and the God will punish the people by the sword those who disobey. The people did not believe him and entered the land of Egypt.

Then Jeremiah again warned the following:

 Defeat of Pharoah by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

 Philistia would have floods

 Moab will be shattered

 Sons of Ammon will be a desolate heap, the town set alight and Israel will take their possessions

 Edon will become an object of horror and no one will live there.

 Damascus has become helpless and the fortified towers will burn

 Kedar and Hazor – the inhabitants of Kedar will take their tents and disappear. Hazor will become a haunt of jackals.

 Four winds from heaven will shatter Elam and then the Lord will restore Elam.

 Babylon the land of the Chaldeans will be captured and put to shame; its imagines will be destroyed. The sons of Judah will be seeking the Lord and the people of Israel will be returned to their pastures.

God had Jeremiah read the prophecies against Babylon and had him throw a stone in the water to show, Babylon too will sink.

Recount of the fall of Jerusalem: Zedekiah was 21 when he became king, he did evil in the sight of the Lord until the Lord was so angry, he cast them out from his presence. In the 9th year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and built a siege around it. In the 11th year, there was a famine in Jerusalem so the people did not have food. The men of war fled the city and the Chaldeans pursued them and captured the king and took him to Babylon. His sons , princes of Judah were slaughtered before him and he was made blind and was imprisoned until his death.

The Babylon men went to Jerusalem and after taking all valuables, they burnt down the house of the Lord and broke down all the walls around the city. In his 37th year in exile king Jehoiachin was removed from prison by the new king of Babylon and he had his meals in the palace until his death.

**Analysis:** Like other books, this book emphasizes Gods love for His people. He gives them many chances. There are many object lessons in everyday life. We should always be aware of Gods help and grace available to us. Jeremiah did not think he was strong enough to serve God the way he was directed. We often feel that way ourselves and will have work to do which is not attractive and not what we want to do but, doing these tasks will give us strength.

**LAMENTATIONS ( OF JEREMIAH)**

**Author and date**

These chapters express the anguish of the Jewish people at the utter ruin of their city.

The book does not name the author but there are connections in the poetic sections of Jeremiah’s prophesy. The date of writing was probably shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B C.

The sorrows of Zion

How lonely sits a city that was full of people. The poetry defines all that is lost.

God’s anger over Israel

These words describe how the Lord, in His anger, has covered Israel in a cloud and taken all from it. There is no king, no law and no prophets as examples which are interwoven in this poetry.

Jeremiah shares Israel’s affliction

He describes what has been taken from him

Hope of relief in God’s mercy

He has hope in the Lord for we have no reason to complain as a result of our sins. The Lord had heard his calls for help and He has seen the schemes against him.

Distress of the siege described

Little ones asking for bread and there is none, they are not recognized in the streets. The Lord has accomplished his wrath, our end has come and our days finished.

Prayer for mercy

They had lost their houses to aliens (foreigners), our fathers sinned but are no more. The joy from their hearts have ceased. Lord do not forget us forever, and do not forsake us. Restore us to thee O Lord unless we are utterly rejected.

**Analysis:** Expresses the despair of the people of Judah over the loss of their land, city, and temple. This book like Psalms is about people praying to God and it shows us that no situation is too bad to share with God. We do not need to suffer alone; God is always with us.

**EZEKIEL**

**Author and date**

Many believe a priest Ezekiel wrote this book. It was possibly written in about 593 - 571 B C.

**Vision of Four figures**

Ezekiel was a priest in Babylon and sees visions from God. He was told that there would be a storm wind from the north and four figures resembling living beings each had four faces. Each with a face of man, a face of a lion on the right, a face of a bull on the left and the face of an eagle. He heard a voice speaking to him as Son of Man, telling him to go to the rebellious people in Israel and that he should not be afraid and a hand gives him a scroll written on front and back were lamentations, mourning and woe. God tells Ezekiel to eat sad words about Israel’s future. God says the people will not listen to him. The Spirit lifted him up and took to the exiles where he sat for seven days until the word of the Lord came to him. God told him that he was watchman to the house of Israel and He said that he must warn the people when a word comes from the Lord. If the wicked is warned and does not turn from his ways, they will surely die. When a righteous man turns from his ways , he too shall die in his sin. But, if he does not sin, he shall live because he took warning.

Siege of Jerusalem predicted and God instructed Ezekiel to lie on his left side for 390 days in mourning for Israel and 40 days in mourning for Judah. You will then set your face down toward the siege of Jerusalem and prophesy against it. His food during this time is clearly defined by the Lord. He was told to cut the hair on his head and beard and to divide the hair. One-third to be burnt in the city when the siege is completed. A further third shall be struck with a sword and a further third will be scattered. Some of the hair will be burned. Jerusalem was to be the center of nations but the people did not follow the Lord so they will be desolated and have a famine, plague and bloodshed which will bereave them of children.

The Lord told Ezekiel that he could prophesy that He will strike down their idols and will place dead bodies of the Israeli before the idols. He further warned that dwellings will be waste. Those that escape, will know that the Lord has been hurt by their adulterous behavior and they will be taught that the Lord is their God. Punishment for wickedness is foretold. The church elders are committing carved images to each man and Ezekiel warns that they will see even more abominations and then He has Ezekiel place a mark on the foreheads of all men that are still faithful. The angels strike down those without marks. God’s glory leaves the temple and He says He will give the people new hearts to follow Him.

The Lord tells Ezekiel to assemble his baggage and in the sight of all, he should leave like an exile and tell the people they too will be exiled if they do not follow the Lord. God describes what He will do to the people but He will forgive them if they show that they will support the Lord. God explains how He reacts to those elders and the city will have famine. God explains that parents are punished for their sins and children for their own sins, not the sins of their parents. He hates punishing people and He will forgive those who repent. God says Jerusalem is a sinful city where parents are disrespectful, foreigners are robbed and orphans and widows impoverished. People do not follow the Sabbath or adhere to God rules on sex. bribery and robbery are everywhere. God will melt the people like one melts metal, making them like precious silver. Nevertheless, God will honor the covenant He made with their parents.

The Lord reminds Ezekiel that the king of Babylon went to Jerusalem and he took away the royal family and the mighty of the land. Pharoah would not be able to help the king of Israel as He will put a net over them which will catch them in His snare.

God deals justly with individuals who are righteous.

Ezekiel’s wife dies, but God says he is not allowed to mourn as a sign to Israel. God will destroy the temple, which Israel loves as Ezekiel loves his wife. They must not mourn because they are being punished. God will also judge the foreign nations that I wandered away from him.

The people from Ammon will have encampments among you and will eat your produce. You will then know that I am the Lord. The Lord will also execute judgements against the people of Moab. He will stretch out His hand against Edom and Philistia. He will also be against Tyre and Sidon as well as Egypt. The Lord broke thew arms of the Egyptian king and strengthened Babylon.

The Lord brought Ezekiel into a valley full of dry bones and to illustrate that Israel was dried up, like the bones. He added flesh to the bones and breath so He brought them to life like He would do for Israel.

Ezekiel tells the leaders of Israel that they take care of themselves rather than their sheep. The sheep are scattered and wandering everywhere. God says, He will rescue the people from the shepherds and He alone will be their shepherd. He also was against Gog of the land of Magog.

The Lord shall restore the fortunes of Jacob and the whole house of Israel. There is a vision of a man with a measuring rod and he measured the Temple including the inner temple , the chambers and a full description of God filling the Temple, the offerings and a gate for the prince. Ordinances were prescribed for the Levites and He prescribed that the land for inheritance shall be allocated by lot. The prince will have land on either side of the holy allotment. The name of the city shall be “The Lord is there”.

**Analysis:** To confront people about their sin, this book emphasizes that God loves the people and hates to punish them. Ezekiel had to act out his drama by lying on his side in mourning, he could not mourn the death of his wife and his feeding requirements were not usual.

The people had cast God aside, but Ezekiel was very much alive and obedient. God will punish those who think they can live apart but God also wants to gather and restore His people.

**DANIEL**

**Author and date**

Some believe that Daniel was the author while in exile but some scholars have doubted this. The date is not known and some guess 605 – 535 BC but many believe to be 300 B C.

**Visions of Love Come Down**

In the third year of the rule of king Jehoiakim, king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, came and besieged Jerusalem. They took a small group of Jews to become government officials for Babylon. Daniel was one of them. He decided not to eat food that the Jewish law declared unclean so he and his friends asked if they could eat vegetables and water. Babylonian officials agreed and after 10 days, Daniel and his friends were healthier than those who ate the palace food. God caused the Babylonians and the king in particular to like Daniel and his friends. God also gave Daniel the ability to interpret dreams and visions.

In the second-year king of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, he had dreams which he did not understand. He had a number of sorcerers , magicians and conjurers to tell the king the meaning of the dreams. They could not and the king demanded that if they could not interpret the dream, they would be torn limb from limb but if the dream is interpreted, valuable gifts will follow. The response was that no one could interpret the dreams. Daniel was told that if he could not interpret the dream, he would kill him and his friends and all the wisemen in his court. Daniel and his friends prayed to God to reveal the meaning of the dream, which God did. Daniel saw that the king James of a huge statue before the king that was broken by a stone which is been turned into a mountain. The dream made that after the kings reign, other kingdoms would arise, which eventually God would set up a divided kingdom that will reign for all eternity. Daniel explained that God had revealed the meaning to him and not that Daniel had any special powers himself.

Nebuchadnezzar gave Daniel many great gifts and made him the ruler of part of Babylon and his friends were recognized as well.

Later, the king built a golden statue everyone was supposed to worship. Daniel and his friends refused to worship the statue and his friends were thrown into the furnace of fire, but they were not harmed as God stood with them. Nebuchadnezzar was amazed and made a rule that nobody could speak against the Jewish god.

Nebuchadnezzar had a vision of a great tree where many animals rested. The tree was cut down. He asked Daniel to interpret the dream. Daniel explained the tree represents the king himself who is now great but he will be driven away from society until he learns that God is the one true king. This came true and after a lonely exile, he worshiped God.

The new king Belshazzar was having a large feast with many nobles and he was drinking wine before thousands. He ordered that the gold and silver which his father had taken from the temple be used for the guests. He praised the gods of gold and silver. Suddenly, a hand wrote on the wall, but nobody could read the writing. Finally, he asked Daniel for help, he explained the writing meant that God had granted power to Nebuchadnezzar and the people feared him. However, he became so proud he behaved arrogantly and his glory was taken away from him. You have not humbled your heart, or your life breath and your ways are not glorified. Belshazzar gave orders that Daniel had authority as the third ruler of Babylon. That night the king was slain.

Darius was made king and Daniel was appointed one of three rulers.

Daniel was distinguishing himself and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. Some officers unsuccessfully looked for grounds of accusation. They suggested to Darius that anyone who makes a petition to any god other than the king should be cast to the lion’s den.

Daniel continued to pray to his God and he was thrown in the lion’s den. The mouth of the den was sealed. The king went in haste to the den and found he was unharmed as God had closed the lion’s mouths. He was freed and those who accused Daniel together with their families, were cast into the den and overpowered before their bones reached the bottom of the den. Darius acknowledged the God of Daniel.

Daniel had a vision in his dream of four beasts. These were interpreted as future kings with the last one which was different from the others. This one will be different from the others in that it will be everlasting and all will obey him. Daniel prayed for his people and asked for forgiveness. Gabriel responded that the people had 70 weeks to end all sin, to make atonement for iniquity and to bring everlasting righteousness to seal a vision and prophecy to anoint the most holy place. He foretells the coming of the Messiah and His end to come with a flood and war, desolations are determined.

Two years later in the 3rd year of Cyprus king Belteshazzar, Daniel was mourning and fasting, a hand touched him and said he should not be afraid for he will fight against the prince of Persia and the prince of Greece is about to come. There will be many kings in Persia, but Daniel was told “how blessed is he who keeps waiting” and he should go his way until the end.

**Analysis:** Daniel is a confusing book. The purpose is to convince the Jewish exiles that God is sovereign and to provide them with a vision of their redemption.

 Daniel describes seeing a “son of man” rule over the world who was both divine and human. (Daniel 7. 13). Many believe that reference was to Jesus. Chapter 12.7 also refers to a man that will live forever which could be reference to Jesus and everlasting life offered by Him. The Tribulation period is referred to in this book and in Mathew 24: 15 -16, 2 Thessalonians 2: 8 and Revelation 19: 11 -19.

**HOSEA**

**Author and date**

Hosea was from the northern kingdom and prophesied during the time of Isiah. The book was written by Hosea in between 786 and 687 B C.

**Prophet married life**

The word of the Lord came to the prophet to find a wife who was a prostitute and have children. Hosea married a prostitute named Gomer, and they had a son. The Lord told them to call him Jezreel. He would punish the house of Jehu for their bloodshed of Jezreel, the city. She then had a daughter which the Lord named Loruhamah which means “not pitied” for He will no longer have compassion for Israel but for Judah. A second son was called Loammi, meaning “not my people” because people who sin repeatedly against God are no longer God’s people. God promises that he will bring Israel together.

God tells Hosea to love a married woman who is an adulteress so he acquired her. God did this to show Israel and to try and help them stop sinning because God loves them like a husband loves a wife who is cheating on him and breaking his heart. God speaks lovingly to Israel and asked her to come back.

Hosea appeals to the people to follow God and he points out that Israel and Ephraim have stumbled and his iniquity uncovered. Ephraim is punished but God yearns over His people. Ephraim brags that he is rich and he follows idols. Hosea pleads with the people and tells Ephraim that he can do no more for him. The ways of the Lord are right and he urges the people to follow the Lord.

**Analysis:** To illustrate Israel’s spiritual adultery and warn of destruction. A comparison of a relationship being compared to husband and wife, helps us understand the depth of God’s love. God has feelings like those we understand. God wants us all to follow Him and in return we would see love beyond our imagination.

**JOEL**

**Author and date**

Joel may mean a confession of faith by his parents. He is possibly not a priest. The work is probably the work of one author and the style is similar to Amos and Micah. There is divided opinion on its date from 830 B C to 400 BC with the latter date being more likely but uncertain.

**The Day of the Lord Draws near**

A terrible outbreak of locusts has devastated Israel's crops. Joel tells the people that the day of the Lord is near. God’s judgment is coming. God wants the people to come back to him, to change the way they were living and worship him. Everybody needs to come to God, even the bride and groom on their wedding night need to come out to God. Joel reminds them crops will come back to life, even better than before. God will come and live with Israel and pour out his Spirit to everybody. After that God will gather all the nations together and punish evil. The nations that do not know God will be afraid of the day of judgment but Israel be safe with God and the day of the land will belong to Israel alone and God will live with him forever.

**Analysis:** The book starts with Joel complaining about how terrible the locust situation was. Joel received a far deeper message about the Day of Judgement. If we follow God, He will pour out His Spirit and protect us. He will live with us even more.

**AMOS**

**Author and date**

Amos was a shepherd who God asked to prophesy. This book was written by Amos in about 800 B C.

**Judgement of neighbor nations**

God will not revoke the punishment of Damascus, Tyre, Edom and Ammon. Also, Moab , Judah and Israel. All the tribes are guilty and Israel, as the chosen people, yet they have not returned to Him. Amos tells them to seek the Lord and He will be with them. For those in Zion, He shows that, what the Lord is offering is better. Amos received his warnings through visions. Then Amaziah, a priest told the king that Amos conspired against him. In response to this question, Amos answered that the king would be killed and Israel will go from its land into exile. Amaziah then tries to send Amos away, but he refuses and responds that, he is a herdsman who God sent to preach. Amos warns that God will punish anyone who speaks against Israel. Amos prophesies that God will raise up Israel and they will rule the nations. This will be justice for all who believe in Him, and Israel will live safely in the promised land.

**Analysis:** Amos tells the king he is not a prophet, but the book seems to tell us about the work of a prophet. It is a strong warning against hurting the poor. Even though one might not have self-esteem, God can use us. We should also be sure we are doing whatever we can to help the needy and if we are rich, we can give to churches and others who need help.

**OBADIAH**

**Author and date**

This book does not identify the prophet and none of the 12 men of that name corresponds to the prophet. The date is uncertain but about 586 BC

**Edom prophecy**

The vision of Obadiah concerns Edom, a nation intent on destroying Israel and opposing God. Edom refuses to worship God so they will be punished. Edom will experience the same shame which they forced upon Israel. The day of the Lord is coming and all nations that support God will be treated as they dealt with others. Israel will have all their land back again and will be belong fully to God.

**Analysis:** This short book show that God is the judge and evil will never win. As Christians, we are on the winning team.

**JONAH**

**Author and date**

The prophet Jonah but the author is unknown even though Chapter 2 is written in the first person singular. Estimates of the date authored are between 783 – 753 BC.

**The reluctant prophet**

God tells Jonah, to go to the Nineveh, an evil city to tell them God is angry and plans to punish them. Jonah does not want to obey. He goes to the town of Joppa and found a ship going in the opposite direction. God makes a terrible storm on the sea. Passengers and sailors are afraid and throw cargo off the boat and pray to their gods. The people on board cast lots to see who’s fault was the storm. The lot lands on Jonah who admits he is running away from God. The sailors are afraid. They throw him overboard and the sea stopped its raging. The sailors were fearful and offered sacrifices to the Lord. The Lord appointed a huge fish to swallow Jonah whole. Jonah prayed to the Lord from the stomach of the fish. The Lord then commanded the fish to vomit Jonah onto dry land. Again. The Lord said to Jonah, go to Nineveh proclaim as I instruct. Jonah then went through the city and when the king of Nineveh heard about this and to appease God, he commanded that man and beast must be covered in sackcloth and they must call on God that each may turn from his evil ways. When God heard the reaction, He relented the calamity he had declared.

Jonah becomes angry at God for forgiving them, asking God to kill him. Jonah went out of the city and sat in the hot sun, but God creates a bush to give him shade. The next day God sends a worm to eat the bush which withers away. Jonah asked God to kill him again. God explains to Jonah that he was concerned about the bush but God is even more concerned about 120,000 people of Nineveh which is why God sent Jonah to them.

**Analysis:** The biggest lesson we learn from this book is that God is patient and loving with us even when we do not follow instructions. We can still help Him as He directs us.

**MICAH**

**Author and date**

Written by Micah the prophet probably during the reign of King Jotham from 742 to 686 B C.

