An Introduction to the Bible

By Richard W. Greene

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Purpose
This course will provide a brief overview of the Bible with a special emphasis on the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah, the Son of God, in each of the books of the Bible.

Introduction
The Holy Bible is God's inspired word. It was given to man by God the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21 says, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." As such, the Bible is unlike any other book and must be read and studied unlike any other book.1 "It [the Bible] is the word of the living God, and is -
1. Indestructible: Matthew 24:35
2. Incorruptible: 1 Peter 1:23-25
3. Indispensable: Deuteronomy 8:3; Job 23:12; Matthew 4:4
4. Infallible: Matthew 5:18
5. Inexhaustible: Psalm 92:5

Why is it called the Bible?
The word bible is the English form of the Greek name biblia, meaning “books.” This is the name which in the fifth century began to be given to the entire collection of sacred books previously known as the “Library of Divine Revelation.” The name Bible was first used by John Wycliffe, one of the first men to translate the Bible into the language of the common man.

What is the Subject of the Bible?
The subject or theme of the Bible is God's great plan of redemption2 (Ephesians 1:3-14). This plan was (1) purposed and planned by God, the Father (1 John 4:9-10); (2) accomplished by God, the Son (Matthew 20:28; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4); and (3) revealed by God, the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-9, 13-14). Someone once said, "God thought it, Christ wrought it, the Holy Spirit brought it, the devil fought it, but I got it!

What is the Purpose of the Bible?
The supreme purpose of the Bible is to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 24:25-27; John 20:31; Revelation 1:1). The Bible also was given:
1. To reveal God and His will (Hebrews 1:1-4).
2. To provide a foundation for our faith (Romans 10:17).
3. To make us wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15).
4. To teach us the ways of righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
5. To show us "things which must shortly come to pass" (Revelation 1:1).

What is the Method of the Bible?
The Bible was designed by God to accomplish its purpose in the following ways, by:
2. Searching the heart (Hebrews 4:12).
3. Illuminating the mind (Psalm 119:105,130).

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2 Ibid, page 19
5. Raising a godly seed (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).
7. Quickening the heart (Psalm 119:50,93; Hebrews 4:12).
8. Regenerating the soul (Psalm 19:7; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23).
9. Cleansing the heart (Psalm 119:9; John 15:3).
11. Promoting growth (Matthew 4:4; Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 Peter 2:2).
15. Keeping us from destructive ways (Psalm 17:4).
17. Sanctifying the believer (John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26).
18. Producing hope (Psalm 119:49; Romans 15:4).
20. Rejoicing the heart (Psalm 19:8; 119:111).
23. Keeping the believer from sinning (Psalm 119:11; 1 John 2:1).
24. Being used to judge the counsel of others (Is 8:19-20; Acts 17:11).
27. Perfecting the man of God (2 Timothy 3:17; Colossians 3:16).
30. Enduring forever (Psalm 119:89; Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:25).
31. Giving victory over Satan (Matthew 4:1-10; Ephesians 6:11-17).
32. Accomplishing God’s purposes (Isaiah 55:11).

To Whom was the Bible Written?

The Bible was written to three groups of people:
1. To the Jews (Romans 3:1-2; 9:4-5).
2. To the Church (1 Corinthians 10:11).
3. To the Unbeliever (John 12:48).

Inspiration of the Bible

One of the most important beliefs of the Christian faith is that “the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is verbally inspired by God and inerrant in its original writings.”

1. What does “inspiration” mean? Inspiration means that the Holy Spirit guided the writers of the Scriptures, making use of their own unique personalities and experiences, so that they wrote all that He wanted them to write, without excess or error.
2. Learning some key terms:
   a. Revelation is the uncovering of truth.
   b. Inspiration is the recording of truth.
c. **Inerrancy** is the accuracy of truth.

d. **Illumination** is the effect of truth.

e. **Authority** is the power of truth.

3. How can we know that the Bible is the Word of God, verbally inspired and without error?

a. The **character** of God tells us that He would reveal Himself in such a detailed fashion as we find in the Bible.

b. The **character and claims** of the Bible itself show us that it comes from God. It establishes the highest ethical standards, demands the most absolute obedience, denounces every form of sin, and shows the way of salvation.

c. The **unity** of the text also proves that it could not have come from man but from God. The Bible is 66 books written by 40 (or more) different authors, over a period of 1600 years, in a geographical area separated by over 1500 miles. Portions were written in Jerusalem and other parts of Israel, Babylon, Rome, Asia Minor, in prisons, on ships, in palaces, and even in the wilderness. Despite its scope, the Bible is ONE book, bearing witness to ONE God, in ONE continuous story, ONE progressing revelation of truth, with ONE theme, being ONE redemption through ONE savior, Jesus Christ.

d. The **integrity** of the manuscript copies supports a divine origin. The Bible is the most historically verified ancient document in existence. We have no **original** ancient documents. What we have are “manuscript copies” of ancient documents. For example, we do not have the original *Iliad* written by the Greek Homer. We have only copies of it which were made from other earlier copies of it. Two key factors help determine the validity and integrity of a historic document:

   (1) How long after the original was the copy made, and (2) how many other copies do we have of the same document with which we can compare it for accuracy? Some examples:

   - The *Histories of Tacitus* - two copies (1,000 years after)
   - Caesar’s *Gallic Wars* - 10 copies
   - Thucydides’ *Peloponnesian War* - 8 copies
   - Livy’s *History of Rome* - 20 partial copies
   - The New Testament - over 5,000 copies, which were made less than 50 years after it was written!

   The impact of this historical proof is that the reader can be confident that when he reads the Gospels, he is reading a relatively accurate copy of what the Gospel writers wrote.

e. The **scientific accuracy of the text** also proves it is the Word of God. The Bible is not a science book, but there are no scientific facts which dispute the Bible text. One must be careful to distinguish between scientific fact and theory. A theory (such as evolution) is an unproved idea or concept. A scientific fact is an observable, verifiable, and repeatable event. The following are some scientific facts found in the Bible:

   - Earth rotating on its axis (Gen. 1:5)
   - Oceans from one massive ocean (Gen. 1:9-10)
   - Man formed from dust (Gen. 2:7; 3:19)
   - Great underground springs (Gen. 7:11)
   - Need for pure food (Deuteronomy 14:21)
   - Circumcision on 8th day (Leviticus 12:2-3)
   - Preventing the spread of germs by facial mask (Lev. 13:45)
   - Quarantining contagious diseases (Leviticus 13:45-46)
   - Body cleanliness (Leviticus 15)
   - Proper disposal of sewage (Deuteronomy 23:13)
• Circulation of blood (Leviticus 17:11,14)
• Bone marrow (Job 21:23-24)
• Earth hanging in space (Job 26:7)
• Earth revolving around the sun (Job 38:12-14)
• Air pressure (or weight) (Job 28:25)
• Moon not shining its own light (Job 25:5)
• Earth round (Proverbs 8:27; Isaiah 40:22)
• Ocean currents (Psalm 107:25)
• Embryonic development and life (Psalm 139:13-16)

f. The work of archeologists has also strengthened the belief that the Bible is the Word of God. Israel has been subject to many famous archeological expeditions that have repeatedly verified the veracity (or truth) of the Bible accounts.