**Approaching judgement in Israel and Judah**

The word that came to Micah that the Lord God would witness against the people and the destruction that would take place would be devastating. Woe to those who are oppressors, the prophets who led people astray, were denounced. The Lord was pleading to the people and it was described what God requires of man was to : (a)do justice, (b)to love kindness and (c) to walk humbly with your God. There were many personal problems in that, there was not an upright person among them as each hunts each other, neighbors do not trust each other, a father is treated contemptuously by his son, daughter rises against mother but Micah waits for his Lord and savior to save him. He will bear the indignation of the Lord and know that the Lord will bring him out of the darkness. God will show miracles and nations will dread God. God does not retain His anger forever because He delights in unchanging love. He will have compassion and cast all our sins into the sea. He will give truth and unchanging love.

 **Analysis:** He has shown you what is good and what the Lord requires of you.

In Chapter 5.2, we see reference to reference is made to one who will rule Israel. Many believe that this reference is to Jesus. Similar interpretations arise from other statements for example in Chapter 4.3 as “many nations” refers to the many countries that would come to Jesus.

**NAHUM**

**Author and date**

The book was written by the prophet Nahum in 663 - 612 B C.

**God is awesome**

God is jealous and avenging but He reserves wrath for His enemies and will not leave the guilty unpunished. God is slow to anger but great in power, master over nature and judge of evil. Nobody can stand against his anger. He will punish the enemies who did not know God in particular in the city of Nineveh.

**Analysis:** This book more than any other discusses God’s anger which is something many Christians do not consider. God loves us all and Nahum praises God for His justice and power.

**HABAKKUK**

**Date and author**

 The book is written by the prophet Habakkuk and probably about 600 B C.

 **People of Babylon ( Chaldeans) punish Judah**

Habakkuk asks the Lord how long must he call for help. He sees inequity and wickedness, destruction and violence carried out by the people of Babylon. They are powerful, fierce and impetuous people who marched through the earth, seize dwelling places and are dreaded and feared. They mock the kings and the rulers.

**God answers the prophet**

The Lord told him to record what he sees and inscribe it on tablets. The Lord warned the evil doers. God’s people must be patient since God promises will be fulfilled. God is real. Habakkuk worships God and promises to wait for God to punish evil. Until then, he will praise God and be strong in God’s grace.

**Analysis:** Habakkuk questions God but the book does show his profound faith. He trusts God and while he keeps questioning, God rewards his faith. We should all strive to bring our pains and doubts to God but to have faith in His advice.

**ZEPHANIAH**

**Date and author**

It is most likely but uncertain that Zephaniah wrote this book in about 641 - 622 B C.

**Day of Judgement**

The words of the Lord came to Zephaniah that He would destroy the earth including Judah and Jerusalem. He names the idolatrous priests, those who bow down and swear to the Lord and also swear to others and all who have turned their back on the Lord. In addition, the enemies of Judah are noted and woe to Jerusalem. The Day of Judgement is near. Zephaniah promises that He will remove the evil people from Israel and the remnant will live in joy and safety.

**Analysis :** This book is short and rarely read. However, it applies to modern times where people are more focused on making money rather than serving God. He will punish them. We should all be sure we are part of God’s perfect world which will come.

**HAGGAI**

**Author and date**

We only know that the text says it was written by prophet Haggai and describes events occurring in 520 BC.

**Temple re-building**

The Lord told Haggai that the people should consider their ways as they eat but they know that there is not sufficient food for everyone. Similarly, they have clothes but some are too cold etc. He told Haggai to talk to the governor of Judah who saw the temple in its former glory and what they have now does not compare. The Lord promises that He will shake the heavens and the earth and all nations and the glory of His house will be greater than ever before. He urges Haggai to talk again to the governor as the Day of Judgement is coming.

**Analysis:** People listened to Haggai’s wordand worked on the temple. The people were involved in their lives , not on God. Many of us are doing the same and if we do not contribute to God’s work, we will be punished as well.

**ZECHARIAH**

**Author and date**

Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai and it is assumed that the first 8 chapters were written by him before 515 BC when the temple was finished and that chapters 9 to 14 were written later.

**Call to repentance**

The Lord told Zachariah that the people should return from their evil ways. He promises to return to Jerusalem and to make it prosperous. Zechariah sees a vision of horseman patrolling the earth, and an angel explains that God is jealous for Israel and will return to them with compassion because they are rebuilding God’s temple. He then sees four animal horns, all that will be left of the nations that have hurt Israel. Third he sees a man with a measuring tape, he says he is measuring Jerusalem, but there will be a wall of fire to protect them and they will know that God is in in its midst. Next, he sees Joshua, the high priest, wearing dirty clothes and an angel giving him clean clothes. God promises Joshua and the whole nation that He will protect those who walk His way. Then Zachariah sees a vision of a lamp stand and two olive trees. The trees represent Joshua, the priest and Zerubbabel, the governor, who has started the temple foundations. promise the temple will be complete. After that he sees flying scrolls condemning thieves and those who swear or purge themselves. Then Zachariah sees two woman who were sent far away from Israel. After that he sees God’s chariots patrolling the earth. A symbolic crown is made for the one who builds a temple as he will be the one to rule on His throne. God then tells Zechariah to tell the people to dispense true justice, practice kindness and compassion and do not oppress the poor or the widow or devise evil against each other.

The Lord promises to dwell in Jerusalem and the streets will be open to all and He will save His people. God says he will punish Israel’s enemies and the priests who do not follow Him. The pastors and religious leaders who do not take care of the people will also be punished. Zachariah ends with a vision of a perfect world which God will make after the Day of Judgment after which, everything will be holy to the Lord.

**Analysis:**  Zechariah is told that He will dwell in their midst and “you will know the Lord of Hosts sent Me to you “Chapter 2.11 Many Christians interpret these words as the one who will be in your midst as referring to as being Jesus.

In addition, reference to many peoples and mighty nations will come to Israel, Chapter 8.21 refers to non-Jewish people coming to God. An interpretation is that refers to Christians being introduced as His people.

Some people are concerned that the Old Testament concentrates on God punishing the people but this book, shows that God really wants us to be kind to others. All who choose a life of sin will be punished.

**MALACHI**

**Author and date**

This book was probably written by Malachi after exile but the date is possibly between 432 and 520 B C.

**God’s love**

God confirms His love for Israel. He queries their love for Him and says priests despise His name and present defiled food at His altar. He tells the priests He is not pleased with them and is critical of those who profane His name. He warns those priests who do not give honor to His name, He will curse them and take them away. He criticizes Judah for its profanity against the Lord.

He promises to send a messenger who will purify the people of Jerusalem and Judah who will be pleasing to the Lord as in former days. He will judge the sorcerers, the adulteress, those who bear false witness, those who oppress the wage earners and widows and orphans as well as the aliens and those who do not fear Him. He asks the people to return to Him and He will return to them.

He says He has been robbed by those who do not give their tithes and offerings. He says bring your tithes so that there will be food in His house and He will pour out blessings on them. All those who fear the Lord and speak to one another, they will be His and He will spare them.

The day is coming when the evil doer will be chaff and those who fear His name will be righteous. They will tread down the wicked. Remember the Law of Moses.

He promises to send Elijah the prophet who will restore the hearts of the fathers of their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers.

**Analysis:** Malachi says the people are robbing God by not making their tithes. When we do not contribute, God is disappointed. He promises that His name will be great among the nations (Chapter 1.11) refers to non-Jewish people supporting Him and in Chapter 3.1 He refers to a messenger He will send. Some believe this refers to John the Baptist. Malachi reminds us all to give to God. He was planning for Jesus and John the Baptist to widen His followers.

**NEW TESTAMENT**

MATHEW

MATHEW as a former tax gatherer, Mathew was well qualified to produce the gospel as he had a knowledge of shorthand and was able to record events in real time. In addition, it is possible that Mark’s Gospel was written earlier and may have been available to Mathew. The date of this work was possibly A.D.60 or 70.

The Gospel of Mathew was designed for recent Christian converts in the following 5 books, perhaps influenced by Moses:

1. Sermon of the Mount (Chapters 5 – 7) on theme of discipleship.
2. Mission of apostleship, when 12 were sent to preach & heal (Chapter 10).
3. Parables of the Kingdom (Chapter 13).
4. Disciple & fellowship of the church (Chapter 18).
5. The great apocalyptic discourse of the end of the world (Chapters 24 – 25).

Another important aspect is that being aimed at Jews, as he bases every appeal on witnesses in the Old Testament.

Chapter 1: Genealogy of Jesus: Mathew presents Jesus as Son of David in the first chapter. The genealogy is in three parts:

1. From Abraham to David
2. David to the Exile
3. From Exile to “Son of David”

All are in 14 generations which is a sacred number (twice 7 days or sabbath, numerical equivalent of name David

Chapter 2: Visit of the three wise men, flight of the family to Egypt and Herod slaughtering baby boys.

Chapter 3: John the Baptist and his baptizing of Jesus.

Chapter 4: Temptation of Jesus by the devil and Jesus saying, “You shall worship the Lord God and serve him only”. Appointment of Simon who was called Peter and his brother Andrew as first disciples. James & Zebedee then also followed.

Chapter 5: Sermon on the Mount, The Beatitudes. Blessed are the:

 Poor for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

 Those who mourn for they shall be comforted

 The gentle shall inherit the earth

 Those who hunger or thirst for righteousness will be satisfied

 The merciful shall receive mercy

 The pure at heart shall see God

 The peacemakers shall be called sons of God

 Those persecuted for the sake of righteousness, theirs is the kingdom of heaven

 Blessed are those who are persecuted on account of Me

 Whoever annuls one of the commandments shall be least in the kingdom of heaven and those who keep and teaches them shall be great.

 Personal relationships: You shall not COMMIT MURDER, ADULTERY which includes looking at a woman in lust, WHOVER DIVORCES HIS WIFE SHALL GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DISMISSAL, YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS , do not take an eye for an eye but rather turn the other cheek, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR and love your enemies.

Chapter 6: When you give alms do not share your giving and when praying do not do meaningless repetition. When praying say the Lord’s Prayer.

Chapter 7: Do not judge lest you be judged. Do not look at the speck in others eyes when there is a log in your eye.

Chapter 8: Jesus cleanses a leper & Peter’s mother-in-law healed

Chapter 9: Mathew was invited to join Jesus and he did.

Chapter 10: The twelve disciples. John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, James, Thaddaeus, Simon, Judas Iscariot joined Simon, Andrew, James and Mathew.

 A disciple is not above his teacher nor a slave above his master. It is enough to become as the teacher or master.

Chapter 11: John queried whether Jesus was the expected one. Jesus gave tribute to John who was in the wilderness.

Chapter 12: The unpardonable sin – He who is not with me is against me. Blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

Chapter 13: Jesus teaches in parables – seeds planted beside the road, in rocky places, in thorns and good soil. Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed.

Chapter 14: John the Baptist is beheaded. Jesus feeds 5,000 with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. Jesus walks on water and Peter follows but loses faith.

Chapter 15: Jesus was healing the multitudes and made the dumb speak, lame walk and blind see. After three days, they had not left and were hungry, so He feeds 4,000 with 5 loaves of bread and a few fish.

Chapter 16: Peter confesses and acknowledges Christ, the Son of God. Jesus foretells his death.

Chapter 17: Peter, James and John went with Jesus into a mountain and He was transfigured before them. His face shone and His garments were white as light. Moses and Elijah appeared before them. He told them not to tell anyone until He rises from the dead.

Chapter 18: Unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Chapter 19: When married you are one. Anyone who divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another, he commits adultery.

Chapter 20: Parable of the vineyard workers who did not work but stood idle. He then sent others during the day and when it came to receive payment he paid those who had been in the vineyards the whole day as much as those who worked for a shorter time as he said this was the basis that they were employed.

Chapter 21: As He approached Jerusalem, He told two disciples to go ahead and they found a donkey and a colt as He said and they should untie them and bring them to the Lord.

Parable of the two sons – one was willing to work in the vineyard and one not.

The vineyard was taken by the vine-growers and when the farmer wanted his produce, they killed slaves and a son who went to collect the produce. The landowner destroyed the land.

Chapter 22: The grand commandment of the law “**you shall love the lord your god with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind**.”

Chapter 23: Jesus explained that the scribes and Pharisees have seated themselves at the chair of Moses and they do their deeds to be noticed. Jesus described the seven woes of scribes and pharisees.

Chapter 24: He warned of many imposters, and he shows signs of His return. When you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION referred to in the Book of Daniel (Chapter 9:25) there will be a great tribulation. After the tribulation the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from the sky. Then all the world will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky and He will send the angels.

Parable of the fig tree to show how a tree recognizes a new season and you should recognize He is near.

Chapter 25: Parable of the ten virgins – the 5 prudent and the five who were not. Parable of the Talents.

Chapter 26: Plot to kill Jesus. At the last Passover Jesus acknowledged that one would betray him. Peter responded that he would give his life to prevent this. Peter was told that he will deny Him three times before the cock crows. Jesus was betrayed by Judas and was seized and tried before Caiaphas. Peter denied knowing Jesus and on the third time, a cock crowed as He said would happen.

Chapter 27: Judas has remorse and returned the reward he had accepted. Jesus was judged by Pilate who cannot find him guilty, but the crowd want him crucified. The crowd chose to free Barabbas, a murderer, so as to have Him crucified. He was mocked and insulted and the charge against him was placed above His head “ This is Jesus the king of the Jews”. In the evening a man Joseph was given His body by Pilate and he took the body, wrapped it in clean linen cloth and laid it in his own tomb and rolled a stone against the entrance. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary saw this.

Chapter 28: Resurrection of Jesus. On the sabbath, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave and behold a severe earthquake took place and an angel rolled away the rock. The angel described that Jesus had risen. The Great Commission in terms of which power is given to the disciples.

MARK

MARK, the attendant of Peter, is the author in about AD 50. Striking similarity between Mark’s Gospel and the sermon of Peter in Caesarea Acts (Acts 10:34 – 43). Most scholars date the works between A.D. 50 and 80. This Gospel was probably directed at the Romans as he explains Jewish terms for their benefit.

Chapter 1: Preaching of John the Baptist who clearly predicted the coming of one who was mightier than him and would baptize with the Holy Spirit. After John was taken into custody, Jesus preached in Galilee. He recruited fisherman Simon and Andrew. Then James and John left their nets to follow Jesus. Jesus healed many including a leper.

Chapter 2: He healed a paralytic and he saw Levi (Mathew) in the tax office and invited him to follow.

Chapter 3: Jesus heals on the sabbath. Jesus appointed the twelve apostles.

Chapter 4: Parable of the sower and soils and an explanation. Parable of the mustard seed which grows up to be larger than all the plants in the garden. Jesus stills the sea.

Chapter 5: More examples of Jesus healing a man with an unclean spirit, a woman who had been hemorrhaging for years and touched His garment was healed as a result of her faith.

Chapter 6: Teaching in Nazareth was not accepted by those who knew his childhood. The twelve were sent out to preach and cast out demons and heal the sick. When Herod heard of His work, he was concerned that John the Baptist had risen from the dead. He feared John as Herod knew he was a holy man, and his death was revenge by Herodias and her daughter.

The multitude followed Him and when it was late and they were hungry, He fed them on 5 loaves of bread and 2 fishes – with 12 baskets of bed remaining after all had eaten. Jesus then sent the disciples to sea while he prayed on land. When He saw them in trouble with the rough seas, He walked on water to them and got into the boat and calmed the sea.

Chapter 7: Pharisees ask why the disciples eat with unclean hands which is contrary to Jewish custom. Jesus responded by telling them that they hold the tradition of men but neglect the commandment of God. He further explains that anything going into a stomach cannot defile man but that which proceeds out of man that does it…. His acts of fornication, murder, theft, adulteries.

Chapter 8: The multitude were with Him for three days and He did not want to send them away hungry. They fed 4,000 with 7 loaves of bread and a few fish and had 7 baskets of bread after all had eaten. Peter is rebuked and the multitude invited to save their life for His sake.

Chapter 9: Peter, James and John went with Jesus high in the mountain and He was transfigured before them. Elijah and Moses appeared.

He foretells His death and that He will rise the three days.

Chapter 10: Male and female shall be one and what God has joined, let no man separate. Whoever divorces his or her wife or husband and marries another commits adultery.

Jesus blesses little children. When a man called Jesus good, He responded that only God is good. The commandments: Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness,

Do not defraud and Honor your father and mother

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Jesus foretells His suffering

Chapter 11: Jesus drives moneychangers from the temple

Chapter 12: Parable of the vine growers

Chapter 13: Things to come foretold.

Chapter 14: Lord’s supper and Peter told that he will deny Jesus three times before the cock crows twice. Judas betrays Jesus and is seized. Peter denies that he is one of His men three times and Peter hears the cock crows twice. The chief priests could find that He did no wrong and He is sent to Pilate.

Chapter 15: Pilate could not find that Jesus has done any wrong, but Jesus is mocked by the chief priests and the crowd. The crowd selected to have the murderer Barabbas freed and they asked for Jesus to be crucified. They crucified Him and divided His garments. After Pilate was sure He was dead, His body was given to Joseph who laid His body in a tomb and rolled a stone in front of it, witnessed by Mary Magdalene and His mother.

Chapter 16: After the Sabbath Mary Magdalene and His mother bought spices to anoint Him. They went to the tomb on the first day of the week and saw the stone was rolled away and a young man told them that He had risen and tell His disciples that He is going to Galilee. He appeared before two of them while they were walking. He then met the eleven and encouraged them to go into the world and preach the Gospel. He was then received up in Heaven.

LUKE

LUKE’s Gospel is the most complete account of the life of Jesus. Luke is a gentile convert physician and companion of Paul. Close relation of the Gospel to the Acts implies it was the same author. Both these Gospels were addressed to Theophilus, a gentile of high standard. Luke’s account of the birth of Christ differs from Mathew. He was not present at these events so he may have been told by Mary in the first two chapters and Mary Magdalen, the wife of Herod’s steward and others may have added other information. It is likely that this Gospel was abruptly stopped at the end of Paul’s two years in prison. It must have been before A.D. 62 but could be as early as A.D.58

The Gospel can be summarized in Jesus’ words “For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost.”

Chapter 1: Confirmation the Gospel was directed to Theophilus after Luke had investigated everything.

Zacharias and his wife were both righteous in the eyes of God, but she was barren, and they were in advanced age. While performing his priestly service, an angel appeared and told him that Elizabeth would bear a son, John. The angel Gabriel said John would “turn back” many to the Lord. Zacharias was doubtful so he was silenced and unable to speak until this promise was fulfilled.