The Names of the Bible

The word “Bible” comes from the Greek word Bibliai, which means book. Jesus and His disciples referred to the Old Testament writings as “the Scriptures,” (Matthew 21:42; Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Acts 18:24; Romans 15:4). Christ also used the terms “the law and the prophets” and “those things which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in Psalms” (Luke 24:44-45). Paul called the Bible “the holy Scriptures” (Romans 1:2) and “the oracles of God” (Romans 3:2). The Jews use the designation “the Law and the Prophets” to refer to the Old Testament writings. They are also called “the Tanakh.” The popular Jewish designation for the first five books of the Bible is “the Torah.”

Seven Editions of Divine Law

The fundamental truths of the Bible (called Divine Law) were revealed gradually and progressively over a period of time and in different ways. The following chart illustrates this:

|---------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|

The Key to the Bible

The Ethiopian treasurer said to Philip in Acts 8:31, "How can I [understand the Scriptures], except some man should guide me." The study of correct Bible interpretation is called hermeneutics. The key to understanding the Bible is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the theme of the entire canon of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. Jesus Himself claimed five times that He is the theme of the Old

3 Thompson Chain-Reference Bible, © 1988 by the B.B. Kirkbride Bible Company, Inc., Indianapolis, IN USA
Testament scriptures (Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:27; 24:44; John 5:39; Hebrews 10:7). Therefore, the Bible must be interpreted Christo-centrically (Christ centered) to be understood and interpreted properly. To do that, we must recognize that every book in the Bible is about Jesus. Consider the following:

- In Genesis, He is the Promised Seed that is going to come and bruise the head of the serpent.
- In Exodus, He is the Passover Lamb.
- In Leviticus, He is the Scapegoat for our sins.
- In Numbers, He is the brazen serpent lifted up to heal the people.
- In Deuteronomy, He is the Great Lawgiver.
- In Joshua, He is the Lord of Hosts.
- In Judges, He is the Deliverer.
- In Ruth, He is our Kinsman-Redeemer.
- In 1&2 Samuel, He is the Prophet, Priest, and King.
- In 1&2 Kings, He is the Judge of Israel.
- In 1&2 Chronicles, He is the Ark of the Covenant.
- In Ezra, He is the Lord, God of Heaven.
- In Nehemiah, He is the Re-builder of the Temple.
- In Esther, he is the Saviour of the Jews.
- In Job, He is the Sovereign Lord of all the earth.
- In the Psalms, He is our Shepherd, and the Song of the ages.
- In Proverbs, He is Wisdom.
- In Ecclesiastes, He is the Preacher.
- In the Song of Solomon, He is the Bridegroom.
- In Isaiah, He is Wonderful, Counselor, the Prince of Peace, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Suffering Servant.
  - In Jeremiah, He is the Lord our Righteousness.
  - In Lamentations, He is the Comforter of my soul.
  - In Ezekiel, He is the Lord our Holiness.
  - In Daniel, He is the Son of God in the midst of the burning fiery furnace.
  - In Hosea, He is Redeeming love.
  - In Joel, He is the Day of the Lord, and Giver of the Holy Spirit.
  - In Amos, He is the Raiser again of the Tabernacle of David.
  - In Obadiah, He is our Deliverer upon Mount Zion.
  - In Jonah, He is the Saviour of the Gentiles.
  - In Micah, He is One that comes forth from Bethlehem to be Ruler in Israel.
  - In Nahum, He is our Stronghold in the day of trouble.
  - In Habakkuk, He is the God of my salvation, who makes my feet like hind’s feet walking in high places.
  - In Zephaniah, He is the Lord thy God in the midst of thee, mighty.
  - In Haggai, He is the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts.
  - In Zechariah, He is a fountain to the house of David, the One whom they have pierced, whose feet shall split the Mount of Olives.
- In Malachi, He is the God of Israel.
- In Matthew, He is the King of the Jews.
• In Mark, He is the Suffering Servant.
• In Luke, He is the Son of Man.
• In John, He is the Son of God, the Bread of Life, the Resurrection and the Life.
• In Acts, He is the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit.
• In Romans, He is the Seed of David, declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, and the love of God from which nothing can separate us.
• In 1 Corinthians, He is the one who has been raised from the dead, the First Fruits of those who are asleep.
• In 2 Corinthians, He is God’s Treasure in earthen vessels.
• In Galatians, He is the Seed of Abraham.
• In Ephesians, He is the Head of the Church, the breadth and length, and depth, and height of the love of God which passes knowledge.
• In Philippians, He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Peace of God, which passes all understanding.
• In Colossians, He is the image of the invisible God, who blotted out the handwriting of ordinances against us and spoiled principalities and powers.
• In 1 Thessalonians, He is our Coming King.
• In 2 Thessalonians, He is the Avenging Lord.
• In 1 Timothy, He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, worthy to be given honor and glory forever and ever.
• In 2 Timothy, He is the Promise of Life.
• In Titus, He is our Blessed Hope.
• In Philemon, He is Love Exemplified.
• In Hebrews, He is the brightness of God’s glory, the express image of His Person, our High Priest, and the Author and Finisher of our faith.
• In James, he is the Father of Lights.
• In 1 Peter, He is the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.
• In 2 Peter, He is the grace and peace of God.
• In 1 John, He is that which we have seen and heard and handled of the Word of Life, and the One we shall be like when we see Him.
• In 2 John, He is the Son of the Father in truth and love.
• In 3 John, He is the Name of God.
• In Jude, He is the only wise God, our Saviour.
• In Revelation, He is Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Root of David, the Lamb who was slain before the foundation of the world, and who has redeemed us to God by His blood from every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, whose name is Faithful and True, the Light of the New Jerusalem, the King of all the Universe!

**Bible Background Information**

The Bible is sixty-six books written in four languages over a period of 1600 years. The writers of the Bible were of very different social rank – statesmen, peasants, kings, herdersmen, fishermen, priests, tax-gatherers, tentmakers, educated and uneducated, Jews and Gentiles. Most of them were unknown to each
other, and were separated by time, distance, language, education, and social class. Yet they wrote with a perfect unity, dealing with only one subject - God’s redeeming love.

**Divisions of the Bible**

The Bible is divided into the Old Testament, containing thirty-nine books, and the New Testament, containing twenty-seven books.

**The Old Testament is divided into five parts:**
1. The Law (Torah), consisting of the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
2. The Historical Books, consisting of 12 books - Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the two books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, and the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.
3. The Poetic Books, consisting of 5 books – Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon (also often called Canticles).
4. The Major Prophets, consisting of 5 books – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel.
5. The Minor Prophets, consisting of 12 books – Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

**The New Testament is also divided into five parts:**
3. The Pauline Epistles, consisting of 14 books – Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews.
4. The General Epistles, consisting of 7 books - James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1,2, and 3 John, and Jude.
5. The Prophetic Writings – the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

**Jewish scholars divide the Bible into three parts:**
1. The Law (or Torah), consisting of the five books of Moses (called the Pentateuch).
2. The Prophets, consisting of Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the two books of Kings, the greater prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets.
3. The Hagiographa, or holy writings, including the rest of the books. These were ranked in three divisions:
   (1) The Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, distinguished by the Hebrew name, a word formed of the initial letters of these books, emeth, meaning truth.
   (2) Song of Solomon (Canticles), Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther, called the five rolls, as being written for the synagogue use on five separate rolls.
   (3) Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

**The Old Testament in the New Testament**

The most important verification of the Scriptural authenticity of the Old Testament is the many references to it in the New Testament, especially by the Lord Jesus Christ who taught that the Old Testament writings were the Word of God. The names given to the Old Testament in the writings of the New Testament are:

- “the scriptures” (Matthew 21:42),

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4 The Epistle to the Hebrews is often listed as one of the General Epistles because its exact authorship is unknown. It has been most often attributed to Paul.
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- “scripture” (2 Peter 1:20),
- “the holy scriptures” (Romans 1:2),
- “the law” (John 12:34),
- “the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms” (Luke 24:44),
- “the law and the prophets” (Matthew 5:17), and
- “the old covenant” (2 Cor. 3:14).

Between the Testaments

There is a break of 400 years between the Old Testament and the New. The last book of the Old Testament, Malachi was written around 400 years before the birth of Christ. Between the Old and the New Testament no addition was made to the revelation God had already given. The period of New Testament revelation, extending over a century, began with the appearance of John the Baptist.

Chapters and Verses

The Scriptures were not originally written with chapters and verses. These were added later as a reference tool. The ancient Jews divided the Old Testament into certain sections for use in the synagogue service and then at a later period, in the ninth century AD, into verses.

Our modern system of chapters for all the books of the Bible was introduced by Cardinal Hugo about the middle of the thirteenth century (he died in 1263). The system of verses for the New Testament was introduced by Stephens in 1551, and generally adopted. While this division is not inspired, and often somewhat misplaced, it is very useful.

General Facts About the Bible

THE OLD TESTAMENT HAS
39 BOOKS,
929 CHAPTERS,
23,214 Verses,
592,493 WORDS, AND
2,728,100 LETTERS.

THE NEW TESTAMENT HAS
27 BOOKS,
260 CHAPTERS,
7,959 Verses,
181,253 WORDS,
838,380 LETTERS.

LONGEST CHAPTER – PSALM 119
SHORTEST CHAPTER – PSALM 117
LONGEST VERSE – ESTHER 8:9
SHORTEST VERSE – JOHN 11:35
MIDDLE VERSE – PSALM 118:8
THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis

Author: Moses
To Whom Written: Israel
Date: 1450-1410 BC
Theme: The beginning of all things
Scope: First 2,000 years
Chapters: 50
Major Events: Creation (1-2), the Fall of Man (3), the Flood (6-8), the scattering of the nations (10-11), the Abrahamic Covenant (12, 17), the war of the kings (14), the birth of Ishmael (16), the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (19), the birth of Isaac (21), the sacrifice of Isaac (22), the death of Sarah (23), the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah (24), the death of Abraham (25), the life of Jacob (27-50), the life of Joseph (37-50), Israel’s settlement in Egypt (43-50), the prophetic blessings on the 12 Tribes (48-49), the death of Israel (50), and the death of Joseph (50).


Christological Significance: Jesus is the promised seed of the woman, sent to crush the head of the serpent (3:15), the lamb of God sacrificed to take away the sin of the world (4:4), the ark of deliverance (6-8), the seed of Abraham (12), the sacrificed Son and the substituted ram (22), the waiting Bridegroom (24), the Rejected Brother (37) and the Lion of the tribe of Judah (49:10-11).

Exodus

Author: Moses
To Whom Written: Israel
Date: 1450-1410 BC
Theme: Israel’s deliverance from Egypt
Scope: 145 years
Chapters: 40
Major Events: Israel’s enslavement in Egypt (1-2); the call of Moses (3), God’s judgment on Pharaoh (5-12), the Passover (12), crossing the Red Sea (14), the giving of the Law (19-24), the fall and restoration of Israel (32-34), the building of the Tabernacle (25-40).

Major Characters: Moses, Pharaoh, Aaron

Christological Significance: Jesus is the “I AM” (3), the Passover (12), the Manna (16), the rock at Mount Horeb (17), and the Tabernacle and its furnishings (25-40).

Leviticus

Author: Moses
To Whom Written: Israel
Date: 1450-1410 BC
Theme: Holiness (mentioned 80 times)
Scope: 145 years
Chapters: 27

5 The dates provided are approximate.
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**Numbers**

**Author:** Moses  
**To Whom Written:** Israel  
**Date:** 1450-1410 BC  
**Theme:** Israel in the wilderness  
**Scope:** 40 years  
**Chapters:** 36  
**Major Events:** Israel at Sinai and the numbering of the people (1-10); the manna (11); the seventy elders appointed (11); the quails sent (11); the rebellion of Miriam and Aaron (12); the spies sent into the land (13-14); Korah leads a rebellion against Moses (16); Aaron’s rod buds (17); the death of Miriam (20); Moses smites the rock twice (20); the death of Aaron (20); the bronze serpent (21); Balaam hired (22-25); Joshua appointed to succeed Moses (27); preparation to enter the land (27-36).  
**Major Characters:** Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua, Caleb, Korah, Balaam.  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the rock (20), the Star (24:17), and the Scepter (24:17).

**Deuteronomy**

**Author:** Moses  
**To Whom Written:** Israel’s new generation  
**Date:** 1450-1410 BC  
**Theme:** Re-telling the Law  
**Scope:** 40 years  
**Chapters:** 34  
**Major Events:** Moses re-tells the Law (1-26); the blessings and curses read (27-28); the death of Moses (34).  
**Major Characters:** Moses  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the promised Prophet (18).

**Joshua**

**Author:** Joshua (and possibly scribes after the Babylonian captivity)  
**To Whom Written:** Israel  
**Date:** 1400–1385 BC  
**Theme:** Israel conquers Canaan  
**Scope:** 25 years  
**Chapters:** 24  
**Major Events:** Rahab and the spies (2); Israel crosses the Jordan (3); the conquest of Jericho (6); Achan’s sin (7); the blessings and curses read (8); the deception by the Gibeonites (9-10); Caleb’s request
granted (14); the land is apportioned to the tribes (15-23); the death of Joshua (24); the death of Eleazar (24); Joseph’s bones are buried in Shechem (24).