When Elizabeth was in her sixth month, Gabriel and told the virgin Mary that she would bear a son and call him Jesus. He will be great and have the throne of David, His father. His kingdom would have no end. Gabriel also confirmed to Mary that Elizabeth was in her sixth month of pregnancy. Mary visited Elizabeth and the baby in the womb jumped on hearing Mary’s voice as he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth acknowledged who has visited her, the unborn Lord.

Elizabeth gave birth and relatives and neighbors said he should be called Zacharias after his father, but mother said he will be called John. Zacharias then wrote the name John on a tablet and his voice was restored. Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit. The child was filled with the spirit and lived in the deserts.

Chapter 2: Joseph and his fiancé Mary went from Nazareth to city of David; Bethlehem and their son was born in a manger as there was no room in the inn. At the same time an angel appeared and told shepherds watching their flocks that their savior Christ the Lord was born. The shepherds then went to Bethlehem and found the baby as promised. Eight days later He was circumcised and named Jesus. Simeon had been told that he would not see death until he had seen his savior and when he saw the baby, he took him into his arms and praised God and acknowledged that it was time for him to depart.

Joseph, Mary and Jesus then returned to Nazareth.

Joseph and Mary used to go to Jerusalem each Passover but upon returning they the parents were unaware that He was not in the caravan and they could not find Him. After 3 days, the found Him with teachers asking and listening. When questioned He responded that He had to be in His father’s house. They did not understand but returned to Nazareth and He kept increasing His wisdom & stature and in favor with God and men.

Chapter 3: John the Baptist preached a baptism of repentance and forgiveness of sin. The book of Isaiah acknowledged the prophet. All were wondering if John was the Christ, John answered, I baptize you with water, but One is coming He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Herod was criticized by John on account of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and wicked things Herod had done. and he locked John in prison.

Jesus was about 30 when he started His ministry. His genealogy is clearly shown back to be the Son of God.

Chapter 4: Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness and when He was frequently tempted by the devil but, when tempted, He always rejected the offers and would not test the Lord our God. He returned to Galilee and was preaching but He acknowledged that no prophet is welcome in his hometown. Many were healed including driving out demons in the synagogue, a high fever with Simon’s mother in law and many others.

Chapter 5: At the lake of Gennesaret the multitudes were pressing around Him and He saw fisherman washing their nets after a long unsuccessful day fishing. He entered Simons boat and asked to be pushed out a little to teach the multitude. When he finished, He said to Simon that he should go to the deep water to fish. Simon doubted him but when he followed, they caught sufficient fish to over full both boats. He invited Simon, James and John to follow Him. His first disciples. He cured a leper and many others including a paralyzed man.

He noticed a tax gatherer Mathew and when challenged, He said, He had not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

Chapter 6: He was challenged for picking and rubbing grain on the sabbath and also for healing on that day.

After a night praying in the mountain, He chose His disciples:

 Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Mathew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas son of James and Judas Iscariot who became a traitor.

 After turning His gaze on His disciples, he began to the Beatitudes. Blessed are:

 The poor for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

 Those who hunger they will be satisfied

 Those who weep shall laugh

 You when are ostracized, insulted as evil for the sake of Son of Man

 Those who will receive their reward in heaven.

 But woe to those:

 Well-fed shall be hungry, those who laugh shall mourn and weep

 Of whom all talk well

 Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you

 Bless those who curse you and pray for those who mistreat you

 Whoever hits you offer him the other cheek & whoever takes your coat, do not

 withhold your shirt.

 Give to all that ask and do not demand back what is taken

 Treat people like you want to be treated

 For those who love those who love or do good to you, what credit is that to you?

 If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you?

 Love your enemies and do good and lend expecting no return

 Be merciful as your Father is merciful

 Do not judge and you will not be judged

 Give and it will be given to you in good measure

 Anyone who is trained will be like his teacher

 Do not look at the speck in your brothers’ eye when you ignore the log in your eye.

 Chapter 7: Jesus heals a very faithful Centurion’s slave.

 Jesus receives a deputation from John the Baptists disciples who ask if He is the Expected One? He responded to tell them to tell of the healing they had seen and added “blessed is he who keeps stumbling over me”. When John’s disciples left, He told the multitude about John and the fact that he did not eat bread or drink wine, but some still say he has demons. A woman sinner washed Jesus’ feet and He did not rebuke her which surprised the Pharisee. Jesus told a parable showing that one is more grateful when one receives more yet the Pharisee did not give Him water to wash his feet, but this sinful woman used perfume and she is forgiven due to her faith.

Chapter 8: He was proclaiming and preaching in cities and Mary Magdalene who had been healed of evil spirits was with Him.

He told the parable of planting seeds, some fell on the road and was trampled and eaten by birds, other planted on rocky seeds and withered, other in thorny area and choked and other on good soil and grew into a good crop. He explained that the seed is the word of God and the seed lost on the road is where the devil takes away the word and they may not believe and be saved. The rocky soil is like those who have no firm root and in time of temptation, fall away. Being planted in thorns is like being choked with worries and riches & life pleasures that fruit is not brought to maturity. Good soil is those who have heard, hold it fast and benefit.

 Jesus stills the seas after the wind descended on the boat in which He and His disciples were sailing.

 More examples of healing a man called Legion possessed of demons. A daughter of a synagogue official who has died and a woman who touched his cloak showed faith and was healed of 12 years hemorrhaging.

 Chapter 9: He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority to heal. He sent them out. Herod heard of His healing and was perplexed as some said John had arisen from the dead. His apostles warned him, and He went to Bethsaida, but the multitudes followed.

The apostles suggested that He send the multitude away as they were in a desolate place and needed food. He suggested feeding the 5,000 but His disciples said we only have 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. He Blessed the food and distributed it and after all were satisfied, there were 12 baskets full.

 He asked His disciples who the multitude think He is. John the Baptist, Elijah and a risen old prophet were answers received. Peter responded that he thought he was the Christ of God. He said do not tell anyone, but Son of Man must suffer, be rejected by Chief Priests and scribes and be killed but will rise after three days. Anyone who is ashamed of Him and His words, the Son of Man shall be ashamed when he comes in his glory. There are some who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.

He then took Peter, John and James up the mountain and while praying His clothing became gleaming white and Elijah and Moses were talking to Him about His departure which would happen in Jerusalem.

Peter and companions had slept but upon awakening they saw His glory. After a voice announced that He was My son the Chosen One, Jesus was found alone. This event was not discussed.

Jesus then rebuked demons in a boy and gave him back to his father. He warned that He would be delivered to the hands of men, but they did not understand.

Chapter 10: The Lord sent seventy out who did His work and stayed with the people to whom they administered and ate whatever they were given. He summarized that the cities that do not listen to Him and rejects the One that sent Him. The seventy were well received and had good results and He told them that many kings wished to see and hear the things they did and saw.

 A lawyer asked Him what he needed to do get eternal life. The lawyer correctly answered that it is written that YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND ALL YOUR SOUL, AND ALL YOUR STRENGHT, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND AND YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF. The lawyer then asked who was his neighbor? Jesus responded with the parable of the “Good Samaritan” where the Samaritan cared for the man who was robbed and beaten.

Chapter 11: A disciple asked Jesus to teach them to pray. He responded with THE LORDS PRAYER. He gives examples of asking and it being given and those who knock at the door, it shall be opened. After He cast out a demon from a dumb man who spoke. Some wanted to test Him by asking for a sign from heaven. He understood and responded which was summarized as “Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it”. As Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites He also explained that when your whole body is full of light, it shall be illuminated, and they will not need signs to see. A Pharisee asked Him to lunch with him and criticized Him for not washing his hands. He explained that we must be clean inside as well as outside which He said it is not what you eat but what comes out of man that defiles you. A lawyer challenged His words, but He was rebuked. Then the Pharisees and scribes were hostile and tried to catch Him in something He may say,

Chapter 12: Jesus issues warnings, the most important is that you are of value and anyone who confesses Him before men shall be confessed by Him before the angels. He who denies Him will be denied. He who says a word against Him shall be forgiven but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven.

He told a parable about us not being greedy and wanting more for God will provide enough for us if we seek His kingdom. He preached the necessity of being prepared, faithful & a sensible steward whether a slave or Master.

Each of us must judge what is right and pay what is due.

Chapter 13: He explained that unless you repent, you will perish.

He explained that His healing on the sabbath was not wrong.

While He was teaching some pharisees came and warned Him that Herod wanted to kill Him. He explained that He had three days’ work to do.

Chapter 14: Jesus saved a man with dropsy and He was criticized but He gave them an example where they would save a son on the sabbath.

He explained that when invited to a wedding we should not seek the best seat so as to exalt yourself or you will be humbled. Similarly, do not try to benefit from the guests you invite to a function.

Jesus invites all to join Him, but we must be prepared to give up all we own and also our family.

Chapter 15: Jesus uses a parable to why He receives sinners as there will be joy for each sinner who repents than for the many that do not need to repent.

Prodigal son: Man divides his wealth between two and the younger spends it all and is left worse off than the servants of the father. He repents and returns home and is well received by his father. Older son was upset that the spendthrift was well received, and father confirms the older has all his wealth but the younger is not dead and they must rejoice.

Chapter 16: A rich man steward was squandering his possessions, so he was to be relieved of his post. As a response, he made settlements with his master’s debtors which pleased the master. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another or who marries one who is divorced, commits adultery.

A rich man and a poor man Lazarus die, and the rich man sees Lazarus being accepted by Abraham. The rich man pleads for Lazarus to help reduce his pain, but he is reminded of his evil ways and also, he is told that his brothers must learn from Moses and the prophets or else they will suffer like the rich man.

Chapter 17: Stumbling blocks are inevitable so be on your guard. If your brother sins and repents, forgive him. He gives examples of how we should do all we are commanded.

He cured 10 lepers but only the Samaritan came back to thank Him.

Jesus foretells His rejection and compares the day it is revealed to the people eating and drinking while Noah entered the ark during the flood, or to Lot who went out of Sodom while it rained fire and brimstones from heaven.

Chapter 18: He told them that we all should pray and explained how a widow received legal protection by asking repeatedly. He said pray often and Your Father will answer. He gave examples of a Pharisee and a Publican and concluded that whoever does not enter the Kingdom like a child will not enter at all.

A certain rich ruler explained how he kept the commandments, but Jesus told him to distribute his wealth to the poor and follow Him. The rich man was sad. Jesus said it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom. He said those who give up and follow the Kingdom will receive many times more. He foretold what would happen to Him in Jerusalem.

Chapter 19: He entered Jericho He saw Zacchaeus trying to see Him and He called on Zacchaeus and said He must stay at his house. They said He was a guest of a sinner, but Zacchaeus gave half his wealth to the poor. He said He has come to save those who were lost.

A nobleman gave each of his 10 slaves 10 minas. The first made 10 minas more and received authority over 10 cities, the second made 5 minas and received 5 cities. The third retained his in his handkerchief for fear of rebuke and the master gave his to the first. It was claimed to be unfair, but He said, everyone who has shall be given more but from the one who does not have it shall be taken away. (I find it easier to understand this if the minas were skills or intelligence as those who use their skills benefit.)

He was proceeding to Jerusalem and He told two disciples that they would find a colt which they did find, and He used it to enter from Mount of Olives and His disciples glorified Him as the king, but the Pharisees wanted Him to rebuke his disciples. He responded if these become silent, the stones will cry out.

He entered the temple and drove out the traders from the house of prayer.

Chapter 20: Jesus’ authority was questioned, and they tried to trick Him. He asked them whether the baptism of John the Baptist was from heaven or men. He did not answer, and He responded that He would also not tell them His authority.

He told the parable of the vine grower who rented his vines, but the tenants killed his slaves who came to collect his share of the produce. They also killed his son and the consequences were that the owner destroyed these vineyards and gave the land to others.

 The scribes and Chief Priests tried to trick Him by asking whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar. He asked for a coin and said render to Caesar all that are Caesar and give to God that which is Gods. They could not catch Him.

They referred to Moses who wrote that upon death of a brother, his brother should marry the childless wife and raise the offspring to his brother. If this happened to 7 brothers, which one’s wife will she be? He replied that those worthy of resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Those who devour widows’ houses will receive greater condemnation.

Chapter 21: He complimented a poor widow who put two small coins in the treasury while the rich were contributing more.

He foretold war between nations, earthquakes, plagues, famines and signs from heaven. But before then, you will be persecuted in His name. This is an opportunity for your testimony, and He will help you. You will be hated in His name, but He will protect you.

There will be signs in sun, moon and stars and then we will see the Son of Man in a cloud. At that time, redemption is near. He compared it to the development of a fig tree and advised all to stay alert and pray so that you have strength to escape.

 Chapter 22: He told Peter and John how to recognize the place of the Last Supper. He was happy to share Passover dinner which they would not do again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. He made the well-known prayer offering His body and blood. He warned that one of them would betray Him and woe to that man.

There was disagreement among them as to who was the greatest. He explains the greatest shall be the youngest and the leader, the servant. He was among them as one who serves. He told Simon that He prays for him and when Simon replied that he was ready to go to prison or die for Him. He replied that the cock will not crow before you deny me three times.

He proceeded to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives and prayed fervently so that His sweat became blood. When he came down, His disciples were sleeping.

When He was speaking a multitude joined and Judas approached and kissed Him. He responded by asking Judas whether he was betraying the Son of Man with a kiss. The slave of a high priest was struck by one and his right ear removed. Jesus stopped this. He also queried their reason for coming with swords and clubs and why He was not taken while He was in the temple daily.

Peter was following Him closely and upon being recognized by a servant girl, Peter denied that he was with Him. A little later another recognized Peter and he denied this association. An hour later a man also identified Peter and while he was denying knowing Jesus, the cock crowed. Peter remembered and wept bitterly.

The Chief priests with the Council of Elders and scribes asked Him if He was Christ. He responded that they would not believe Him, if He told them. When He agreed He was the son of God, they had the evidence needed.

Chapter 23: The body then rose and took Him to Pilate who asked Him if He were the King of the Jews. He agreed it is as you say. As He was a Galilean, He was sent to Herod.

He did not respond to Herod who dressed Him in a robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

Pilate could find no wrong and suggested punishing and releasing Jesus. The crowd wanted Him removed and crucified and in response Pilate released Barabbas and announced that He would be crucified.

Some woman were following Him being taken on the cross. He responded that daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping but weep for yourselves and your children. He said days will come when the wombs of the blessed will not bare children.

As they went to crucify Him, He prayed to Father to forgive them as they did not know what they were doing. They divided His clothes and suggested that He as the King of Jews should save himself. They added an inscription THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

He prayed to Father to commit His spirit to His hands and He breathed his last.

Joseph a member of the Council out of Galilee and saw where the tomb had not consented to the plan and asked for His body. He wrapped in cloth and laid it in a tomb. Woman who had come with Him saw the tomb and how His body was laid.

Chapter 24: On the third day after His crucifixion, they brought spices to the tomb but found that the stone blocking the entrance had been rolled away and they did not find the body of Jesus. As they stood perplexed, two men in dazzling apparel appeared. They advised that He has risen, and they were reminded of His words of rising after three days. While the woman were telling the apostles, Peter ran to the tomb and confirmed that His body was gone, and he marveled about what had happened.

Two of them were walking Jesus approached and travelled with them. They asked if he knew what had happened to the Nazarene in Jerusalem, and what the woman had seen. He responded that they were slow at heart to believe. Also why was it necessary for the Christ to suffer to enter into His Glory. He joined the two for supper and as He was breaking bread, they recognized Him, and He disappeared. They returned to Jerusalem and the 11 who were saying He had risen and appeared to Simon. The two related their experience in being with Him.

While they were telling this, He appeared in their midst. They were frightened but He showed His hands and feet as proof. He invited them to touch as the Spirit does not have flesh and bones as He has. He had a meal with them and opened the scriptures for them. He said “…. Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day and that repentance for forgiveness should be proclaimed in His name ….”

He walked with them to Bethany, blessed them and parted.

JOHN

JOHN’s Gospel has similarities with the other three Gospels and present the same person as the Son of Man.

Also, John excludes events covered in other Gospels, such as the birth of Jesus, His baptism, the Last Supper and His resurrection. According to the first three gospels, after John the Baptist was imprisoned, Jesus went to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God. In John, the main scene of Jesus’ ministry is Jerusalem.

Other Gospels refer to one Passover implying that they only cover one year, but in Mark 2:23 reference is made to the disciples plucking ears of corn i.e., springtime and feeding 5,000 on green grass Mark 6:39 in spring again so at least two years. John refers to three Passovers.

 First three gospels revolve around the Kingdom of God while John is centered largely on Jesus. By the time John was written, Christianity included Gentiles, predominantly Greek. Genealogies were familiar to Jews but unknown to Greeks and they emphasized that the mind of God is responsible for the order of the world. The Greek view was that the mind of God dwelling within a person makes that person rationale.

 In John reference is made to “the beloved disciple” and close companion of Peter. It is unlikely that John would so describe himself, so it is unlikely that he is the writer. The contribution of the Holy Spirit should not be underestimated in evaluating the ability of John.

John spent his last years preaching, teaching and writing in Ephesus and then exiled in Patmos. His Gospel appears to presuppose a knowledge of the other Gospels and the authority of John lies behind the gospel, but the actual writing may not be from him. In Ephesus there was the apostle John and an elder John referred to as The Elder. In 2 John and 3 John, reference is made to The Elder. The most likely author is The Elder and the mind and memory was John who the elder which explains why the gospel described John as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”. This conclusion, places the date about 70 years after Jesus’ death i.e., about 100 AD.

Chapter 1: In the beginning the WORD was already there. Jesus was with God in the beginning and in Him we will see what God always was and always will be. And His desires for us The word was with God and the word was God. John’s problem was presenting Christianity to the Greeks in a manner that would fit into Greek thought. He found that the word was not merely a sound but a dynamic thing. The world of God by which God created the world was understood by them. The Greeks would never believe that God would take a human body. The mind of God made the world and made sense of it.

The spirit of God did three things: (a) He brought the TRUTH OF GOD, (b) He brought the power to recognize the truth, and (c) it gave them the courage to preach.

There was a man called John the Baptist, who came to give witness of the light and claimed that He who comes after me has a higher rank and existed before me. He was the real light and gives light to every man. Because of Jesus, the bitterness of death is past for every one of us. John stated that he was not the Christ. He explained that he baptizes in water but He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.

He then saw Jesus and stated that he had seen the son of God.

John and Andrew heard John the Baptist speak. John and his brother Simon went to Jesus. He named Simon Peter and the next day He met Philip who was invited to follow Him. Nathanael doubted whether a Nazarene could be anything good but when he met, he confirmed that He was the son of God.