**Major Characters:** Joshua, Rahab, Achan, Caleb

**Christological Significance:** Jesus is Rahab’s scarlet thread (2) and the Captain of the Lord’s Host (5).

### Judges

**Author:** Unknown, possibly the prophet Samuel

**To Whom Written:** Israel

**Date:** 1350-1300 BC

**Theme:** Defeat and Deliverance

**Scope:** 350 years

**Chapters:** 21

**Major Events:** Israel’s failure after the death of Joshua (1-2); God raises up 5 deliverers (3-5); Gideon defeats the Midianites (6-8); Jephthah’s fateful vow and rule (11-12); Samson’s life (13-16); the fall of Dan and Benjamin (17-21).

**Major Characters:** the 12 Judges: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and Samson; as well as Jabin, Barak, and Sisera.

**Christological Significance:** Jesus is our Deliverer (3:9) and the Angel of the Lord (6:12).

### Ruth

**Author:** Unknown, possibly the prophet Samuel

**To Whom Written:** Israel

**Date:** 1350-1300 BC

**Theme:** The Kinsman-Redeemer

**Scope:** 12 years

**Chapters:** 4

**Major Events:** Ruth decides to serve God (1); Ruth cares for Naomi (2); Ruth gleans in Boaz’s field (3); Boaz redeems Ruth (4).

**Major Characters:** Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz

**Christological Significance:** Jesus is our Kinsman-Redeemer (4).

### First Samuel

**Author:** Unknown, possibly the prophet Samuel through chapter 24, perhaps the prophets Nathan or Gad after that.

**To Whom Written:** Israel

**Date:** 1070-900 BC

**Theme:** Samuel, Saul, and David

**Scope:** 115 years from the birth of Samuel to the death of Saul

**Chapters:** 31

**Major Events:** The birth and call of Samuel (1-8); the reign of Saul (9-15); David is anointed king (16), David and Goliath (17); Saul pursues David (18-31); the deaths of Saul and Jonathan (31).

**Major Characters:** Eli, Hannah, Samuel, Saul, Jonathan, David, and Goliath.

**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the Seed of David.
Second Samuel

**Author:** Unknown, possibly the prophets Nathan or Gad.
**To Whom Written:** Israel
**Date:** 1070-900 BC
**Theme:** David’s reign
**Scope:** 40 years
**Chapters:** 24

**Major Events:** David grieves over Saul and Jonathan (1); Judah anoints David as king (2); Civil war in Israel (2); Joab murders Abner (3); David makes Jerusalem the capital of Israel (5); David becomes king over all of Israel, fights the Philistines and brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (5-6); God institutes the Davidic Covenant (7); David’s reign (8-24).

**Major Characters:** David, Joab, Abner, Absalom

**Christological Significance:** Jesus is typified in the life and reign of David. The Davidic Covenant established that Messiah would sit on the throne of David.

First Kings

**Author:** Unknown, perhaps Jeremiah
**To Whom Written:** Israel
**Date:** 561-540 BC (written before the destruction of the Temple)
**Theme:** Reign of Solomon, Division of the Kingdom
**Scope:** 120 years from the death of David to the reign of Jehoshaphat
**Chapters:** 25

**Major Events:** The death of David (1); Solomon becomes king (1-2); Solomon asks God for wisdom (3); the building and dedication of the Temple (4-9); the Queen of Sheba visits Solomon (10); Solomon forsakes God and dies (11); the kingdom is divided (12); Jeroboam’s sin (13); Pharaoh Shishak invades Jerusalem (14); the prophet Elijah and the call of Elisha (17-19); Ahab and Jezebel overthrown (20-25).

**Major Characters:** David, Solomon, Queen of Sheba, Rhehoboam, Jeroboam, Elijah, Elisha, Ahab, Jezebel.

**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.

Second Kings

**Author:** Unknown, perhaps Jeremiah
**To Whom Written:** Israel
**Date:** 6th century BC
**Theme:** A History of the Divided Kingdom
**Scope:** 293 years from the reign of King Ahaziah of Israel in 853 BC to the release of King Jehoiachin from Babylon in 560 BC.
**Chapters:** 25

**Major Events:** Elijah taken to Heaven (2); ministry of Elisha (2-8); the kings of Israel and Judah (8-17); The fall of Samaria (17); Hezekiah rules Judah (18-20); Manasseh’s evil reign (21); Revival under King Josiah (23); Judah falls to Babylon (24-25).

**Major Characters:** Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Josiah, Nebuchadnezzar.
First Chronicles

Author: Unknown, perhaps Ezra
To Whom Written: Returning exiles
Date: 5th century BC (after the Babylonian exile)
Theme: A History of Israel
Scope: 40 years from the death of Saul to the beginning of Solomon’s reign.
Chapters: 29
Major Events: Genealogies (1-9); the death of Saul (10); David becomes king over Judah (11); David becomes king over all Israel (12); David brings the Ark to Jerusalem (13-16); the Davidic Covenant (18); David numbers the people and is judged by God (21); David prepares for the Temple (22-29).
Major Characters: Saul, David
Christological Significance: Jesus is the Ark of the Covenant; the Seed of David.

Second Chronicles

Author: Unknown, perhaps Ezra
To Whom Written: Returning exiles
Date: 5th century BC
Theme: A History of Judah
Scope: 450 years from the ascension of Solomon to the Babylonian Captivity
Chapters: 36
Major Events: Solomon’s reign (1-9); the kingdom is divided, with the 10 tribes breaking away (10-12); the kings of Judah (13-36); the deportation to Babylon (36).

Ezra

Author: Ezra
To Whom Written: Israel
Date: 457-444 BC
Theme: The Remnant Returns
Scope: 75 years
Chapters: 10
Major Events: Return under Zerubbabel and the re-building of the Temple (1-6); the second return under Ezra 50 years later (7-10).
Major Characters: King Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Haggai, Zechariah, Darius, and Ezra.
Christological Significance: Jesus is the rebuilder of the temple (Zerubbabel).

Nehemiah

Author: Nehemiah (or Ezra)
To Whom Written: Returning exiles
Date: 430-420 BC
Theme: Rebuilding the Walls
Scope: 12-15 years
Chapters: 13
Major Events: Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem and begins to rebuild the walls (1-3); there is much opposition (4-6); the walls are finished (6); the genealogies of the remnant (7); revival under Ezra (8-13).

Major Characters: Nehemiah, Ezra, Artaxerxes, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Hananiah.

Christological Significance: Jesus is the builder of the walls (Nehemiah).

Esther

Author: Unknown, perhaps Mordecai
To Whom Written: Israel
Date: 450 BC
Theme: God’s Providential Care
Scope: 10-12 years (between 483-470 BC – between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra)
Chapters: 10

Major Events: Esther becomes Queen (1-2); Haman plots against the Jews (2-4); Mordecai and Esther defeat Haman (5-8); the Jews defeat their enemies (8-10).

Major Characters: Queen Esther, Mordecai, Haman, and King Ahasuerus

Christological Significance: Jesus is our deliverer and our advocate.

Job

Author: Unknown, perhaps Job, Elihu, or Moses
To Whom Written: Israel
Date: Uncertain
Theme: Suffering
Scope: Uncertain
Chapters: 42

Major Events: Job’s circumstances (1); Satan’s two assaults on Job (1-2); Job’s friends arrive (2); the three debates (3-26); Job defends himself (27); Elihu’s solution (32-37); God challenges Job (38-42); God delivers Job (42).

Major Characters: Job, Job’s wife, Satan, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar

Christological Significance: Jesus is our protecting hedge (1:10).

Psalms

Authors: David, Moses (Psalm 90), Asaph (Psalms 50, 73-83), Solomon (Psalm 127), Ethan, Psalm 89), the sons of Korah (Psalms 42-49, 84-85, 87, 88).
To Whom Written: Israel
Date: From the time of Moses (1450 BC) to Israel’s return from captivity (530 BC).
Theme: Devotion and Praise
Scope: non-historical in nature – poetic and prophetic
Chapters: 150

Major Events: non-historical

Major Characters: David, Jesus

Christological Significance: Jesus is the Son of God (Psalm 2), our Shield, Glory, and the Lifter of our heads (Psalm 3), the resurrected One (Psalm 16), our Rock, Fortress, Deliverer, God, Strength, Buckler, Horn of our salvation, and High Tower (Psalm 18), the crucified Messiah (Psalm 22), our Shepherd (Psalm 23), the King of Glory (Psalms 24, 47), our Light and Salvation (Psalm 27), our Strong Rock and Refuge (Psalm 31), seated at the right hand of God (Psalm 110), a priest forever after the order of Jesus
Melchizedek (Psalm 11), the rejected stone (Psalm 118), and the messianic subject of Psalms 2, 8, 16, 22, 45, 69, 89, 109, 110, and 118.

**Proverbs**

*Author:* Solomon, David, Agur, Lemuel, and others  
*To Whom Written:* Israel  
*Date:* Varies  
*Theme:* Wisdom  
*Scope:* non-historical  
*Chapters:* 31  
*Major Events:* non-historical  
*Major Characters:* non-historical  
*Christological Significance:* Jesus is wisdom (8:12, 22), and the Friend who sticks closer than a brother (18:24).

**Ecclesiastes**

*Author:* Solomon  
*To Whom Written:* Israel  
*Date:* 10th century BC  
*Theme:* The Vanity of Man’s Reasoning  
*Scope:* non-historical  
*Chapters:* 12  
*Major Events:* non-historical  
*Major Characters:* The Preacher (Solomon)  
*Christological Significance:* Jesus is Wisdom (9:14-16) and the Creator (12:1).

**Song of Solomon**

*Author:* Solomon  
*To Whom Written:* Israel  
*Date:* 10th century BC  
*Theme:* Love  
*Scope:* non-historical  
*Chapters:* 8  
*Major Events:* The courting and marriage of the bridegroom and the bride (1-8)  
*Major Characters:* The Bridegroom (Solomon) and the Bride (Shulamite)  
*Christological Significance:* Jesus is typified by the bridegroom loving his bride (the Church).

**Isaiah**

*Author:* Isaiah  
*To Whom Written:* Judah  
*Date:* 745-680 BC  
*Theme:* Israel’s Messiah  
*Scope:* 65 years  
*Chapters:* 66  
*Major Events:* Judgment on the northern and southern kingdoms (1-39); the return and restoration from Babylon (40-55); the kingdom of the Messiah (56-66).
Major Characters: Isaiah, Uzziah, and Hezekiah

Christological Significance: Jesus is born of a virgin (7), Israel’s Messiah and coming King (9), and the Suffering Servant (53).

Jeremiah

Author: Jeremiah
To Whom Written: Judah
Date: 626-580 BC
Theme: Judgment
Scope: From the time of reformation under Josiah to the captivity in Babylon.
Chapters: 52
Major Events: Jeremiah is called (1-10); prophecies against Judah (11-28); the new covenant (29-38); the fall of Jerusalem (39-52).
Major Characters: Jeremiah

Christological Significance: Jesus is the Balm of Gilead (8:22), the Righteous Branch (23:5), and our Resting-place (50:6).

Lamentations

Author: Jeremiah
To Whom Written: Judah
Date: 586 BC
Theme: Mourning for Jerusalem
Scope: 3 months (between the capture of Jerusalem and Jeremiah’s kidnapped journey to Egypt)
Chapters: 5
Major Events: Jeremiah mourns for Jerusalem (1); God’s anger against the wicked (2); Jeremiah laments God’s judgment against His people, but also declares His faithfulness to the righteous (3); the distress of the siege of Jerusalem (4); Jeremiah’s prayer for mercy (5).
Major Characters: Jeremiah

Christological Significance: Jesus is the Smitten One (3:30).

Ezekiel

Author: Ezekiel
To Whom Written: The Remnant
Date: 592-570 BC
Theme: God’s Judgment and Glory
Scope: 22 years (seven years before to 22 years after the destruction of Jerusalem)
Chapters: 48
Major Events: The fall of Jerusalem (1-24); prophecies against the nations (25-39); the rebuilding of the temple and Israel’s restoration (40-49).
Major Characters: Ezekiel

Christological Significance: Jesus is the Shepherd (34:23).
Daniel

Author: Daniel,  
To WhomWritten: The Remnant  
Date: 605-530 BC  
Theme: The Rise and Fall of Kingdoms  
Scope: 75 years during the time of Judah’s captivity  
Chapters: 12  
Major Events: Daniel in Babylon (1); Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (2); Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego thrown into the fire (3); Nebuchadnezzar’s vision (4); Belteshazzar defiles the Temple vessels (5); Daniel in the lion’s den (6); Daniels’ vision of world kingdoms (7-12).  
Major Characters: Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego  
Christological Significance: Jesus is the Stone (2:35,45), the Son of God (3:25), the Ancient of Days (7:9), the Son of man (7:13), the Prince of princes (8:25), the most Holy (9:24), and the Messiah 9:25).

Hosea

Author: Hosea  
To WhomWritten: northern kingdom of Israel  
Date: 755-714 BC  
Theme: God’s Redeeming Love  
Scope: 40 years during the reign of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah  
Chapters: 14  
Major Events: Hosea’s faithless wife (1-3); Israel’s faithlessness to God (4-14).  
Major Characters: Hosea and Gomer  
Christological Significance: Jesus is seen as the Lord, God of Hosts (12:5).