Chapter 2: Jesus and His disciples attended a wedding with His mother. Mary told Him that the wine was consumed, and He told them to fill the water pots with water which He changed to wine. The headwaiter told the groom that the new wine was better than that which was first served.

Jesus went to Jerusalem for Passover and found that they were selling oxen and sheep in the temple where the moneylenders were seated. He threw them out of his father’s house. They asked for a sign that He had authority and He replied that if they destroy the temple, He would re-build the temple in three days. He was talking of the temple of His body not the building.

Chapter 3: A Pharisee Nicodemus met Jesus who explained the “……...unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God”. He further explained that being born again is being born of the Spirit and not going back to the womb.

He further explained that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life”. God sent His son not to judge the world but that the world be saved through Him.

Jesus and His disciples came to Judea where John the Baptist was baptizing with water. John explained that He who comes from heaven and those who believe in Him have eternal life.

Chapter 4: On His return to Galilee, He stopped in Samara and He asked a woman for a drink. She could not understand that a Jew would ask for water from a Samaritan. He explained that He would give water that prevented thirst and provide eternal life. He told her to bring her husband and despite her saying she had no husband He said you have five. She then understood that He was a prophet. He told her that He was the Christ she had expected to come. His disciples returned with food, but He did not eat, His food is to do the work of Him who sent him.

The people in Samara accepted Him on the word of the woman but many more who heard His words.

On returning to Galilee, a son of a royal official was close to death but was cured by Him.

Chapter 5: In Jerusalem where a multitude of sick, blind, lame and withered waited for the waters to help them as an angel had stirred waters in the past to cure people. Jesus cured a man who wanted help to get into the water. He did this on a sabbath.

The Jews wanted to kill Him for working on the sabbath and calling Himself the Son of God. He responded advising that those who did not honor the Son did not honor the Father.

He said that those who believe in Him has eternal life.

He summarized that His power was from His Father and He could do nothing on His own.

He gave witness to the work of John and His works have been given to Him by the Father who sent Him. He explained that the people seek support in the scriptures but if they believe in Moses, they should believe in Him as Moses wrote about Him.

Chapter 6: A great multitude was following Him on the other side of the Sea of Galilee. He asked where we could feed the multitude and Andrew said there was a boy with 5 loaves and 2 fish. He used this and started feeding the multitude and after all were fed, there were 12 loaves of remains.

Jesus withdrew to the mountains when He knew they were coming to get Him. The disciples took a boat and rowed to Capernaum. A strong wind started, and the sea was stirred up, after three or four miles they saw Jesus walking on water to meet them. He joined them but the multitude could not understand how He travelled across the Sea without a boat.

Jesus explained to the people that the bread they received was not from Moses but from His Father. He told them that He came from Heaven, but they doubted Him as they knew He was the son of Mary. Jesus responded that they should not grumble but accept that “No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day”. He reminded them that believers have eternal life. He is the living bread and those who eat the bread shall have eternal life. He said “…... unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves”. By drinking His blood, he meant we must take His life into the very core of our hearts.

His disciples were not walking with Him and He asked if they wanted to go away. Peter replied where would we go; you have the words of eternal life. He explained that He had chosen the twelve but that one is a devil.

Christianity is not a philosophy; it is a personal response to Jesus Christ. It is the allegiance which will not allow us to do anything else.

Chapter 7: Jesus was walking in Galilee as the Jews in Judea wanted to kill Him. His brothers went to the feast, but He only went in secret. He then entered the temple and preached and told them that Moses gave them laws that they did not carry them out, yet you seek to kill me. When the Chief priests planned to seize Him, He preached that they could not find Him.

There was a division in the multitude as to whether to support or not.

Chapter 8: He was teaching at the temple when a woman caught in adultery was placed in His midst. They asked that she be stoned but Jesus suggested that the one who has not sinned throw the first stone. They all retreated, and He did not condemn her.

Jesus preached that He was the light of the world. Pharisees said he was bearing witness to himself, but He responded that His judgement is not from Him alone but from He who sent Me.

He told supporters to abide in Him to be disciples who know the truth and will be free. They responded that they were descendants of Abraham, but you seek to kill me as My word has no place in you. He tells them that they are not believers of The Word.

Chapter 9: He saw a man who was blind from birth. The man had not sinned, but he was inflicted so that He could be displayed in him. His sight was restored. Again, the Pharisees accused Him of not keeping the sabbath and the man He helped merely confirmed what He had done. He told the Pharisees that their sins remain.

Chapter 10: Using a parable of the Good Shepard, He explained that anyone who enters through Him will find pastures.

He explained that He was doing works in the Fathers name. The Jews responded that they do not stone Him for good works but for blasphemy and as a man declaring to be God. He explained that He was the Son of God and they wanted to seize Him but could not.

Chapter 11: Lazarus was from the village of Martha and Mary. When He heard that he was sick He stayed even though His disciples warned that the Jews were seeking to stone Him. Lazarus was dead for four days when He arrived, and Martha said that he would not have died if He had been here. He told Martha that He was the resurrection. When He met Mary, she had the same reaction, but he went to the tomb and they reluctantly removed the rock and Jesus showed that Lazarus was alive. The Jews who saw this believed in Him.

The Chief Priests and Pharisees knew that he would convince all if He was not stopped. They planned to kill him and therefore Jesus no longer walked publicly. He went to another city. With the Passover, the people wondered if He would come to Jerusalem.

The Chief Priests and Pharisees gave an order that anyone who knew where He was should report it to them.

Chapter 12: Before the Passover, Jesus with Lazarus was having supper with Martha serving and Mary wiped his feet with perfume. Judas Iscariot queried why the perfume was not sold and the proceeds given to the poor. Jesus told him that she could keep the perfume for His funeral as the poor will always be there, but He will not. Multitude came to see Lazarus, but chief priests considered killing Lazarus as he was causing many to believe Jesus.

Jesus was welcome to the feast and He sat on a donkey. Pharisees were not happy.

 He knew His time had come and prayed to glorify God. He hid himself.

Many believed in Him, but the Pharisees were threatening to put them out of the synagogue. Jesus preached that those who believe in Him believe in the One who sent Him and acceptance of His sayings, results in eternal life.

Chapter 13: Before the Passover Feast, Jesus was at the last supper and He washed the feet of His disciples. Peter resisted but accepted as He explained that cleaning their feet was being part of Him. He told them that not all were clean as He said one of them has lifted his heel against Him and would betray Him. He identified Judas by giving him a morsel and suggested he should do it quickly. No one understood what He was saying.

He explained to them that He was going, they could not go. Peter responded that he would lay down his life for Him and He replied that the cock will not crow until Peter denies Him 3 times.

Chapter 14: Jesus comforted His disciples and when Thomas asked for clarification, He said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me”.

He explained to Philip He is the Father and the Father is Him. He also promised” If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it”.

He promised that the Father would give another Helper who will be with them forever. The Spirit will be received by those who believe. Anyone who loves Jesus and keeps His word, the Father will love him and abide in him.

He promised that the Holy Spirit will teach and guide you.

He told them what was happening before it happened.

Chapter 15: If you abide in Me. And My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

Instructions given to disciples to love one another as He loved you.

Those who hunger will be satisfied.

Chapter 16: These things He told you will result in you being an outcast in the synagogues because they have not known the Father or Me.

He promised that He would send a Helper, who would convict the world concerning sin (not believing in Him) and righteous, and judgement. The Spirit will guide you.

Chapter 17: Jesus prayed for His people that they would continue as they were while He was with them. He asked that His people be in unity and He in them like the Father is in Him.

Chapter 18: After these prayers He went into a garden where the Roman cohort, chief priests and Pharisees were coming upon Him. He acknowledged that He was the one they sought, and Judas fell to the ground. Simon Peter cut off the high priest’s right ear, but He told Peter that He would drink the cup given Him by the Father.

Jesus was taken to the priest with Simon Peter and another disciple following. The other disciple was known, and he brought in Peter. A slave-girl identified Peter as one of His followers, but Peter denied this.

Jesus was questioned and He replied that He taught in temples and in the open, no secrets.

He asked why He was questioned and was struck by an officer and taken to the high priest.

 Peter then twice denied that he was a disciple and then the cock crowed.

Pilate came out to the people and asked what accusations you bring against Him. They would take Him and judge Him according to their law as they could not commit Him to death.

Pilate asked if He was the King of the Jews. He responded that His kingdom is not of this world otherwise they would fight the Jews to save Him. He acknowledged that He was a King. Pilate found no guilt in Him. He asked if he should release the King of the Jews as was the Passover custom. The crowd rather wanted the robber Barabbas to be released.

Chapter 19: Pilate had Him scourged and the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put a purple robe on Him. Pilate repeated that he found no guilt, but chief priests and officers requested a crucifixion. Pilate was afraid when they said He was the son of God. Pilate was convinced to crucify Him when they said He was claiming to be king which Caesar would not accept. So, he delivered Him for crucifixion.

The soldiers took His garments and shared by casting lots as per the scriptures.

His legs were not broken but one soldier pierced His side and blood and water came out.

No bones were broken as per the scriptures.

Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple asked for His body. He and Nicodemus with myrrh and aloes, took his body and bound it in linen with the spices. There was a new unused tomb in the garden where He was crucified. They laid Jesus there.

Chapter 20: On the third day, first after sabbath, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw the stone already taken away. She ran away and saw Simon Peter and another and told them that His body had been taken. They went to tomb and saw the wrappings and they left. Mary Magdalene stayed and wept and saw two angels in the tomb. Jesus said to Mary that He had not ascended to my Father. Tell my disciples that you have seen Me.

That evening, Jesus appeared among His disciples, but Thomas wanted to see His hands. After eight days, He appeared before them including Thomas and he was convinced it was The Lord.

Jesus, “because you have seen me you believed”? He further added, “Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.”

Chapter 21: Jesus appeared on the Sea of Galilee where the disciples were fishing but with no catch. He directed them to the other side of the boat where they had a plentiful catch. When they arrived on land, they found a fire already in place and Jesus said to them “bring some of the fish…...” None of the disciples questioned who he was for they knew.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

The Gospel of Luke and Acts are two volumes of a single work. The author is not named but is possibly Luke a friend of Paul. He possibly used Paul’s travel diary as a source. Estimate date of authoring was A.D.62.

This was a letter to Theophilus about the things he had been taught. Luke did not write about the early church and his narrative is about Peter with James and John being mentioned. The book is the Acts of Peter and Paul and Peter is dropped after the conversion of Cornelius.

Luke is telling a story not writing a history. There are two themes, firstly the rejection

Of the Gospel by the Jews and reception by the gentiles and secondly, the treatment of the church by local and Roman officials.

Luke’s purpose was to explain to Theophilus in Luke and Acts, how the Gospel began with the promise of the restoration of the kingdom and ended with the gentile church in Rome.

The primary emphasis is the activity of the Holy Spirit. Luke dealt with the ministry of Jesus and Acts with the ministry through the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1: This account is about what Jesus began. He presented Himself after suffering and appeared over a period of 40 days. He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem until they were baptized by the Holy Spirit.

After He said these things, He was lifted up in a cloud out of sight. Two men in white clothing stood beside them and promised that Jesus would return the same way as they watched Him go to heaven.

Eleven of the disciples met and were praying with woman including Mary, His mother and His brothers, about 120 persons. Peter stood and said that the Scripture had foretold the betrayal by Judas and Mathias was added as another disciple.

Chapter 2: After Pentecost i.e., 7 Sunday after Easter to celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit, they were all together and tongue of fire distributed to each of them and Jews living in Jerusalem heard their own languages. Peter stood and explained that it was a message from God explaining what would happen “before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come ……. everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” He referred to the work that Jesus had done and that they nailed Him to the cross, but that God had raised Him up again and that He now sits with the Lord at His right hand. The crowd asked what they should do, and Peter advised them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Those three thousand who received the word were baptized and were continually devoting themselves and breaking bread.

The apostles continued their work and the Lord added to their number day by day.

Chapter 3: Peter & John were going to pray and a beggar who had been lame from birth, approached them asking for a gift. Peter explained that they did not have silver and gold, but they said they offer a gift in the name of Jesus and taking him by his right hand and raised him. His legs immediately strengthen, and he was able to walk. The people were amazed but Peter explained that this power came from Jesus the man you sentenced to death when Pilate found no guilt in Him. He suggested that repentance would save them. He further linked this offer to what God said to Abraham.

Chapter 4: As Peter and John were preaching and proclaiming Jesus the resurrection from the dead. They were arrested and tried for what Peter said was what was done for a sick man. Peter explained that he was cured by the name of Jesus who you crucified. He said that salvation was only possible through Him.

The priests were impressed by their ability and recognized that they had been with Jesus. The priests did not know what to do and therefore, commanded them not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. Peter and John responded that they should judge whether it is right to give heed to them or to God. After further threats, they were released on account of the people who were glorifying God. The two then shared their experience with the other ten and prayed to glorify the Lord. Where they were gathered was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. The congregation were of one heart and soul and acknowledged that everything belonged to Him. Certain Joseph also called Barnabas, sold land and laid the proceeds at the apostles’ feet.

Chapter 5: A man Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold their land and kept back some of the proceeds and this decision was queried by Peter which he said was lying to God. As Ananias heard the word, he died. His wife died a similar fate.

The chief priests supported by the Sadducees, were jealous and jailed the apostles. At night, an angel freed them, and, in the morning, they continued preaching. The officers found the prison locked, the guards on duty but no prisoners. They were re-arrested. When challenged for continuing their preaching, Peter replied, we obey God not men.

The priests were ready to slay them but a Pharisee Gamaliel, a teacher of law, gave orders to free the men. And gave examples of others who had challenged them and perished. They flogged the apostles and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus.

They were proud to be worthy to suffer shame in His name and continued preaching.

Chapter 6: Hellenistic Jews were unhappy that their widows were not serving tables and the disciples suggested it is not desirable to neglect the word of God to serve tables and proposed that 7 be selected to supervise. The seven were selected and after praying, approved by the apostles. They continued preaching and the number of disciples continued to grow. One of the 7, Stephen was successful, and his wisdom and Spirit was unacceptable to some men who induced others to say that he spoke against Moses and God. He was brought before the Council but all on the council saw his face like a face of an angel.

Chapter 7: Stephen’s defense was to refer to Abrahams move from Haran and how he circumcised Isaac as his son and Isaac the father of Jacob and how the Patriarchs were jealous of Joseph who was sold to Egypt, but God was with him. When there was a famine in Egypt and Canaan, Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent his sons who were also fathers to Egypt. On the second visit, Joseph introduced himself to his brothers and invited Jacob, his father to come to visit. Jacob went to Egypt and passed away there.

At that time Moses was born and the Pharaoh’s daughter took him away as her son. Moses was educated and was a man of power. When he was 40, he visited his brothers and defended one being mistreated by striking down the Egyptian. Following day there was a fight between brothers and Moses was told he had no power to rule of judge them.

Moses then saw an angel in the bush who invited him to come and deliver them.

When the council heard Stephen, they began gnashing teeth, but Stephen was full of the Spirit saw the glory of God with Jesus on His right side. They stoned Stephen who asked Jesus to receive his spirit. On his knees he asked the Lord to forgive them and he died.

Chapter 8: Saul supported the death but there was resultant persecution against the Jewish church in Jerusalem. Saul began entering house after house dragging men and woman to prison.

The disciples were scattered, and Philip was in Samaria where he was heard. Many with unclean spirits were healed. Simon a magician was baptized, and he joined Philip. The apostles then sent Peter and John to join him. When Simon saw the work that Peter and John were doing by laying hands, he asked if he could buy that talent. Peter rebuked him and told him to seek repentance. Simon responded that they should pray for him.

An angel spoke to Philip and directed him to a desert road where he met an Ethiopian an official of the queen of Ethiopia. The official was reading Isaiah and Philip joined him. Philip taught him and when Philip was satisfied that he believed in Jesus, they stopped on the road and Philip baptized him. The spirit then took Philip to Azotus where he kept preaching until he reached Caesarea.

Chapter 9: Saul was still threatening against disciples of the Lord. He went to the High Priest to receive letters to authorize him to bring bound supporters of Jesus to Jerusalem.

As he was approaching Damascus, a light from heaven flashed and Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting Him. He instructed Saul to enter the city and receive instructions. Saul was blind for three days. Jesus sent a disciple Ananias to see Saul and to give him his vision. Ananias queried why he should be helped as he had authority to bind all. Jesus said he would use Saul as a witness. Saul was met and his sight restored after which he was baptized.

Saul then started preaching that Jesus was the Son of God. Saul kept growing in strength and he realized that the Jews were plotting to kill him, but he escaped. Saul tried to associate with the disciples who did not know he was a disciple. Barnabas listened and shared with the others that Saul had seen Jesus. He then moved freely with the disciples, but the Hellenistic Jews wanted to kill him. He was sent to Tarsus. The church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace.

Peter was travelling and healed a man Aeneas who was bedridden for 8 years. In Joppa, Tabitha was a disciple and abounded with deeds of kindness. She died and Peter was called to see her body. He raised her from the dead and it became known in Joppa and many believed in the Lord.

Chapter 10: In Caesarea was a centurion Cornelius who was devout and gave many gifts to the Jewish people. An angel directed him to go to Joppa and find Peter. As they were on their way, Peter had prayed and was getting food when he fell into a trance. The sky opened a voice said to Peter, kill and eat and when he complained that the food was not clean, he was told that what God has cleansed no longer consider unholy. Cornelius’ men appeared at the house and a voice reassured Peter that they w ere sent by the Spirit, so he invited them in and gave them lodging.

The next day he went with them to Joppa and the following day to Caesarea. Cornelius had invited relatives but on seeing Peter he fell at his feet and worshipped him. Peter raised him up saying I am just a man. Peter confirmed that he knew the legal risks and asks why he was sent for. Cornelius explained why he had called upon Peter and they agreed that were now together awaiting commands.

Peter summarized the work done throughout the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. He explained how he was raised from the dead and while Peter was talking, the Spirit fell upon all those present. He then baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 11: When Peter returned to Jerusalem, he was met by Jewish members who criticized him for mixing and eating with the Gentiles which they described as unclean and uncircumcised. Peter explained that while he was in Joppa and was hungry the Lord approached him and urged him to eat. He responded that he did not believe the food was clean, but the Lord told him that anything that is cleansed by God, does not need further cleansing. The Gentiles he determined that the Lord has granted them repentance which leads to a full life

Those who are persecuted with Stephen made their way to Antioch speaking the word to no one except to the Jews. There were men from Cyprus and Cyrene who came to Antioch also preaching about Jesus. The church leaders sent Barnabas to stop them, but he was also converted and listened to do to the preaching. A prophet Agabus indicated that by the spirit there would be a famine. A contribution from the disciples and others was delivered to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Saul.

Chapter 12: Herod the king, was mistreating the members of the church and he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword. When you saw this please the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter who was put in prison delivering him to four soldiers to guard him. When Peter was in prison, an angel approached him and told him to stand and carry his chains which tied him as a bonded prisoner. Peter followed angel past the two guards and threw a locked gate. The angel released Peter from the hand of Herold and Peter we confirmed his faith in the Lord. Peter made his way to Mary’s house where they were surprised to see him. Herod could not find Peter and had the guards executed.

Herod in his royal apparel started preaching to the people who responded that they wanted the voice of God and not the voice of a man. Herod did not give glory to God and immediately, an angel of the Lord struck him, and he died. The word of the Lord continue to grow. Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem with the Mission completed and taking along with them John also called Mark.

Chapter 13: They were preaching in many areas and while ministering, the Holy Spirit asked for Barnabas and Saul to be separated. The two then proceeded to Cypress with a proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews and also add John as a helper. They met a magician and who was also a false prophet who his name was bar-Jesus. Proconsul Sergius Paulus was a man of intelligence and I wanted to see Barnabas and Saul. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and were preaching to the proconsul, but the magician tried to stop their words being accepted. Saul fixed his gaze on the magician and called him a fraud and a son of a devil. He also told him that the hand of the Lord was upon him and he then became blind.

 Saul also known as Paul, went to see to Pisidian Antioch and on the sabbath they went to the synagogue. The prophets invited them to talk if they so desired. Paul spoke to the men of Israel and to those who fear God and described how the Lord saved the people in Egypt and showed their ancestral beginnings, he also referred to the work by John the Baptist and how Jesus followed. He summarized how Jesus could not be found guilty by Pilate, but the people wanted him crucified. He explained how He had risen from the dead and that He died for the forgiveness sins. The congregation asked them to return.

The next Sabbath, the whole city assembled, and the Jews were jealous and contradicted their words. The words were accepted by the gentiles who rejoiced and spread the word through the whole region. The Jews instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, but the disciples were filled with the spirit.

Chapter 14: They then came to Iconium where they preached and both Jews and Greeks were believing but certain Jews did not believe and the persuaded the Gentiles to be embittered against them. Paul and Barnabas were supported by the Lord and continued their work to a divided city. They then went to other cities and saw a man who was lame from birth but, he showed faith and Paul told him to stand upright which he did. The multitude were convinced and offered them gifts. They explained that they were trying to turn the people from worshiping vain things to worshiping a living God. Jews then came from Antioch and managed to persuade the multitude to stone them, so they moved off again. They continued preaching as they travelled and joined up with the other disciples in Antioch where they all shared reports on what God had done for them and planned their way forward.

Chapter 15: some came down from Julia and we’re preaching but told Paul and Barnabas that they needed to be circumcised according to the custom of Moses. The two did not except this and debated with them and were told that they should go to Jerusalem to present their case. On the way they met many converts and heard reports of the benefits they had received from God. In Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and their reports convert of the Pharisees were unconvinced and repeated the demand for them to be circumcised. Paul’s response was that God made no distinction and therefore, God should not be subject to a test.

When they were speaking; James answered and gave testimony to God and told the Jews not to trouble the Gentiles who were turning to God. He further suggested that they should refrain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication.

The church wanted to select men to return to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. However, Barnabas wanted John to accompany them and Paul did not agree. The result was that Barnabas went with John to Cyprus and Paul went with Silas and continued preaching as they travelled.

Chapter 16: Paul met a certain Timothy whose father was Greek, and mother was Jewish. Timothy accompanied Paul as he continued preaching and observing how Christianity was growing. He then met a vision of man who invited them to Macedonia to help them. In Philippi the leading city of that area, they stayed a few days, and, on the Sabbath, they sought to pray.

They sat down and started speaking to woman who assembled. A certain Lydia opened her heart and responded to Paul’s words. She was baptized and invited them to stay at her house. As they were praying a woman fortuneteller followed them and proclaimed that that they were servants of the Most High God and should be followed. Paul was annoyed and did not approve, and he commanded that the name of Jesus Christ to come out of this woman. When her masters saw that they were not going to benefit from this they brought Paul and Silas to the chief magistrates and claimed that is made of throwing the city into confusion proclaiming customs which are not lawful for Romans to accept.

The crowd rose up against them and they were beaten and imprisoned. At about midnight they were praying and singing hymns in the jail when suddenly a great earthquake hit the foundations of the prison and all the doors open and everyone’s chains were unfastened. The jailer was about to kill himself as he thought all the prisoners had escaped. However, Paul and Silas called him and told him they were still there, and he fell down before them. The jailer then asked what he could do to be saved and he was told that he needed to believe in the Lord Jesus and He, and His household will be saved.

The chief magistrate then instructed that they be freed, and the jailer reported this to them. However, Paul responded that they were beaten without a trial and that the magistrate should come to the prison and free them as Romans should not be so treated. The magistrates came and freed them and asked them to leave the city. However, they went to the house of Lydia.

Chapter 17: They traveled to Thessalonica and Paul went to the synagogue for three sabbaths and reasoned with them from the scriptures giving evidence of Christ’s had to suffer and rise again. Some were persuaded but some Jews formed a mob to take them to the authorities. They were not in Jason’s house, so he was taken before the authorities. He was released.

Paul and Silas then went to Berea where the people were more receiving of the word. However, the Jews from Thessalonica found out they went to Berea and started stirring the crowds. Paul immediately went to Athens, but Timothy and Silas stayed behind.

While Paul was waiting in Athens, he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and meeting with the Gentiles in the marketplace each day. He was then taken to the Areopagus and asked to explain his message. Paul responded that the Athenians were religious but did not know who they were worshipping. He saw objects of their worship and a sign” To An Unknown God”. Paul explained that the God who made the world and all things in it, is the Lord of Heaven. He urged them to seek this God, but they need to repent. Some believed him but others wanted to hear this again. Two joined him.

Chapter 18: Paul then went to Corinth where he met a Jew who left Italy as commanded by Claudius. Paul was reasoning in the synagogue each sabbath and when Silas and Timothy arrived, he devoted himself completely to the word. When the Jews resisted, he forsake them and said he would go to the gentiles. He stayed with Titus Justus whose house was next to the synagogue. The leader of the synagogue believed in the Lord and many of the Corinthians were believing and were baptized. The Lord that night urged Paul to continue speaking. He then settled there for a year. Gallio was proconsul when Paul was brought before him by the Jews. Before Paul could defend himself, Gallio told them that he was unwilling to judge on matters of words and names in their law and he drove them away. Paul then went out to sea to Syria and ultimately to Antioch.

A certain man named Apollos was well instructed in the Scriptures and proceeded to speak boldly in the synagogues. He powerfully refuted the Jews in public and was introduced to the disciples.

Chapter 19: While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul through the country to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He asked them whether they had encountered the Holy Spirit which they had not; they were not sure about the Holy Spirit. Paul asked where they were baptized, and they explained that they were baptized by John who baptized in repentance and told people about the coming of Jesus. They were then baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. They then encountered the Holy Spirit and entered the synagogues and preached. But some became hardened and disobedient, he withdrew from them.

Paul was performing extraordinary miracles and even the Jewish priests were trying to perform miracles in the name of Jesus. An evil spirit in one man said he did not recognize them but did recognize Jesus and Paul. This event helped give significantly more recognition to the work of Jesus and he was well known to all in Ephesus. One effect was that the makers of silver idols were not busy as Paul was teaching people to pray to God not idols. The silversmiths dragged Paul’s accomplices into the theater. The disciples stopped Paul from going there. The multitude were confused but the town clerk acknowledged their God and claimed that the men they were dragging into the theatre had committed no crime and the assembly was dismissed.

Chapter 20: Paul then went through Macedonia and he spent three months in Greece. A plot was set against him by the Jews, he did not sail to Syria but returned to Macedonia. He met his disciples in Troas. As Paul was preaching in an upper room, he continued beyond midnight and a man fell asleep and fell out of the window and died. Paul fell on the man and declared that there was life in him. At daybreak, the young man walked away. They sailed away and missed some Asian towns as Paul wanted to return to Jerusalem.

He said farewell to Ephesus and declared that his preaching was to Jews and Greeks to tell them about God and to have faith in our Lord Jesus. In summary, he taught that it is more pleasant to give than receive.

Chapter 21: After they departed and stopped in Syria. He met his disciples and through the Holy Spirit Paul was warned not to go to Jerusalem. After four days, he left and met Philip in Caesarea and while there a prophet warned that Paul would be bound with his belt by the Jews and delivered to the gentiles. Paul responded that he was ready to die in the name of the Lord.

When Paul arrived in Jerusalem, he started describing the things which God had done to the gentiles. He was accused of forsaking Moses, telling them not to circumcise and not to walk according to customs. They had four men who should be purified with him. Paul went with the men and the next day he went to the synagogue and gave notice of days of purification.

The Jews from Asia, saw him in the temple and laid hands on him. He was accused and the people dragged him out of the temple. When they wanted to kill him, a report came up from the commander of the Roman cohort which confused them. They stopped beating Paul when they saw the Roman with soldiers. Paul was bound and the commander tried to find what he had done. There was confusion and Paul was taken to the barracks. On his way he asked if the commander knew Greek and it transpired that Paul was not the Egyptian who stirred up a revolt.

Chapter 22: Paul’s defense was that he was a Jew who was directed to Damascus and he was led but could not see. There he met Ananias a devout man who gave him his sight and told him that God had appointed him to administer to the people. He returned to Jerusalem and the Lord warned him to leave Jerusalem. The people rejected his defense and the people wanted him killed. The commander Rado wanted him sent to the barracks but on route, he told a soldier that he was a Roman. The commander then asked him, and he indicated that he was a Roman by birth. He was freed the next day before the chief priests and council.

Chapter 23: Before the council, Paul confirmed that he had a good conscious about his life. The chief priest told people to strike him to which Paul responded that God would strike them in retaliation. Paul perceived that the crowd were Pharisees and Sadducees who had different beliefs about resurrection, angels and spirits. The Pharisees claimed they found nothing wrong and there was confusion. The commander instructed that Paul be brought back to the barracks.

40 Jews then found themselves to starve until Paul was killed. Paul was warned by his sister’s son who was then referred to the commander.

The commander appointed 200 soldiers to take Paul to Caesarea to see the Governor. The governor said he would have a hearing, so the accusers needed to be called in. Paul was kept in Herod’s Praetorium.

Chapter 24: After 5 days, the high priest, elders and attorney arrived to bring charges against Paul. The case against Paul was that he created dissension, wanted to destroy the temple. Felix could not decide, and Paul was kept in custody but was reasonably comfortable. After two years, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus and Paull remained imprisoned.

Chapter 25: Festus invited the chief priests to bring accusers to Caesarea to present their case. Festus offered Paul the option of returning to Jerusalem for trial. But Paul responded that he had done no wrong. Festus decided to refer him to Caesar. King Agrippa visited Festus and on being told about the case against Paul, he asked to see him.

Chapter 26: When Paul was brought before the King, he was offered the opportunity to defend himself. He explained his prior life as a Pharisee and how he met Jesus who he was persecuting. Jesus appointed him to minister the His word and he was teaching all to repent. The king said that Paul would persuade him to be a Christian and Paul replied that this would also apply to all that hear him. The king said Paul would have been set free had he not appealed to Caesar.

Chapter 27: Paul was put on two ships to Italy and the voyage became dangerous and Paul admonished them. The centurion listened to the ships pilot, not Paul. The ship continued with much difficulty and to save themselves, they jettisoned cargo. Everyone was worried and Paul stood up and told them that lives would not be lost only the ship. He said an angel told him that he would stand before Caesar. Paul directed the men to eat as they were starving. The next day they saw land but could not reach it as the ship hit rocks. The instruction was for swimmers to leave the boat.

Chapter 28: They safely arrived on an island which was found to be called Malta. The natives were kind and while Paul sat next to a fire a viper landed on him. The natives interpreted this as his death sentence for murder, but Paul removed the viper and suffered no harm. When Paul who had fever and dysentery. Paul healed him and others also came for healing.

After three months. They set sail and after stops, came to Rome. The Jews did not come to Rome and Paul preached as large numbers heard him testifying about the work of God. He stayed two full years preaching the kingdom of God and teachings of Jesus.

ROMANS

There is general agreement that Paul was the author of this epistle. The letter was written by Paul on his third missionary journey. It is very likely that the letter was written from current bed from another Grecian city. Dates for the epistle range from A.D.53 to 58 with the years A.D.55 to 58 with the years 55 to 56 the most likely.

There is no evidence that Paul ever visited Rome.

Paul starts the letter with preliminary comments and then launches off on the importance of righteousness in man’s relationship with God. He wants to enable people to know Jesus Christ more **clearly**. Love Him more **dearly**  and follow him more **nearly.** He sees mankind as divided into two classes the Jews and Gentiles as a basis for Christian philosophy.

Chapter 1: Paul a bond servant of Jesus was called an apostle and thanked his God through Jesus Christ for you all. The Romans, because their faith are being proclaimed throughout the world. Paul confirmed that through his preaching he made witness to the Romans and that he wished to visit them. There were two words which show the very essence of Paul’s gospel:

 Salvation – from physical illness, from danger, corruption and other infections of life, from lostness, from sin, from wrath of God,

 Faith – loyalty, belief, the Christian religion, indestructible hope, total acceptance and it begins with receptivity.

 He said he was under obligation to the Greeks and the barbarians both to the wise and the foolish, but for his part, he is eager to preach the gospel to you in Rome.

The wrath of God has been revealed but they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshipped and served creatures rather than God. They had degrading passions, committing indecent acts with other men. God gave them over to a depraved mind.

Chapter 2: He warns about judging others. To those who seek good, honor and immorality, eternal life but to the selfish, ambitious who do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There is evil to all who do evil to the Jew first and also the Greek but honor to those who do good to them. God will judge the secrets of man through Jesus Christ.

If you as a Jew preach the law and break it, you dishonor God. If you transgress the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. William Barclay explains the Jewishness is not a matter of race and has nothing to do with circumcision. It is a matter of conduct. Some Gentiles who are not circumcised are Jews in the real sense of the word.

Chapter 3: Through circumcision, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. By the works of God, no flesh will be justified in His sight for through the law, comes the knowledge of sin. Apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and Prophets and faith in Jesus Christ.

All have sinned and we are redeemed by Jesus. Man is justified by faith apart from law. God is the God of Jews and Gentiles. We establish the law through faith.

Chapter 4: In the Old Testament, Abraham was justified by believing God. David also reckons righteousness apart from works. Jesus was delivered up because of our transgressions and raised because of our justification. The fundamental difference between Jewish legalism and Christian faith is that the Jews believe you must earn God’s favor yet Christians believe we take God at His word and stake everything on the faith that His promises are true. Believing in God makes the impossible possible.

Chapter 5: We have peace with God because of Jesus Christ and the love of God through the Holy Spirit. Jesus died for us sinners and we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

Sin was imputed when there was no law, sin reigned from Adam and we have all sinned and death is a consequence of sin but we are rescued by Jesus Christ.

Chapter 6: Upon being baptized, we are united with Him through His death and we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. We believe we shall also live with Him who will never die again.

Consider yourself to be dead to sin and alive to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore, do not let the lust of sin into your body and do not present your body to sin but present yourself to God.

The penalty of sin is death and the free gift from God is eternal life. The law restrains people through fear ; but love redeems them to be better than their best. Christians are not inspired by fear but rather by what God has done for them.

Sanctification is the road to holiness and they must continue to live a Christian life.

Chapter 7: The law has jurisdiction over a person and a married woman being joined to another while her husband is alive, is an adulteress. Sin’s delusion works in three ways: i) deluded by the satisfaction to be found in sin which is not what happens; ii) Deluded by the excuses we try to make, and iii) we are deluded that we will not face the consequences.

 We learnt what was sin through the law, but we now serve a newness of the Spirit and not the oldness of the law. The law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

On the one hand, my mind is serving the law of God but my flesh the law of sin. Who will set me free from this body of sin?

Chapter 8: For those who are in Jesus Christ, they are set free from the law of sin. Those of the flesh cannot please God. For those in the spirit He who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you and will give life to your mortal body.

The spirit helps our weaknesses and if we decide to follow Him, nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God. There are those whose life is dominated by sinful human nature and those whose life is dominated by the Spirit of God.

The Jews : in the next three chapters, Paul deals with the problems of the Jews which is summarized as follows: i) Israel is the chosen people which means more than racial, ii) The Jews did not accept Jesus which opened the door to Gentiles, iii) Israel were dependent on achievement founded on the law while God is a total trusting heart, iv) Gentiles must have no pride, v) Jew and Gentile will be saved.

The keynote of Christian life is hope and no despair , Christians do not wait for death but for life.

Chapter 9: Paul wishes he were separated from Christ for the sake of his brethren who live according to the flesh. He compares the man who answers back to God with the thing molded asking the potter. What if God demonstrated His wrath? He accepted those that were not his people and even the gentiles.

In God’s dealings with the world , the essential things are His will and mercy.

This chapter give us the basis of the first Christian Creed.

Chapter 10: Paul prays for the salvation of those who have a zeal for God but without knowledge. If they repent their sins, confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead, they will be saved.

Faith comes from hearing the word of God as evidenced by the words of Isaiah and Moses.

Chapter 11: God has not neglected His people from the time of Isaiah to the present time. By the transgression of the Jews, salvation came to the Gentiles. Behold the kindness and severity of our God to those who fail but kindness to you if you continue to love Him as He prescribes. A partial hardening has happened to Israel but as is written, a savior will be sent.

Chapter 12: Paul urged the Romans to present their bodies in spiritual service of worship and not to be conformed to this world but to the will of God. We will all be members of one body but will have different gifts which should be used in His service. Abhor what is evil and cling to what is good, be devoted to one another, practice hospitality, bless those who persecute you, rejoice with those who rejoice and never back evil. Be at peace with all men, do not take revenge and feed your hungry enemy. Overcome evil with good.

Chapter 13: Be subject to the governing authority as all authority comes from God or is established by God. Therefore, opposing authority is opposing God. You must pay taxes, owe nothing except love for one another. You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and others are summed up as Love your neighbor as yourself. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh.