Joel

Author: Joel  
To WhomWritten: the southern kingdom of Judah  
Date: 835-796 BC  
Theme: The Day of the Lord  
Scope: 38 years  
Chapters: 3  
Major Events: The destruction and judgment of God like a plague of locusts (1); God calls His people to repent and return to Him (2-3).  
Major Characters: none  
Christological Significance: Jesus our Hope (3:16).

Amos

Author: Amos  
To WhomWritten: the northern kingdom of Israel  
Date: 764-755 BC  
Theme: Judgment on Sin  
Scope: 10 years  
Chapters: 9
**Obadiah**

**Author:** Obadiah  
**To Whom Written:** Edom  
**Date:** 586 BC  
**Theme:** Judgment on Edom  
**Scope:** Just after the fall of Jerusalem  
**Chapters:** 1 (21 verses)  
**Major Events:** The fall of Jerusalem (1)  
**Major Characters:** none  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the Lord of the kingdom (vs. 21).

**Jonah**

**Author:** Jonah  
**To Whom Written:** Ninevah  
**Date:** 784-722 BC  
**Theme:** God’s Mercy to the Gentiles  
**Scope:** about 50 days  
**Chapters:** 4  
**Major Events:** Jonah, called to Ninevah, flees from the Lord (1); Jonah is swallowed by a great fish (1-2); Jonah repents and preaches (2-3); Ninevah repents (3); Jonah pouts (4).  
**Major Characters:** Jonah, and the fish.  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection is seen in the experience of Jonah being swallowed by the fish.

**Micah**

**Author:** Micah  
**To Whom Written:** Israel and Judah  
**Date:** 740-698 BC  
**Theme:** Judgment and Kingdom Hope  
**Scope:** 42 years  
**Chapters:** 7  
**Major Events:** Judgment on the wicked nations (1-5); what God requires (6-7).  
**Major Characters:** none  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the Messiah to be born in Bethlehem (5:2).

**Nahum**

**Author:** Nahum,  
**To Whom Written:** Ninevah  
**Date:** 648-620 BC  
**Theme:** The Doom of Ninevah
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

Scope: 28 years  
Chapters: 3  
**Major Events:** God’s mighty power (1); the destruction of Nineveh (2-3).  
**Major Characters:** none  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the Stronghold (1:7).

### Habakkuk

**Author:** Habakkuk  
**To Whom Written:** the southern kingdom of Judah  
**Date:** 625-610 BC  
**Theme:** A Call to Faith  
**Scope:** 15 years  
**Chapters:** 3  
**Major Events:** God uses the Chaldeans to punish Judah (1); God answers Habakkuk’s objections (2); Habakkuk’s prayer (3).  
**Major Characters:** none  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the One Who justifies by faith (2:4), and the Lord in His holy temple (2:20).  

### Zephaniah

**Author:** Zephaniah  
**To Whom Written:** the southern kingdom of Judah  
**Date:** 634-625 BC  
**Theme:** The fall of Jerusalem  
**Scope:** 11 years  
**Chapters:** 3  
**Major Events:** The coming judgment on Judah (1); judgments against Judah’s enemies (2); woe and hope for Israel (3).  
**Major Characters:** none  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is Israel’s king (3:15).  

### Haggai

**Author:** Haggai  
**To Whom Written:** The Remnant  
**Date:** 520 BC  
**Theme:** Rebuilding the Temple  
**Scope:** 4 months (between Ezra 4 and 5)  
**Chapters:** 2  
**Major Events:** The temple is rebuilt (1); Haggai encourages the builders (2).  
**Major Characters:** Haggai, Zerubbabel  
**Christological Significance:** Jesus is the Desire of all nations (2:7).  

### Zechariah

**Author:** Zechariah  
**To Whom Written:** The Remnant  
**Date:** 520-518 BC
Theme: Messiah
Scope: 2 years (between Ezra 4 and 5)
Chapters: 14
Major Events: A series of eight visions (1-8); messianic prophecies (9-14).
Major Characters: Messiah
Christological Significance: Jesus is the Branch (3:8, 6:12), the Shepherd (13:7), King of all the earth (14:9), and the King, the Lord of hosts (14:16).

Malachi

Author: Malachi
To Whom Written: The Remnant
Date: 450-400 BC
Theme: Rebuke for selfishness
Scope: the years after the temple was rebuilt
Chapters: 4
Major Events: God’s love for Jacob (1); discipline for the priests (2); prophecy of the coming of John the Baptist and God’s judgment on the people because they have robbed God (3); and the coming of Elijah before the day of the Lord (4).
Major Characters: none
Christological Significance: Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness (4:2).

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew

Author: Matthew (Levi)
To Whom Written: The Jews
Date: AD 50 or 60
Theme: Jesus, the King
Chapters: 28
Major Events: The birth, baptism, temptation, ministry, triumphal entry into Jerusalem, trial, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sermon on the Mount, the Lord’s Prayer, the call of the twelve apostles, the parables of the kingdom, the death of John the Baptist, Peter’s confession of faith in Christ, the Transfiguration, end times prophecies, and the Great Commission.

Mark

Author: Mark
To Whom Written: The Gentiles, Roman citizens
Date: AD 53 to 60
Theme: Jesus, the Servant
Chapters: 16
Major Events: The baptism, temptation, ministry, miracles, transfiguration, triumphal entry into Jerusalem, trial, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ.
Luke

Author: Luke
To Whom Written: The Greeks
Date: AD 63-68
Theme: Jesus, the Son of Man
Chapters: 24
Major Events: The birth, baptism, temptation, ministry, miracles, teachings, triumphal entry into Jerusalem, trial, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sermon on the Mount, the Lord’s Prayer, the call of the twelve apostles, the parables of the kingdom, the birth, ministry, and death of John the Baptist, Peter’s confession of faith in Christ, the Transfiguration, end times prophecies, and the Great Commission.

John

Author: John
To Whom Written: The Church
Date: AD 90-100
Theme: Jesus, the Son of God
Chapters: 21
Major Events: The pre-incarnate existence, baptism, temptation, ministry, miracles, trial, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Last Supper discourse, the High Priestly Prayer of Christ, the ministry of John the Baptist.

Acts

Author: Luke
To Whom Written: The Church, Theophilis
Date: AD 65
Theme: The Acts of the Holy Spirit
Chapters: 28
Major Events: The Holy Spirit is promised by Jesus, and Judas is replaced by Matthias (1). The Holy Spirit is poured out on the day of Pentecost (2). The church grows and preaches Christ and the kingdom of God in Jerusalem (3-4). Ananias and Sapphira lie to the Holy Spirit and are judged, and the apostles are arrested and released (5). The number of the disciples multiplies (6). Stephen is arrested, presents his defense, and is stoned (7). Saul leads a persecution against the church and the disciples scatter, and Philip goes to Samaria and sees great fruit (8). Saul is converted (9). Peter preaches to Cornelius and the Gentiles are saved (10-11). Herod persecutes the church (12). The Holy Spirit sends Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (13-14). The elders and leaders meet to discuss the salvation of the Gentiles (15). Paul continues his ministry in various areas and regions and then is arrested in Jerusalem (16-28).