Chapter 14: Accept the one who is weak in faith. One man may eat all things but maybe, he who is weak eats vegetables only. Do not judge the eating habits of others. We all live and eat for God. Do not judge your brother for we all stand before the judgement seat of God. The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking but righteousness (giving to others and God what is their due, and peace in the positive sense i.e., absence of trouble, and joy in the Holy Spirit with emphasis on making others happy. Therefore, let us pursue the things which make for peace and building up one another. It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything by which your brother stumbles. Whatever is not from faith is sin.

Chapter 15: We who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength. Let each please his neighbor for his good to his edification. Through perseverance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. The Gentiles should glorify God for it is written that praise will be given to the Gentiles and let all people praise Him.

Paul wrote boldly to the Romans because of the power given to him from God to be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. He did not presume to speak anything except what Christ has accomplished through me.

Paul explained that he had work to do in other areas but when that was finished, he would go by way of Rome on to Spain and he knew that he was coming in the fullness with the blessing of Christ. All urged his brother and to pray for him that he may delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea and Jerusalem that he may get to them and find refreshing rest in their company.

Chapter 16: Paul commended our sister Phoebe who is the servant of the church at Cenchrea that they receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the Saints. That you help her in whatever she may need from you for she herself has been a helper of many. He also introduced other helpers who should be supported.

He urged that they keep their eye on all those who cause dissension and hindrances country to the teaching what you have learned. Such men are slaves of their own appetites and deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. Paul, Timothy and team greeted them all and wished that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with them all

1 CORINTHIANS

PAUL’s first epistle to the Corinthians was possibly written during the latter part of his stay in Ephesus in about A.D.55.

Corinth was a wealthy commercial center that connected the mainland of Greece and the Peloponnesus. The city was important to Paul in his missionary endeavors as it was the hub of commerce and contain the population of mixed characters. Corinth’s moral character made it a fertile field for Good News of the Messiah. It was a city noted for everything depraved, dissolute, and debauched. Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans from Corinth as he had an incentive to write about the sins of men. The response to Paul’s teaching was different to that of Jesus as listeners did not burn with interest but were opposed and Paul was forced to leave.

Chapter 1: Paul thanked God for the grace of God given in Jesus Christ. Christ did not send me here to baptize but to preach the Gospel so that the cross of Christ should not be made void.

The word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness but to those who are being saved it is the power of God. Jews ask for sign, Greeks seek wisdom. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men in the weakness of God is stronger than men, God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise in the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong. No man should boast before the Lord.

Chapter 2: Paul did not come with superiority of speech proclaiming to you the testimony of God. He determined nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him being crucified. He was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling and his preaching was a demonstration of the Spirit. Paul did not preach the wisdom of the rulers, but he did speak of God’s wisdom, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages of glory. This wisdom was not understood by the rulers of the age otherwise they would not of not have crucified the Lord.

A natural man does not except the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolish to him and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised.

Chapter 3: Paul did not speak as a spiritual man but as a man of flesh. No man can lay a foundation other than the one which is Jesus Christ. Know if any man build upon a foundation with gold, silver, precious metals, wood, hay, straw each man’s work or they can become evident in for the day.

Chapter 4: We are stewards of the Lord and He is the only one to examine us and we should not pass judgement. Paul suggests that he will be their father and will leave Timothy to remind them of the ways of Christ.

Chapter 5: Immorality which is worse than the Gentiles is with them. Paul is not there but he has judged the man who has his father’s wife and will deliver him to Satan. He advised them not to associate with a so-called brother who is immoral, covetous, idolater, revilers or a drunkard, do not even eat with them. Do not judge those within the church.

Chapter 6: If you have a complaint against a neighbor, you are not the court to judge this.

It is already a defeat for you to have lawsuits against others, rather be wronged or defrauded. We all know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Do not be deceived neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Your body is not for immorality but for the Lord and the Lord is for your body. One who joins himself with a harlot is one body with her but the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

Chapter 7: Each man should have his own wife and each woman to have her own husband. They should each fulfill their duty to each other. The wife does not have authority over her body, but the husband does and likewise, the husband does not have authority over his body, but his wife does. The wife should not leave her husband and the husband should not send his wife away. An unbelieving husband is sanctified but a believing wife and vice a versa. Circumcision or uncircumcision is nothing what matters is the keeping of the Commandments of God. A wife is bound as long as her husband lives but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes only in the Lord.

Chapter 8: Love edifies but if anyone loves God, he is known by Him. The eating of things sacrificed to idols, there is no such thing. There is only one God.

Chapter 9: Paul has not seen Jesus, but he is an apostle to the Corinthians. He said he preaches the Gospel voluntarily as part of the stewardship entrusted in him. He has become all things to all men, to the Jew, those without law and the weak for the sake of the Gospel.

Chapter 10: The Jews were baptized by Moses, ate the same spiritual food, drank the same spiritual drink. God was not pleased with them and left them in the wilderness. We should not crave evil things as they craved nor act immorally, nor grumble. God will not let you be tempted beyond what you are able. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. Whatever you do, do to the glory of God and give no offense to Jew, Greek or the church of God.

Chapter 11: Paul urged them to imitate him as he imitates the Lord. Christ is the head of every man as man is the head of a woman. Every man who has something on his head when praying, disgraces his head but every woman who has her head uncovered, disgraces her head. There must be factions among you in order that those who are approved may become evident among you. When you eat together it is not the Lords Supper.

Paul explained the Lords Supper on the night on which he was betrayed. He broke bread and said “This is My body, which is for you, do this in remembrance of Me” in the same way he took the cup and saying “This cup is the new covenant in My blood do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks a cup of the Lord in unworthy manner shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

Chapter 12: The people were led astray by idols but only by the Spirit of God can we proclaim Jesus is Lord. There are a variety of ministries and a variety of effects, but the same God works all these things in all persons. For even as the body is one and yet has many members and all members of the body. We all have gifts, but they are not all the same gifts.

Chapter 13: One does not profit from any skill without love. Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous, love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly, it does not seek its own, it is not provoked, does not take into account wrong suffered, does not rejoice in righteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **Love never fails**. But abide faith, hope, love, these three but the greatest of these is love.

Chapter 14: Pursue love, yet desire spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. One who speaks in tongues edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church.

Be mature in your thinking.

Chapter 15: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was buried and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. He appeared to Cephas and then to the 12. After that he appeared to more than 500 brethren at one time. He appeared to James then to all the apostles and last of all, as it were to be an untimely born, He appeared to me also. I am the last of the apostles, as I am not fit to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God. If it is preached that Christ was raised from the dead, how is it that some of you say that there is no resurrection. If there is no resurrection, they are preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

Christ has been raised from the dead and He delivers at the kingdom of God Father. He must reign until He has put all his enemies under His feet. Become sober-minded as you ought and stop sinning for some have no knowledge of God. The body is sown a natural but is raised as a spiritual body. The second man is from heaven and as we were born on earth with the image of the earthy, so we will have a heavenly image.

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Behold, we shall all be changed. The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law, but thanks to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 16: Concerning the collection for the Saints, on the first day of every week let each of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collection we made when I come. When I arrive, whoever you may approve, I shall send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem. If it is fitting, I may also go. Paul explained that he hoped to return. He explained that he will be in Ephesus until Pentecost for there are many opportunities for him. If Timothy comes, do not be afraid for he is doing the Lord’s work. He may come to me. Apollos, I have encouraged, and he will come to you. Be alert and let all be done in love. Paul rejoiced over the coming of Stephanss and Fortunatus and Achaicus because they have supplied what was lacking on your part. Brothers, he greeted to the name and the grace of the Lord Jesus. May He be with you and love be with you in Christ Jesus, Amen

2 CORINTHINIAS

This letter was prompted by a visit by Titus who found that dangers were lying before the church in Corinth. Paul had to act sternly and did the following three things: 1. Present the gospel more clearly to the Christians, 2. Put pressure on them for their promised contribution, and 3. Pulverize all opposition by defending of his apostolic ministry. This letter was about a year after the first letter. In his defense of his apostolic authority, Paul reveals his very soul and adds details about his life which may not have been disclosed.

In this letter we see that at times Paul was at a pinnacle of joy yet and other times he was in the valley of despair. This is a good lesson for all Christians to remember that the road is not always easy. Like and outraged father, he pleads, rebukes and weeps for his church family. He is also concerned about his brethren in Jerusalem and he wants to take an offering back to them.

This letter clearly shows his cool and authority as an apostle even though he was not one of the twelve. Paul anchored his authority in the call of Christ and the power he could only have received from the Lord.

Chapter 1: Paul opened his letter acknowledging God and Lord Jesus Christ who comforts us in our affliction. In testimony of his conscience, he acknowledges that he was the reason for them being proud in the Lord. He explained that he intended to visit but he was vacillating. He reminds them that Christ established his team with them, and he would come to Corinth no more.

Chapter 2: He would not come for his sake as he causes them sorrow and they should make him rejoice. His objective is to show his love for them. He asks for forgiveness and comfort by reaffirming their love for Christ.

Chapter 3: You are a letter of Christ, cared for by our team; not written in ink but with the Spirit of God on tablets of human hearts. We have confidence in Christ through God. If the ministry of death in letters engraved on stone so that the sons of Israel could not look at the face of Moses, how can the Spirit fail to be even more with glory. The ministry of righteousness has more glory than condemnation.

Chapter 4: We have this ministry and do not lose heart and we preach about Jesus Christ as His bond servants. We look at the things that are not seen because the things seen are temporal and the unseen are eternal.

Chapter 5: If our house is torn down, we have an eternal house in heaven.

We must all appear in the judgement seat and we give you an occasion to be proud of us.

The love of Christ controls us and He died for our sins.

Chapter 6: Our mouth has opened freely to you the people of Corinth and our heart is opened wide. Do not be bound together with unbelievers for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness or light and darkness.

Chapter 7: Paul has not wronged, corrupted or taken advantage of anyone. I rejoice and have confident in you.

Chapter 8: Paul described how the church in Macedonia gave according to their ability. He asked that the people of Corinth show proof of their love and the reason for Paul’s team boasting about them.

Chapter 9: Paul urged the people might be ready to give the bountiful gift and not be affected by covetousness.

Chapter 10: We do not walk according to the flesh even though we walk in the flesh. Paul acknowledges that they say his letters are weighty and strong but what we are in letters, we are also indeed.

Chapter 11: Paul explains that he comes and preaches about a God who is good, but others come and preach about a different spirit, you the people have accepted this. Paul was not a burden on them. He has been punished for doing his preaching and when they tried to arrest him in Damascus, he was able to escape.

Chapter 12: Paul felt his defense was boasting and he therefore will boast about another man and no one must credit him more than they see in him. When he comes, he warned that he may not find them as he wished; there may be strife, jealousy, tempers, disputes and disturbances. I may mourn over many that have sinned in the past and not repented.

Chapter 13: Paul was coming to them for the third time and he warned he will not spare anyone this time. You seek proof of the Christ who was crucified for your sins but lives because of the power of God. We pray that you do no wrong and you only do things for the truth. He was writing this letter so that when he comes to Corinth, he may use severity for building up and not tearing down. Rejoice, live in peace and Gods love and peace will be with you. The grace of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit be with you.

GALATIONS

PAUL found out that Jewish Christians in Galatian churches were circumcising Gentile converts as being necessary for their salvation.

Possibly written at the time of his third visit to Ephesus or Macedonia which is as late as A.D.56.

Chapter 1: Paul who was sent by Jesus Christ was amazed that the people of Galatia were listening to another preacher. The Gospel preached by Paul was not according to man, he received through a revelation from Jesus. He confirmed how he used to persecute the church and wanted to destroy it. He travelled and did not see other apostles other than James, Jesus’ brother. The church in Judea heard him preaching and commented that he was the one that once persecuted them and is preaching the faith which he tried to destroy. They were glorifying God because of him.

Chapter 2: After 14 years he went to Jerusalem and revealed the Gospel he was preaching to the Gentiles. But not even Titus, a Greek, was circumcised. He was preaching to the uncircumcised just as Peter had done.

When Cephas came to Antioch, Paul opposed him because he was condemned and was aloof fearing the party of the circumcision. The Jews joined him in his hypocrisy and Barnabas was carried away. Paul emphasized that he was crucified with Christ who now lives in him by faith. If righteousness comes to us through the law, then Christ died needlessly.

Chapter 3: Paul ask who had bewitched them as they received the Spirit by faith not the works of law. In order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The law does not invalidate the covenant given by God hundreds of years before hand.

 The law has been a tutor to lead us to Christ that we may live in Faith. All who are baptized are neither slave or master, Jew, or Greek you are all in one in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 4: Now that you know God, how is it that we turn back to weak and worthless things to enslave us again. Because of your bodily illness, I preached the gospel to you the first time. I wish to be present with you for I am perplexed about you.

Tell me, what do you want under the law? Abraham had two sons one by the bondwoman and the other by the free woman. The son from the bond woman was born to be a slave but we are the children of the free woman.

Chapter 5: Christ set us free and if you receive circumcision, Christ will be on no benefit to you. It is an obligation to be justified by law and you have fallen from grace. Through Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything. You were called to freedom and do not turn that into an opportunity for the flesh. Love your neighbor and do not bite and devour each other. The deeds of the flesh are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, disputes, dissention, envying, drunkenness, carousing and things like this. You practice these things you will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such things there is no law.

Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh and live by the Spirit.

Chapter 6: even if a man is caught in any trespass, restore such one in the spirit of gentleness. Bear one another’s burdens for us to fill the law of Christ. Man, who sows to his own flesh shall reap the flesh of corruption. Do not lose heart in doing good for in due time you will reap the benefit in full. Those who compel you to be circumcised do it so that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. Live by the rule that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is material.

EPHESIANS

PAUL’s letter to the Ephesians to emphasize the truth that the Church is the body of which Christ is the head.

The insight and depth of the epistle is so great that some have considered it the most profound work in the whole bible.

The theological themes are, (1) Divine election in that God chose or elected us in Him before the foundation of the world, (2) Reconciliation is possible as the barriers between man and God and to fellow man were removed by Christ who clearly shows that we are all equal, (3) Christ functions through the church.

Chapter 1: He chose us in Him before foundation of the world, he predestined us to adoption as sons and to have redemption through His blood. He was raised from the dead and is seated on the right hand of God and is above all as head over all things in the church.

Chapter 2: You formerly lived in the lusts of the flesh but by His grace you have been saved by a gift from God. Through Him we have access to the Spirit to the Father. You were built from the foundations of the apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone.

Chapter 3: Paul is the prisoner of Jesus for the sake of the Gentiles and he has the stewardship of God’s grace. The Gentiles are heirs and fellow members of the body of which Paul was made a minister. He asks that you do not lose heart at many tribulations for they are your glory. Paul prays for these people.

Chapter 4: Gentiles should walk in a manner worthy of His calling with humility and gentleness with patience and forbearance to one and other in love. There is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. He is equipping us to build up the body of Christ until we all attain the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of Man which belongs to the fullness of Christ. We will not be children but grown up in all aspects into Him.

You walk no longer just as children as you have been taught in Him just as truth is in Jesus.

Let all bitterness, wrath and anger, clamor and slander and malice be put away from you. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted and forgiving just as God has forgiven you.

Chapter 5: Be imitators of God and walk in love, do not be immoral or impure or greedy. No filthiness or silly talk or coarse jesting but rather just give thanks. Do not be deceived with empty words. Walk in the light of the Lord. Do not get drunk with wine always give thanks to the Lord.

Wives be subject to your husband who is head of the wife. Husbands love your wife. The husband and wife will be one flesh.

Chapter 6: Children obey your parents, honor your father and mother is the first commandment. Fathers do not provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Slaves be obedient to your masters as slaves of Christ. All good done is repaid. Masters do the same, no threatening as there is no partiality with Him

Be strong in the Lord and the strength of His might, put on the full armor of God. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against powers, against spiritual powers of wickedness so take the full armor.

In addition, taking up the shield of faith you will be able to extinguish all the missiles of evil and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God.

Pray at all times in the Spirit and pray for me for Paul is the ambassador so you may speak as boldly, as he speaks to you.

Grace be to all who love Jesus with incorruptible love.

PHILIPPIANS

PAUL and his team to the city of Philippi which became the “birthplace” of European Christianity.

The letter was clearly written in jail, but we are not sure where. It was a note of condemnation and explanation to head off any criticism that Paul was returning prematurely and to thank the church for its gift. If trends were allowed to continue, it may have undermined the cause of Christ at Philippi. This is the most personal of his letters and reveals Paul as radiant amid the storms of stress of life.

Chapter 1: Paul sends grace to all the saints in Christ Jesus and he thanks God for his fond remembrance of them. He is confident that He will perfect the work in them until the day of Christ Jesus. He is happy with the place of the people.

He wanted them to know that his imprisonment was in the cause of Christ. Some preach the word without fear, some from envy and strife, some from goodwill. The latter do it out of love as they know I am in defense of the Gospel. The former do it for selfish ambition to cause me distress in prison.

For me to die is gain but to live will mean fruitful labor, I do not know which to choose. Whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you striving for the faith of the Gospel.

Chapter 2: If there is any encouragement in Christ, do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit but with humility as you regard another as more important than yourself. Do as Jesus did and be humbled. God exalted Him and bestowed on Him a name above all, at His name every knee should bow, every tongue should confess The He is Lord.

I hope that Timothy will visit you so I can learn of your condition. I thought it necessary to send Epaphroditus for he was longing for you all and you had heard that he was sick, but God had mercy on him. Therefore, receive with joy because he came close to death.

Chapter 3: Paul warned them to beware of evil workers, false circumcision. Paul was circumcised on the eighth day, but he counted that gain as a loss for the sake of Christ. He counts all things as a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Jesus Christ. He is not yet perfect but was Christ lay hold for him and what He will do so I forget what was behind me. He urged all to walk according to the example given.

Chapter 4: He asked all to help his workers and rejoice in the Lord. Be anxious for nothing but in everything make requests by praying and supplication. Let your mind dwell on what is true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and of good refute.

I rejoice that you have revived your concern for me. He has lived with humble means, in prosperity, being filled and being hungry and he can do all things through Him who strengthens him. He advised that no church has shared the giving and receiving as they have done in Philippian. He was amply supplied by what Epaphroditus had delivered, a fragrant aroma well pleasing to God. To our God and Father be the glory forever, Amen. Greet every saint especially those of Caesar’s household.

COLOSSIANNS

PAUL’s letter to was written from prison, possibly about A.D. 53 – 56. The Colossians who first heard the word during Paul’s Ephesian ministry if he passed through Colossae. The accommodation of Gentile practices left a mark on the Jews practicing Christianity. In Galatia it was threatened by legalism, as in Ephesus.

This heresy combined Jewish and Hellenistic elements. Some Jewish converts brought the mixture from heterodox Judaism and developed it further.

Chapter 1: Paul and Timothy to the people of Colossae give thanks to God and advise that they are praying for them. We heard of your faith which is constantly bearing fruit as it grows.

They were formerly alienated, hostile and were engaged in evil deeds. He has now reconciled you to present you before Him as holy and blameless, beyond reproach. Paul was made a minister so that he would carry out the preaching of the word of God. We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching every man with wisdom to present to Christ.

Chapter 2: Paul tells them he struggled for them all, seen and unseen, so that their hearts may be knit together in love in a true knowledge of Gods mystery that is Christ himself.

Walk with Jesus so that no one takes you captive. For in Him dwells the full Deity, you are made complete, and you were circumcised without hands touching you, having been buried in baptism by which you were raised up with Him. Therefore, let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to any festival or sabbath day. He listed the things which they had received from Christ.

Chapter 3: Keep seeking the things above not on the things of earth. Considering the members of your earthly body are dead to morality, impurity, passion, evil desires, and greed which amounts to idolatry. You have put aside many bad habits such as slander, abusive speech and telling lies. In a renewal which is no different between Greek and you, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, slave, and free man, but Christ is all in all. Beyond all these things put on love which is the perfect bond of unity. Whatever you do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father.

Wives be subject to your husbands. Husbands love your wives and do not be embittered against them. Children be obedient and fathers, do not exasperate your children. Slaves to obey.

He who does wrong will bear the consequences without partiality.

Chapter 4: Masters Grant your slave justice. Conduct yourselves with wisdom towards outsiders making the most of the opportunity. Do your speech always be with Grace. Paul confirmed to them the love and support they had from his team which he named.

THESSALONIANS

After he was released from prison in Philippi. Paul, together with Silas and Timothy went west of the Macedonian capital, Thessalonica. Despite dogged opposition, the church there was the second European church. Paul wrote this letter to commend his faithful brethren for their dedication to Christ and one another and furthermore to encourage them further. The date of the letter is A.D.51.

This letter gives us a glimpse of the uncomplicated primitive church. Paul lays bare his soul which he compares to a nursing mother, a firm father, and a homeless orphan. In no letter does Paul go to such lengths to cover the sequence of events across second coming of the Christ in the role of dead believers in that advent.

Chapter 1: Paul and his team, Silas and Timothy give thanks to God. The gospel did not come to the people only in word but also in power the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 2: Paul’s coming to Thessalonica was not in vain. Whereas he was mistreated in Philippi, we were well received by you. We came as we were entrusted with the Gospel by God and we did not seek any glory but only showed love in our desire to impart the Gospel to you. You accepted this as the word of God, and you became imitators of the church in Judea. You endured the suffering as we did from the Jews who killed the Lord Jesus. You are our glory and joy.

Chapter 3: Timothy was sent to strengthen and encourage your faith. We kept telling you that we would suffer the affliction which came to pass. Timothy returned to us with the good news of your faith and love and that you always think on the others longing to see us just as we long to see you. Now, may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you to increase and abound in love for one another and for all men just as we do for you.

Chapter 4: You heard from us as to how we should walk and please God. Each of you know how to possess your own sanctification and honor. You need no one to write to you as you are practicing toward your brethren. I urge you to excel still more.

If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, God will bring with Him those are fallen asleep in Jesus. We are alive and remain to be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord.

Chapter 5: We must stay alive and alert for God for you are destined for salvation through Christ.

Appreciate those who diligently labor among you. Admonish the unruly and encourage the faint hearted. Rejoice and pray without ceasing. Hold fast to what is good and abstain from evil. May the peace of God sanctify you entirely and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

2 THESSALONIANS

PAUL was grateful for believer’s faith, love and endurance while being persecuted. He explains the purpose of the persecution which defines believers in future glory and seals the doom of Gods enemies. Despite contrary reports, Paul confirms that the day of the Lord has not yet come.

Chapter 1: Paul, Silvanus and Timothy wished grace to the church in Thessalonica and told them that they were considered worthy of the kingdom of God. They said that the people should pray always so that our God may count you worthy of the calling and fulfill the desire for goodness and the work of faith with power.

Chapter 2: We request you not be shaken from your composure or disturbed either by a spirit or a message to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. They warned that the mystery of lawlessness is already at work and only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. That lawless one will be revealed in the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end appearance of his coming. You have been called by God so stand firm. The Lord gives us good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts.

Chapter 3: Finally pray for us that the word of God may spread. Lord is faithful, He will strengthen and protect you from evil. They commanded in the name of Jesus that we keep aloof from those who lead an unruly life not in accordance with the tradition which they teach. Do not eat anyone’s bread without paying for it. As a model for you, we work, day and night: if anyone does not work, neither let him eat. If anyone does not obey our instruction, take special note of that man and do not associate with him so that he may be put to shame. Do not regard him as an enemy but admonish him as a brother.

1 TIMOTHY

PAUL’s first letter to Timothy and to Titus were written between Paul two Roman imprisonments. A date somewhere between A.D.61 and 62. This simple pattern of a solemn charge, bound together by a doxology or hymn of praise, is repeated three times.

Chapter 1: Paul’s letter to Timothy urged him to stay at Ephesus while Paul went to Macedonia so that Timothy could instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies that give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. The law is good if used lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for the righteous man but for those that are lawless and rebellious. For the ungodly sinners who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral man and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and managers and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching. I thank Jesus Christ our Lord; he strengthen me because he considered me faithful putting me into service even though I was formally a blasphemer and a persecutor and violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly, in unbelief. Jesus Christ came to the world to save sinners, among whom I am the foremost of all, this demonstrated his perfect patience to all who are believing Him for eternal life. Paul commanded Timothy to keep Faith in good conscience full.

Chapter 2: Paul urged prayers, petitions and thanksgiving be made on behalf of all men, for kings and for all in authority in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of our Savior who desires all men to be saved to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Paul wants all women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments. Rather by means of good works as befits woman making a claim to godliness. Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. Paul did not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over men but to remain quiet.

Chapter 3: If any man aspires to the office of overseer it is fine work he desires to do. An overseer must be above reproach, husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable and able to teach. He may not be addicted to wine or pugnacious but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. He must manage his own household well.

Deacons likewise must be a man of dignity, not double-tongued or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain but holding to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience.

Woman must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossip, the temperature, faithful in all things.

Chapter 4: The Spirit says in later times, some will fall away from the faith paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. Everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected. Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness which is profitable for all things since it holds promise for the present love and also for the life to come. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear.

Chapter 5: Do not sharply rebuke an older man but rather appeal to him as father similarly older women as mothers and younger people as brothers or sisters. Honor widows but let them learn piety to their own family and help some to return to their parents. She who gives herself to wanton pleasure, is dead even while she lives.

If anyone does not provide for his own family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Paul wants Younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach.

Let the elders who rule will be considered worthy of double honor, especially those working hard at preaching and teaching.

Timothy do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily, no longer drink water exclusively but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

Chapter 6: Let all slaves regard their master’s as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine may not be spoken against. Similarly, let those that have believers as their masters not be disrespectful to them. Godliness means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. We brought nothing into the world so we cannot take anything out of it. For those who want to get rich fall into temptation and many foolish and harmful desires plunge men into ruin and destruction. The Love of money is the root of all sorts of evil and some by longing for it have wanted away from the faith. Instruct those that are rich not to be conceited or fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to be good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share.

Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly an empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”

2 TIMOTHY

The reason for writing this epistle was a need to maintain the faith and to ensure the continuity of the Church of Jesus Christ. In this letter, Timothy and Titus, together with all the church are charged to keep the Faith by the work of the Holy Spirit. The chief point is Paul’s presentation of the gospel as a trust to be preserved, cherished and committed to faithful men. His words gain peculiar solemnity and weight because they were the last to come from his pen.

Chapter 1: Timothy is fondly remembered and the sincere faith within him. He reminds Timothy to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in him through the laying of Paul’s hands. He says that God has given them a gift of power and love and discipline. Retain the standard of sound words would you have heard from me in the faith and love which are in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2: Therefore, be strong in the grace that is Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful man who will be able to teach others also. Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. He gives examples of the sacrifices made for the sake of all to succeed.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed handing accurately the word of truth. Avoid worldly and empty chatter. Free from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

Chapter 3: Realize that in the last days difficult times will come for men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips without self-control brutal haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance and like my persecutions and sufferings, the Lord delivered me.

Chapter 4: He urges Timothy to preach the word and be patient as they will get teachers in accordance with their own desires.

You be sober in all things, do the work of an evangelist for the time of my departure has come.

He advised that his helpers had gone to other places and he was warned about Alexander the coppersmith. He urged him to come before winter.

TITUS

This epistle is to emphasize the connection of doctrine, committed to faithful men, with godliness of life. It is uncertain whether or not Paul was the author.

Chapter 1: Paul is purported to have written this letter to Titus explaining that he left in Crete that Titus might appoint elders in every city as Paul directed. He defined the fine qualities of an elder. He also warned about rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision who must be silenced. He says Cretans are greedy beasts and lazy. To be pure, all things must be pure, but they deny God and are worthless.

Chapter 2: Older men or to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love and perseverance. Older woman likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to too much wine, teaching what is good. That they may encourage the younger woman to love their husbands and love their children. Likewise, young men to be sensible

and an example of good. Urge slaves to be subject to their masters.

The grace of God had appeared bringing salvation to all men looking for the blessed hope in the glory of God, our savior.

Chapter 3: Remind them to obey the rulers for we were once foolish ourselves. But the kindness of God our savior appeared for His love of mankind. We were saved by Jesus Christ and by His grace, that we might have eternal life.

When Artemas and Tychicus are sent make every effort to visit Paul. Also help the lawyer Zenas.

PHILEMON

PAUL wrote this on behalf of Philemon’s slave who had been converted. By returning the absconding slave to his master, Paul instructs us concerning the principles governing the relations of Christian brothers which are to be realized by free will.

Chapter 1: Paul acknowledges the faith to Jesus Christ of Timothy’s brother, Philemon.

He confirms the joy he has received from faith and that Philemon will was proper in the eyes of the Lord. Paul has sent Philemon to Onesimus even though he wanted to keep him to minister to him in prison. I did not want to do anything that would make your goodness were not by compulsion but your own free will. He was parted from you so that you could have him back forever, not as a slave, but a beloved brother both in the flesh and in the Lord. Accept him as you would me says Paul and if he owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul am writing this so that I may benefit from you in the Lord. He sent greetings from others.

HEBREWS

This is a unique epistle in that we are not sure of the author, destination, date or reason for being written and the relationship to first century Christianity, Judaism and the Hellenistic culture. Jewish Christians were in danger of apostasy from Christ back to Moses. This was based on unbelief, conduct, neglect of public worship, weakness in prayer, instability, lack of teaching

others and neglect of the scriptures.

The author stresses the superiority of Christ to show the inferiority of Judaism. Three concepts are expressed – exhortation, series of warnings, consolidation or assurance. The line of reasoning: Christ brought persecution; Judaism did not therefore be free. The epistle shows Christ’s superiority.

Probably written in A.D.68 during Jewish – Roman conflict.

The author is uncertain. The letter establishes Christ’s superiority over angels, Moses, Aaron, Melchizedek, the Levitical system and the Old Testament.

The first idea for the reader is expressed in the word “consider”. To consider that Christ speaks from within the sanctuary, guaranteeing to every believer entrance into the presence of God.

The second idea is “exhortation” in comparison with “urge or encourage” The purpose of the letter is to encourage Christians to support both approaches by examples of success lived by faith. The writer builds on truth in support of the main message. No other writer of the New Testament: (a) Discusses significance of Melchizedek (7.1.4)

 (b) a difference approach to repentance (12.17)

 (c) deliberate sin (10.26)

Chapter 1: Long ago, God spoke to the prophets but in those recent days, He had spoken to us in His Son who He appointed heir to all things. He sat on the right hand of the Majesty on high having become better than the angels. As evidence, there were many examples, including: which of the angels did He ever address as His son, and in Psalm 97.7, “let all the angels of God worship Him”.

Chapter 2: We must pay close attention to what we have heard.

We see Him suffering death crowned with glory and honor that by the grace of God, He might taste death for everyone. Since the children share in flesh and blood, He through death rendered powerless the devil who had the power of death. He became a merciful faithful high priest to make propitiation for the sins of the people. Since He was tempted, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

Chapter 3: Those called, consider Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him as Moses was faithful to all in His house. Moses was faithful as a servant, but Christ was faithful as a son over a house whose house we are.

Take care lest there should be one of you who is falling away from the living God. Encourage one another day after day.

Chapter 4: We and they had good words preached to us and Christian believers are promised a path to His house but in Psalm 95.11 it is written “Thou shall not enter my rest”. It remains for some to enter but those who were disobedient will fail to enter.

The word of God is active and sharp, and all is open to His sight. We have Jesus to whom we shall confess, and we may receive mercy and grace.

Chapter 5: Every High Priest is appointing by men in order to offer them gifts and sacrifices for sin. Christ did not glorify himself to become a high priest as He said to Him,

 “Thou art my son. Today I have begotten you” Psalm 2.7. He was made perfect those who obey Him have a source of eternal life.

Chapter 6: To those who have been enlightened and saw the benefits but then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again in repentance since the crucified the Son of God and put Him to shame. God is not unjust and will not forget your work, love and ministering.

Chapter 7: Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of a Most High God met Abraham and he blessed him. Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all spoils. Now observe how the sons of Levi commanded that people give a tenth to the priest. So, through Abraham and Levi, who received tithes also paid tithes. As a priest was changed so was the law to accommodate the new priest. The Lord was descended from Judah a tribe referred to my Moses, but Melchizedek and successors arise as a result of power of indestructible life as Psalm 110-4 refers to being priest forever. The law appoints priests by inheritance who are weak, but the word appoints a Son made perfect forever.

Chapter 8: We have a high priest who sits at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. He is the mediator of a better covenant enacted on better promises.

If the first covenant was faultless, there would be no need for a second but there is evidence of the need Jer 31-31, Ex 19-5 etc.

Chapter 9: The first covenant had regulations of divine worship and earthly sanctuary. There are definitions of the “holy place”. “Holy of Holies” and the high priest enters only once a year, not without taking blood which he offers for himself for the sins people commit. Accordingly, by

 gifts and sacrifices cannot make a worshipper perfect.

When Christ appeared, He entered through the greater and more tabernacle that is not of this creation. Rather than through the blood of animals, through the blood of Christ, who through the Spirit offered Himself without blemish to cleanse our conscience to serve God. He is the mediator of a new covenant. A covenant is valid men when dead and the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. Moses took animal blood for every commandment saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you.”

The high priests annually offered blood which was not of their own. By His sacrifice, He has put sin away, He was offered once for the sins of many and shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin to those who await Him.

Chapter 10: The Law can never by the same sacrifices year by year make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, they would cease to be offered because worshippers once cleansed would have no conscience.

When He says, God takes no pleasure in burnt offering and sacrifices for sin. Psalm40-6. Jesus says, behold I have come to do thy will Of God. We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.

We have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus. Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.

If we go on signing willfully after receiving the knowledge of truth, there a longer and made a sacrifice for sins. Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you need endurance so that through the will of God you may receive what has been promised.

Chapter 11: Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Without faith, it is impossible to please Him for he who comes to God must believe that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. Examples of faith – Noah he received the salvation of his household; Abraham to receive an inheritance he went out not knowing where; Sarah received an ability to conceive; Jacob as he was dying blessed each of the sons of Joseph; Joseph made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel; Moses when he was born was hidden for three months by his parents and when grown up, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter ; by faith they passed through the Red Sea while the Egyptians were drowned; the walls of Jericho fell down and Rehab the harlot, did not perish.

There were many who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war.

Chapter 12: Let us lay aside every encumbrance and sin which so easily entangles us and let us run with endurance. He endured such hostility so that you may not grow weary and lose heart. You have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you “do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord” Job 5 -17: “those whom the Lord loves he disciplines” Prov 3-12.

Without discipline of which you have become a partaker, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. Let us show gratitude by offering acceptable service with reverence and awe.

Chapter 13: Let love of brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers. Remember the prisoners. Let marriage be held an honor among all, let the marriage bed be undefiled for fornicators and adulterers, God will judge. Let your character be free from the love of money, be content with what you have for He said “I will never desert you or forsake you”

We can confidently say “the Lord is my helper I will not be afraid” Psalm 118-6.

Let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God and do not neglect doing good and sharing.

May God of peace equip you in everything to do His will working in us, which is pleasing to His sight, through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory forever and ever.

JAMES

There were many called James in the New Testament. The likely author of this epistle is James the Lord’s brother. Traditionally, it is assumed that the date of writing was mid 40s or early 60s A.D.

The twelve tribes was used to indicate the entirety of the Jewish nation. However, this nation was scattered, and it seems best to us to understand that James was writing to Christian Jews who were disbursed abroad.

Chapter 1: When you encounter various trials, know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. If any of you lack wisdom, ask of God who gives it to all men generously. But, let him ask in faith without any doubting. Let no man expect that he will receive anything. Let the rich man glory in his humiliation.

Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial, for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life as promised to all those who love Him. One is tempted when enticed by one’s own lust. All good comes from above and anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. Prove yourselves doers of the word and not merely bearers who delude themselves.

Chapter 2: Do not judge by appearances of clothing and jewelry. God chose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. Do not blaspheme the name which you have been called. Love your neighbor as you do yourself but if you show partiality, you are committing sin. Faith without works is useless.

Chapter 3: If any man does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man. The tongue defiles the body and sets on fire the course of our life. With it we bless our Lord and curse men, one ought not have blessing and cursing come from the same mouth.

He who is wise and understanding, show it by good deeds and gentleness of wisdom. Where there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there is this disorder and every evil thing.

Chapter 4: What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you. Submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Do you not speak against one another for he who speaks against the brother judges his brother? When making plans, you should say “if the Lord wills, we shall…”

Chapter 5: Riches are allowed to deteriorate, and you have fattened your hearts.

Be patient for the coming of the Lord. Do not swear. Confess your sins to one another so that you may be healed. He who turns a sinner from the errors of his ways, will save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

1 PETER

This epistle is likely to be written by apostle Peter who writes with the help of Silvanus and Mark was with him.