Romans

Author: Paul
To Whom Written: The Church at Rome
Date: AD 57
Theme: Justification
Chapters: 16
Summary: Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the gospel is the power of God for salvation, and the wrath of God is against all unrighteousness of men (1-2); all men are guilty before God and justified by faith apart
from the law (3); Abraham believed God and is the father of all who believe (4); Christ died for the ungodly (5); those who believe are dead to sin, united with Christ through baptism, and receive the free gift of God, which is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (6); there is an on-going conflict between the flesh and the spirit in those who believe (7); there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death; therefore nothing can separate us from the love of God (8); the word of faith brings salvation; God has not cast Israel away (9-11); instructions on how to live a kingdom life (12-16).

1 Corinthians

Author: Paul
To Whom Written: The Church at Corinth
Date: AD 55
Theme: Christian Conduct
Chapters: 16
Summary: Paul showed the wisdom of God in calling and using those who are weak and poor (1); he describes his reliance on the Holy Spirit, and the work of the Spirit in revealing the truths of God (2); he rebukes the Corinthians for their division (3-4); he rebukes their immorality (5-11); he gives instructions for the use of the gifts (12-14); he promotes the importance of the resurrection of Christ (15-16).

2 Corinthians

Author: Paul
To Whom Written: The Church at Corinth
Date: AD 56
Theme: Christian Conduct
Chapters: 13
Summary: Paul defended his apostolic calling and work, especially by describing his suffering for the sake of the gospel (1-7); he requested the Corinthians to take up an offering for the suffering saints in Jerusalem and Judea (8-9); he continued to defend his apostolic authority and ministry, again describing his personal suffering, the presence of a thorn in the flesh for the sake of the abundant revelations given to him, and a warning that the Corinthians must examine themselves to see whether or not they are in the faith (10-13).

Galatians

Author: Paul
To Whom Written: The Church at Galatia
Date: AD 55
Theme: Law and Grace
Chapters: 6
Summary: Paul began by sharing his own testimony as to how he received the gospel of the kingdom which he preached to the Galatians, and delivered a severe and repeated warning that they are not to receive any other gospel; he related the story of how he rebuked Peter for his hypocrisy concerning his relationship with the Gentiles in the presence of visiting Jewish brothers (1-2); he then angrily rebuked the Galatians for abandoning the way of the Spirit to embrace the rabbinic Judaism enforced on them by misguided messianic disciples of Jesus, showing them the true place of the Law in God’s prophetic purposes (3); he declared their sonship in Christ through the promise of the Spirit as the seed of Abraham, and used the allegory of Sarah and Hagar to illustrate the dangers of attempting to embrace both (4); Paul
then described the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, describing the fruit of the Spirit (5); he closed with instructions on how to live in the Spirit (6).

**Ephesians**

**Author:** Paul  
**To Whom Written:** The Church at Ephesus  
**Date:** AD 61-62  
**Theme:** The Church, Christ’s Body  
**Chapters:** 6  
**Summary:** Paul declared that we were predestined to the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ, having been sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, and that Jesus is above all things, the Head of the church, which is His body (1); we who were once enemies of God, are saved by grace through faith, and are no longer aliens but fellow citizens, being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit (2); Paul described his stewardship of the gospel, God’s manifold wisdom, and the expanse of His great love (3); we are to walk in the unity of the Spirit, being equipped for the work of the ministry through gifted leaders, putting on the likeness of God (4); we are to be imitators of God, especially in our marriages (5); finally, we are to engage in spiritual warfare, being equipped with the whole armor of God (6).

**Philippians**

**Author:** Paul  
**To Whom Written:** The Church at Philippi  
**Date:** AD 62  
**Theme:** Joy  
**Chapters:** 4  
**Summary:** The apostle, writing from prison, demonstrated joy and faith in the place of suffering (1); we are to follow the example of Christ, who emptied Himself of all privilege to go to the cross, being exalted and given a name which is above every name; therefore, we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (2); knowing all these things, we are to rejoice in the Lord, being partakers of His suffering and the power of His resurrection, pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (3); again, we are to rejoice in the Lord always, making our requests known to God through prayer, and thinking on those things that are good; in addition, we must learn to be content in every situation and circumstance, knowing that our God will supply all our needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus (4).

**Colossians**

**Author:** Paul  
**To Whom Written:** The Church at Colosse  
**Date:** AD 62  
**Theme:** The Pre-eminence of Christ  
**Chapters:** 4  
**Summary:** After thanking the Colossians for their faith, Paul presents a powerful description of the centrality of Jesus Christ (1); he then gave us instructions as to how we are to live based on Christ being the supreme fulfillment of all God’s purposes (2) being raised together with Christ, we are to seek those things above not the things on the earth, letting the word of Christ dwell richly in our hearts; this is to be
reflected in our marriages, families, and employment (3); Paul closes with an admonishment that we are to conduct ourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, and with some personal words of encouragement and instruction (4).

**First Thessalonians**

**Author:** Paul  
**To Whom Written:** The Church at Thessalonica  
**Date:** AD 52  
**Theme:** The Return of Christ  
**Chapters:** 5  
**Summary:** Paul greeted the Thessalonians with thankfulness for their faith and works, reminding them that they had turned from idolatry to serve a living and true God (1); he then defended the integrity with which he came to them to bring them the gospel, not seeking glory from men, but being gentle to them; as a result, he called them to walk worthy of the God who called them into His kingdom (2); the apostle informs the Thessalonians of Timothy’s good report concerning their faith and love (3); the Thessalonians are to remain sexually pure, leading a quiet life, and working with their own hands; those who have died in Christ will be raised from the dead (4); finally, he instructs them concerning the day of the Lord (5).

**Second Thessalonians**

**Author:** Paul  
**To Whom Written:** The Church at Thessalonica  
**Date:** AD 53  
**Theme:** The Day of the Lord  
**Chapters:** 3  
**Summary:** After much discussion among the Thessalonians about the return of Christ, Paul gives them some comforting words and signs to look for to remove their fear and doubt that the day of the Lord has already occurred (1-2); he then gives them instructions in how to live in preparation for the coming of the Lord, avoiding evil men, and not growing weary of doing good (3).

**First Timothy**

**Author:** Paul  
**To Whom Written:** Timothy  
**Date:** AD 64-67  
**Theme:** Church Order  
**Chapters:** 6  
**Summary:** After greeting Timothy, Paul issued a severe warning against false teachers and doctrines, encouraging Timothy to correct such things (1); Paul gave some details to Timothy about proper conduct in the church, the role of women, and the leadership of elders and deacons (2-4); he then gave instructions for relationships within the church, discipline, the care of widows, and admonished the wealthy to be generous (5-6).