The references to persecution and suffering is interpreted by some as an anticipatory

warning against approaching persecution was even then moving. If the persecution was the Jewish Sanhedrin, the Romans were quick to see that here was a way of life incompatible with paganism and must be stopped. The persecution of Peter and Silas in Philippi was on this basis without Jewish instigation.

It is possible that the epistle was written in Rome at about A.D.64.
Peter writes to Jews and Gentiles who he reminds that they are now persons of God after being “not a people”. After facing death, Peter comes forward to encourage and strengthen brethren who are already involved in the cruel persecution.

Chapter 1: Peter, writing to those that are chosen to follow Jesus to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you. He blesses God, father of our Lord Jesus Christ and tells the recipients of the epistle that they are protected through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. He urges them to keep sober in spirit and fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

For those of you who have been born again the word of the Lord abides forever.

Chapter 2: Putting aside all malice and hypocrisy, long for the pure milk of the word that it may grow in respect to salvation. You come to Him as a living stone rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God.

Submit yourselves, for the Lord sake, to every human institution, whether a king as the one in authority. Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honor the king.

Christ also suffered for you leaving your example for you to follow in His steps.

Chapter 3: Wives, be submissive to your husband so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives. Let not your adornment be merely external but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

Husbands live with your wives in an understanding way and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life so your prayers may not be hindered. To sum up, let it be harmonious, sympathetic, kindhearted and humble in spirit and not return evil for evil or insult for insult but giving blessings instead. Sanctify Christ in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to anyone who asked you to give an account for the hope that is in you.

Chapter 4: Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourself for the same purpose and live for the will of God. In the past, you carried out the desires of the Gentiles and pursued sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, drinking parties and idolatries. You shall give an account to him.

It is time for judgment to begin with the household of God. What will be the outcome for those who do not obey the Gospel of God?

Chapter 5: The elders shepherd the flock of God among you according to the will of God not for gain but with eagerness. God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble. After you suffer for a little while, God will strength and establish you.

2 PETER

This epistle was probably written in Rome in about A.D.66. It is claimed to have been written by Simon Peter and gives evidence of the transfiguration of Christ.

Peters purpose is to warn against false teachers. It is a strong denunciation and a prophecy for their destruction. He condemns the spirit of lawlessness and the heresy that a Christian does not have to be moral. His antidote is a growth of Christian virtues so to destroy such false teaching. He warns the recipients to keep prepared for the second coming of the Lord.

Chapter 1: Grace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. He has granted us his precious and magnificent promises that we might become partakers of divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world by lust. Applying due diligence in your faith supplying moral excellence and self-control, perseverance and godliness. Brethren, as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble. We did not cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. Peter confirms that he heard the support for Him from God. No prophecy of Scripture is one’s interpretation and was not made by human act, but men moved by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 2: False prophets arise amongst people as do false teachers. If God did not spare Angels when they sinned and Noah was not saved and He condemned cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction, who would live ungodly thereafter. God knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, keep the unrighteous under punishment for the judgement day. It is better for those transgressors not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered.

Chapter 3: This letter was a way of reminding them of the words of the prophets and the commandments of the Lord.

The Lord is patient towards us not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come, and elements will be destroyed. We are looking for a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Since you look for these things, be diligent and regard the Lords patience to be a salvation. Be on your guard and do not be carried away by undisciplined men. Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity.

1 JOHN

The life of Apostle John is in two periods, the first concludes with the departure after the ascension of Christ and the second from that time until his death. He came from a well-to-do family. In this his first epistle, John who was known to be a man of love displays that he can be stern, intolerant of heresy. John wrote the Gospel and this epistle. It is likely that this epistle was written A.D.90. The second and third John may be about the same time. All the apostles were written from Ephesus according to reliable tradition.

Chapter 1: What we have seen and heard and what we beheld and proclaim to you is eternal life. We want fellowship with you as indeed was our fellowship with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ.

God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. He is the light and we have fellowship with one another as the blood of Jesus cleanse us from sin.

Chapter 2: I am writing this so that you may not sin but anyone that does sin, has an advocate with the father, through Jesus Christ. For one who abides in Him ought to walk like He walked. One who says he is in the light but hates his brother is in the dark.

If you love the things in the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father and one who confesses the Son has the Father.

The promise He has made is eternal life.

Chapter 3: We are children of God, when He appears, we shall be like Him.

He who practices sin, also practices lawlessness. One that practices sin is of the devil and He appeared to destroy the works of the devil.

If born of God, we do not sin because His seed abides in us. We should love one another. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer and eternal life is not abiding in him.

Chapter 4: Do not believe every spirit as there are false prophets. The Spirit of God confesses Jesus Christ has come in the flesh from God.

Love is from God and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. God loved us and sacrificed His Son for the propitiation of our sins. So, we ought to love one another. Bear witness to God and confess that Jesus is the son of God.

Chapter 5: Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God and whoever loves the Father loves Him. Jesus came by water and blood and the Spirit is truth. There are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood.

The one that believes in the Son has witness in himself. The witness is that God has given eternal life.

All unrighteousness is sin and there is a sin not leading to death. We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding.

2 JOHN

The timing of the writing of this epistle is unknown but in the absence of any other evidence, it is likely to be at the same time as the first letter. The destination is enigmatic. Some hold that the letter was addressed to an individual lady and her family, possibly named Kyria.

He was glad to find some of her children walking in the truth just as we have received commandment to do. In addition, we must walk as He commended as many deceivers do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. If anyone does not bring this teaching, do not greet him or have him in your house.

3 JOHN

As for the second letter from John, this is possibly to the eldest son of the lady.

John records his pleasure in finding that he bears witness and walks in truth. Bear witness of your love before the church and send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. John wrote something to the church but Diotrephes who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, John will come and call attention to his deeds and defend his accusations. Do not imitate what is evil but rather what is good as God does good and the devil does evil. I hope to see you soon and to speak face to face.

JUDE

Probably written by Jude a servant of Jesus Christ.

The date cannot be fixed, it is probably in the latter half of the first century.

The purpose was to warn against the heresy of Gnosticism, a philosophy that distinguished sharply between matter, as being inherently evil, and spirit, as being good. It gave rise to the idea that Christ’s body was only apparent and not real for, if Christ had been a real body, it would have been evil. This theory prompted two different results. The one is that we are under no obligation to obey moral law and the other a form of abuse of the body to promote spirituality. Jude rebukes false teachers who deceive unstable believers and corrupt the Lords table.

Chapter 1: He appeals to the recipients to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. Certain ungodly persons turn the grace of God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord saved people out of Egypt and destroyed those who did not believe.

The origin of sin is unknown but was first noted in the heart of Satan who was created a perfect being; but he exerted his will above God. Angels who did not keep their own domain He kept under darkness for the judgement day. In cities around Sodom and Gomorrah there was gross immorality and went after strange flesh. Michael the archangel disputed the devil and argued about the body of Moses but did not pronounce against him but said that the Lord will rebuke you. These men revile in things they do not understand. Things like acting like unreasonable animals and followed others and were caring for themselves like trees without fruit. These are grumblers, finding fault after their own lusts.

You ought to remember the words of Jesus Christ saying that there shall be mockers following their own ungodly lusts. They cause divisions devoid of the spirit. Build yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God and have mercy on those who are doubting.

To Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory be glory majesty and dominion.

REVELATION

(The Apocalypse)

There is doubt as to the authenticity of this book and initially it was thought that John was the author. Notwithstanding the peculiarities of this book, there are many similarities between the vocabularies of John’s Gospel and the Apocalypse.

Some have placed the date of writing as early in the reign of Nero. Apostle John was banished to the Isle of Patmos by emperor Domitian and some place the exile in the 14th year of his reign, viz. A.D. 95. The Apocalypse was written at a time of great persecution. Domitian banished men to various places in exile, but Nero did not. Also, seven churches in Asia show a mature development which could hardly have been as early as A.D.65.

This is a book of prophecy and repeatedly emphasizes attempts, led by Satan, to oppose and prevent the execution of the declared intention of Christ to establish His kingdom rule on earth.

The book of Revelation is the only large portion of the word of God with four basic differing interpretations. (1) The prime purpose of the book is to teach fundamental spiritual principles.

(2) This interpretation insists that the author describes events in the Roman Empire, towards the end of the first century. This theory developed in the 17th century, predicted the corruption and doom of the Roman Catholic Church.

 (3) The Book set forth particular events in the history that relate to the welfare of the church, especially the seals, the trumpets and the bowls.

 (4) It is clear that the book is of predictive prophecy. This futuristic interpretation insists that for the most part, the visions will be for filled before the end of this age.

Chapter 1: The Revelation of Jesus Christ to show that must be done which was communicated to John who was a testimony to His work.

John was on the Isle of Patmos because of a loud voice saying, he was asked to write a book and send it to the seven churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. On turning to see whose voice he was hearing, he saw “seven golden lampstands” with one like the son of man in the middle clothed in a robe to his feet. His head and feet were white as snow and his eyes were a flame of fire. In his right hand he held seven stars and out of his mouth was a shining sword. He fell at His feet and was comforted that it was Him who had arisen from the dead. The 7 stars are the seven angels and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Chapter 2: John was told to write specific messages to the following churches:

 To the church in Ephesus, he told them that He knows their toil and perseverance and that they cannot endure evil men and apostles who are found to be false. However, they left their first love and they must repent.

 To the church in Smyrna, tell them that He knows their tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer be faithful until death and He will give you the crown of life.

 To the angel of the church in Pergamum tell them that He knows where they dwell, where Satan’s throne is and that they hold fast My name and did not deny My faith as was witnessed by one who was killed. However, some of you hold the teaching of Balaam and committed acts of immorality and some hold the teaching of Nicolaitans. Repent therefore or else He will make war against them.

 To the angel of the church at Thyatira, tell that He knows of your deeds, love, faith and perseverance but you tolerate Jezebel who claims to be a prophetess and leads people astray, so they commit immoral acts and eat food sacrificed to idols. He will cast her on a bed of sickness and those who commit adultery with her great tribulation unless you repent. He who overcomes and keep His deeds, he will get authority over all nations.

Chapter 3: This contained similar warnings to the churches of Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea

Chapter 4: After these things, he looked and saw a door open in Heaven and he was invited up to see what would take place after these things. One was sitting on the throne and there was an emerald rainbow around the throne. 24 Elders in white garments and golden crowns were sitting around in 24 other thrones.

From the throne were flashes of lightning and sounds of thunder and 7 lamps were burning. Before the throne was a sea of glasslike crystal and 4 creatures. The first creature was like a lion, the second a calf, the third had a face like a man and the fourth was like a flying eagle. The creatures gave glory and honor to Him and the elders worshipped Him who sits on the throne.

 Chapter 5: On the right hand of Him was a book sealed with 7 seals and an angel asked, “Who is worthy to open the book and break its seals?” No one in Heaven or earth was able to open the book. As I wept, an elder explained that the lion was from Judah, the Root of David has overcome so as to open the book. The elder’s creatures fell down before the lamb and sang a song. Worthy art thou to take the book and break its seals for thou was slain, and thou made kingdom to our God and they will reign on earth.

Angels, creatures and elders and many of them, said in a loud voice, worthy is the slain lamb to receive power.

Chapter 6: When a lamb opened the first seal, a living creature said “Come” and as he sat on a white horse and went out to conquer.

On opening the second seal, the saying of come was followed by a red horse that took peace from the earth and that men should slay one another.

This was repeated on the third seal and a black horse with a pair of scales and a voice said a quart of wheat or three quarts of barley for a denarius and do not harm the oil or wine.

The fourth seal and saw an ashen horse Death and Hades and that authority given to kill.

The fifth seal he saw those who had been slain because of the word of God and they cried out to beg refraining from vengeance for those on earth.

When the sixth seal was broken there was an earthquake, the sun became black and the moon blood. The stars fell to earth and the sky was split and all mountains and islands were moved.

Chapter 7: He saw 4 angels holding back the winds and another telling the 4 angels who planned to harm the earth to wait until bond servants of the Lord are marked.

144,000 of each Israeli tribe and 12,000 from each of Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin were sealed.

After that a great multitude of all nations were standing before the throne in white robes crying for salvation. Those in white robes had come out of the tribulation and had washed their robes in the blood of the lamb. The Lord will spread His tabernacle over them, and they shall hunger no more and the heat and sun will not beat on them and they will be guided by the lamb.

Chapter 8: There was half hour silence in heaven when the seventh seal was broken. With incense, the prayers of the saints went to God and an angel filled a censor with fire and threw it to the earth, this was followed by thunder, lightning and earthquake. The 7 angels sounded their trumpets and a third of the earth was burned, green grass was destroyed, mountains were burning, a third of the sea became blood and a third of the creatures died and a third of ships destroyed, the sea became bitter and killed men. When the fourth angel sounded, a third of sun, moon and stars were smitten. An eagle warned that all would be destroyed at the blast of the remaining trumpets.

Chapter 9: At the sound of the fifth a bottomless pit was opened and the smoke from the pit blackened the sun and air and locusts came upon the earth. They will sting man like a scorpion, men will seek but not find death.

On the sound of the sixth trumpet, 4 angels were released to kill a third of mankind. Horses with heads like lions and tails like serpents killed the rest of mankind who did not repent.

Chapter 10: An angel came out of heaven with a book in his hand. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on land and when he cried, seven peals of thunder followed by a voice from heaven saying seal up the things which the seven seals spoke. The angel swore by Him who lives forever and created heaven and the things in it and the sea and the things in it. He was then told to take the book from the angel and eat it, the taste will be sweet but bitter in your stomach. The angel said he must prophesy, concerning peoples, nations, tongues & kings.

Chapter 11: He was given a measuring rod and told to measure the temple, the altar and those who worship in it and leave out the outside court. The two witnesses will have authority for 1260 days. Two olive trees and two lampstands must not be harmed and anyone who does, will die. The powers are defined. Many will die. Those who dwell on earth will rejoice over them. After three and a half days, they will be called to heaven

The 7th Trumpet sounded, and a loud voice stated that the kingdom of the world is the kingdom of our Lord and of Christ who will reign forever.

Chapter 12: A great sign appeared of a woman clothed with the sun, the moon at her feet and a crown of stars. She had a child and was in labor pain. Another sign appeared of a dragon with 7 heads and 10 horns and his tail swept away 1/3rd of the starts of heaven and he stood in front of the woman to devour her child.

She gave birth to a son who will rule all the nations. The woman went for 1260 days to a palace in the wilderness made by God.

There was a war in heaven between Michael and his angels against the dragon and his angels. The devil and Satan were thrown to earth with their angels.

A voice in heaven proclaimed joy as the devil and Satan were gone but he warned earth. The devil punished the woman and he went off to make war with her offspring who keep the commandments of God.

Chapter 13: He saw a beast come out of the sea with 10 horns. He was like many different animals and blasphemed God. There is another beast who causes men to receive a mark on their right hand and one can only buy or sell from a marked man.

Chapter 14: A lamb was standing on Mount Zion and 144,000 with the name of His father on their foreheads. He heard harpists playing and only the 144,000 could learn the words. They were blameless. A flying angel said, “Fear God and give Him glory”. Other angels also appeared

But a voice from heaven said, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on”. They rest from their labors for their deeds follow them. A son of man sat on a cloud and an angel told him to swing his sickle over the earth and it was reaped. Another instructed to gather the grapes. The wine press was trodden outside the city and blood came out of the wine press for 200 miles.

Chapter 15: He saw 7 angels with 7 plagues because the wrath of God was finished. They sang Moses song praising our righteous God Almighty and that all nations will worship before Him as the righteous have been revealed. No one could enter the temple until the 7 plagues from the 7 angels was finished.

Chapter 16: A voice from temple said to the 7 angels, “Go and pour the 7 bowls of wrath into the earth”. Each bowl brought devastation but after the 7, a voice said, “it is done” and there was an earthquake, the city was split in three, the islands went away, and mountains disappeared. Hailstones weighing 100 pounds each came down on men.

Chapter 17: One of the angels took him to show the judgement of the great harlot with whom kings committed immoral acts and those on earth were drunk with the wine of immorality. In the wilderness he saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast with 7 heads and 10 horns. She was in a purple scarlet adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls in her hand and a gold cup full of abominations & unclean things of immorality. He saw her drunk and wondered. The angel explained, the beast you saw will destroy and those on earth will wonder whose name he has. The 7 heads are 7 mountains on which the woman sits. They are 7 kings of which 5 are fallen, one is and the other has not yet come. The 10 horns are the 10 kings not yet received a kingdom. They give power and authority to the beast.

They will wage war against the lamb who will overcome them because He is Lord of Lords, King of Kings and those with Him are the chosen and faithful. The waters he saw are peoples, and multitudes and nations and tongues. The ten horns will eat her flesh and burn her up in fire. The woman is the great city which reigns over the kings of earth.

Chapter 18: Another angel came down from heaven and cried out Babylon the great has fallen. It was the prison of every unclean spirit and hateful person. All the nations have drunk her immorality, and merchants have been enriched.

No one traded with the city as it was known that its hour has come. God had pronounced judgement against the city.

Chapter 19: God destroyed the city that was disrupting the earth with immorality. The Lord Almighty reigns.

Heaven opened and behold a white horse and armies in white linen followed Him. On His robe was written, King of Kings, Lord of Lords. The beast and false prophet were seized and threw them into a lake of fire.

Chapter 20: Blessed is the Holy one who is a part of the resurrection.

Satan will be released from the prison and will come out to deceive the nations. The devil was thrown in a lake of fire and will be tormented day and night forever.

A great white throne with Him in the middle and from whom earth, and heaven flew away and no place was found for them. The dead were judged by what was written in the books of life.

Chapter 21: I saw Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. A loud voice from the throne said behold the tabernacle of God is a among men and He dwell among them and they shall be His people. He said the He would make all things new. Jerusalem would have 12 gates with 12 angels with the names of 12 tribes written on them. There were 3 gates facing each direction N S E and W. There were 12 foundation stones with 12 Apostles names on them. The foundation stones each had a different precious stone.

Chapter 22: He showed me a river of water with a tree of life on either side, bearing 12 kinds of fruit, one for each month. There will be no longer any curse the throne of God shall serve him. The Lord of God will provide light and he, John who saw these things and he was told that those who heed the words of this book, worship God.

Do not seal the prophecy of this book and He is coming soon with a reward for every man according to what he has done. He is the beginning and the end.

Anyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book let him take a water of life without cost. Do not add to these words or take away from the words of the book of this prophecy. He testifies that he is coming quickly.