**Second Timothy**

**Author:** Paul  
**To Whom Written:** Timothy  
**Date:** AD 66-67
Theme: Holding the Truth

Summary: Paul was no longer under house arrest but was incarcerated in a cold prison cell, awaiting execution. Timothy must present himself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, being a vessel of honor (1-2); the last days will be difficult and dangerous times, with many learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; Timothy must continue in the things he has learned, being equipped for every good work through the word of God (3); Paul then gave Timothy some final instructions and words (4).

Titus

Author: Paul
To Whom Written: Titus
Date: AD 64-66
Theme: Church Order

Summary: Paul gives Titus instructions about elders and deacons (1); he has further instructions for those who are older and those who are younger (2); he concludes with various instructions about godly living (3).

Philemon

Author: Paul
To Whom Written: Philemon
Date: AD 64-67
Theme: Love Exemplified

Summary: Onesimus was a disciple of Paul and an escaped slave. Paul wrote this letter to Onesimus’ master, Philemon to request mercy and forgiveness.

Hebrews

Author: Unknown, probably Paul or Barnabas
To Whom Written: Hebrew believers
Date: AD 66
Theme: The Better Priesthood of Christ

Summary: The book of Hebrews was written to show that Jesus Christ was not only the fulfillment of the Law, but that He was superior to Judaism in every way. Jesus was pre-eminent over angels, Moses, the Old Testament priesthood, the temple and the Old Testament sacrifices (1-9); in addition, faith is superior to the Law and to the works of the Old Covenant; without faith it is impossible to please God; Jesus Himself is the author and perfecter of our faith; Mount Zion (grace) is superior to Mount Sinai (law); therefore, let us love one another (10-13).

James

Author: James
To Whom Written: Hebrew believers (the 12 tribes scattered, the Diaspora)
Date: AD 45
Theme: Practical Christian Living
Chapters: 5
Summary: James was the half-brother of Jesus, and his epistle is believed to be the first of the New Testament writings. James began his letter by encouraging those who were being persecuted for the faith and others who were facing temptations; he pointed his audience to do works of righteousness, visiting orphans and widows in distress, and remaining unspotted form the world (1); he addressed the sin of partiality (favoring the rich over the poor), and showed the perfection of faith in works (2); teachers will receive a greater judgment; no man can control his tongue; therefore, we must be careful what we speak; wisdom from above is to be identified by its fruit of purity, peace, gentleness, reasonableness, and mercy; the wisdom of the world is bitter, selfish, ambitious, sensual, and demonic (3); James gave various instructions on how to live properly, avoiding the lusts of the flesh, speaking well of one another, and not presuming on the future (4); he rebuked the misuse of riches with a call to justice and charity for the poor, imploring believers to be patient in the Lord; if any is sick they should call for the elders of the church, for the effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much, as illustrated in the life of Elijah; finally, he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins (5).

First Peter
Author: Peter
To Whom Written: Those who reside as aliens in Asia (the Diaspora)
Date: AD 65
Theme: Suffering and Glory
Chapters: 5
Summary: Peter wrote to encourage his readers who were suffering and to call them to personal holiness. We have a living hope and sure salvation in Jesus Christ; though we have not seen Him, we believe in Him and rejoice; therefore, we must prepare our minds for action, having been born again of an imperishable seed through the living and enduring word of God (1); as new born babes, we are to desire the milk of the word; we are also living stones being built up together as a spiritual house, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, called according to this purpose - to suffer with Christ (2); Peter then gave instructions as to the life we should live in our marriages, in the church, and in our communities (3); we must be willing to suffer for righteousness sake, for the end of all things is near; it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God (4); admonitions were then given for those who lead the church to do so with integrity and gentleness (5).

Second Peter
Author: Peter
To Whom Written: The Church
Date: AD 66-67
Theme: Last Days
Chapters: 3
Summary: Peter’s second epistle was written to warn the churches about false teachers who were challenging the truth of the gospel. He began with the encouragement that through Jesus we have received everything we need for life and godliness, and are partakers of the divine nature; therefore, we are to diligently attend to our spiritual growth and maturity; the Scriptures are not of private interpretation, but have been given by the Holy Spirit (1); false prophets, motivated by greed, have arisen within the church; God’s judgment will come on them as it did on the angels who fell and those who died in the flood; but
the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation and judgment (2); the last days will be marked by mockers, but be aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief; therefore, let us be in holy conduct, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God (3).

First John

Author: John
To Whom Written: The Church
Date: AD 85-95
Theme: Fellowship
Chapters: 5
Summary: John wrote to combat the heresy of Gnosticism, which taught that Jesus did not have a human body. He began by declaring that he saw the human body of the Lord Jesus, and that Jesus will forgive those who confess their sins (1); these are the ways we can know if we are His children – obedience to His commandments, not loving the world, not practicing sin, being hated by the world, loving one another, and confessing that Jesus has come in the flesh and is the Son of God (2-5).

Second John

Author: John
To Whom Written: The Church
Date: AD 85-95
Theme: Love and Truth
Chapters: 1
Summary: Again, John is writing to admonish the church to remain in the truths they have been taught, loving one another, walking according to the commandments, and watching ourselves that we not lose what we have accomplished.

Third John

Author: John
To Whom Written: The Church
Date: AD 85-95
Theme: Christian Hospitality
Chapters: 1
Summary: John wrote this letter to praise two teachers, Gaius and Demetrius, for walking in the truth. The churches must receive and support them. Let us not do evil, but good, for the one who does good is of God.

Jude

Author: Jude
To Whom Written: The Church
Date: AD 67-68
Theme: Contending for the Faith
Chapters: 1
Summary: Jude was the brother of James and the half-brother of Jesus. He wrote this letter to warn the churches against the dangers of false teachers, calling on them to contend earnestly for the faith. He cited several who incurred the judgment of God, including the angels who fell, Cain, Balaam, and Korah; he
also pointed to the faithfulness of Enoch, and warned believers to keep themselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

Revelation

Author: John
To Whom Written: Seven Churches of Asia Minor
Date: AD 90-95
Theme: Consummation of All Things
Chapters: 22
Summary: The final book of the Bible was written by the apostle John while he was imprisoned on the island of Patmos. It was written at the command of the Lord Jesus and concerns the “things which must soon take place.” John saw a vision of the Lord Jesus and received messages from Him for the seven churches of Asia (1-3); John is then taken to heaven and sees the throne of God, Jesus as the Lamb slain, and the judgments of God upon the earth, including the antichrist and false prophet, the fall of Babylon, and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ with the armies of heaven (4-20); finally, John sees the consummation of all things, the judgment of all people, the destruction of heaven and earth, and the New Jerusalem (21-22).