

The Bible



The Word of God

The Bible is the final authority concerning doctrine and behaviour. Everything taught must be in line with God's Word. Salvation and heaven are available through our Lord Jesus, who is the living word.

**All scripture is given by inspiration of God
2 Timothy 3 v 16**

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The Bible

The following 18 lectures will help you gain insight into this book. The aim is that your appetite to know it better will increase and that you will live in the good of the Author's plan. There will be 9 lectures relating to The Old Testament, and 9 to The New Testament.

- Lecture 01. An overview of the Old Testament
- Lecture 02. An overview of the New Testament
- Lecture 03. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- Lecture 04. Matthew, Mark, Luke.
- Lecture 05. Joshua, Judges, 1&2 Samuel
- Lecture 06. Gospel of John, Book of Acts
- Lecture 07. Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians and Ephesians.
- Lecture 08. Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians.
- Lecture 09. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea,
- Lecture 10. Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum.
- Lecture 11. 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.
- Lecture 12. Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- Lecture 13. Job, Psalms, Proverbs,
- Lecture 14. Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Ruth
- Lecture 15. Esther, Lamentations, Daniel,
- Lecture 16. Ezra, Nehemiah, 1&2 Chronicles.
- Lecture 17. Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter
- Lecture 18. 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation

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THE BOOKS OF THE LAW GENESIS - DEUTERONOMY

GENESIS

AUTHOR: MOSES

DATE: 1450-1410 B.C.

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. God's Dealings with the Human Race Gen. 1-11
 - A. Creation Gen. 1-2
 - B. The Fall Gen. 3-5
 - C. The Flood and aftermath Gen. 6-11
- II. God's Dealings with Abraham's Family Gen. 12-50
 - A. Abraham Gen. 12-25
 - B. Isaac Gen. 22-27
 - C. Jacob and Esau Gen. 25-36
 - D. Joseph Gen. 37-50

Historical Setting: The book of Genesis covers the period from Adam to Joseph and it is set in the context of a Mesopotamian backdrop.

Key Event: Creation and the calling of Abraham

Key People: Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham,
Through these characters, the story of a plan of salvation begins to unfold and the bloodline of JESUS is already traceable.

Adam and Eve: The first man and woman created by God. They are important to the Genesis story because it is clearly assumed that because of them, sin entered into the human race and contaminated it. Adam was created in the image of God, but after the fall, that image became distorted.

Noah: Noah is another key person in the Genesis story; through him and his obedience to God, the human race is protected from extinction when God brings his judgement on the earth

Abraham: Abraham's life describes the pattern for engaging God in a relationship. The New Testament later describes him as our father in the sight of God. God promised that through him would come a mighty nation and that through that nation all the families of earth would be blessed. This promise is fulfilled in Jesus.

Key Themes: Creation and covenant.

Creation: The Bible makes it clear that God created the heavens and the earth. The Bible also maintains that God holds the world together with his mighty power. Increasingly, the old debate between science and the Biblical account is receding. Many scientists accept the biblical order and we continue to discover what an amazing place this earth is.

Covenant - The theme of covenant forms the pattern of relationship that existed between God and the people he chose. The covenant idea was a concept widespread during the time of Abraham. It is believed that God took an existing current idea and designed it as the hallmark of his relationship with his people.

Key Chapters: Genesis 1 and 12 - God is the Creator and everything springs from his initiative. The birth of Israel with the call of Abraham.

The division in Genesis - Genesis is divided into two unequal sections. The first section, chapters 1-11, deals with beginnings. It focuses on the beginning of the human race, the beginning of a relationship with God and the beginning of that relationship with God breaking up. The second section, chapters 12-50 focus on the origin of the people of God with special attention placed on the patriarchs.

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OLD TESTAMENT

EXODUS

AUTHOR: MOSES

DATE: 1450 B.C.

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Story of Deliverance Ex. 1-19
 - A. Moses' call Ex. 1-4
 - B. Miracles Ex. 5-13
 - C. On to Sinai Ex. 14-19
- II. God's Design for a Holy Community Ex. 20-40
 - A. Laws for living Ex. 20-23
 - B. Provision for worship Ex. 24-40

Title: The title 'Exodus' comes from the name the Greek translators gave to the book. The name means 'going out' and it relates to the journey of the people of Israel from Egypt.

Historical setting: It is very difficult to determine the accurate historical setting for the book of Exodus for various reasons.

- The events took place in the second millennium B.C.
- The book contains no historical reference i.e. the kings of Egypt are merely called by their title 'Pharaoh' and not by their name.
- There is no document apart from the Bible that has been discovered that relates specifically to Israel's time in Egypt. This might be because the Egyptians did not record the humiliating defeat suffered at the hands of their former slaves
- The writer of Exodus is more interested in theology than history

However the importance of the event in shaping the history of the people of Israel shows how significant the events were to the nation of Israel.

Key Events: The Passover, the Crossing of the Red sea and Mount Sinai

Main Themes

The Revelation of God - The book of Exodus starts with the relationship that develops between God and Israel. This relationship starts with the experience Moses had with the burning bush (**3:1-4:17**). Moses becomes the mediator between God and Israel but it is God who always takes the initiative to reveal himself.

Covenant and Worship - The theme that started with Abraham in Genesis is now applied to a whole nation. The covenant was like a contract signed between two people entering into a relationship or partnership **(19-24)**. The tabernacle is built according to heaven's specification and becomes the focal point for the presence of God among his people.

Obedience - The theme of obedience runs strongly through the book of Exodus. Moses had to obey God and confront Pharaoh. Pharaoh lost his life, the life of his son and his army because of his disobedience. The Israelites safely came out of Egypt when they obeyed and performed the Passover ceremony. Obedience was at the heart of the covenant relationship between God and Israel. **(19:8, 24:3,7)**

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LEVITICUS

AUTHOR: MOSES

DATE: 1445-1444 B.C.

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Worship as Sacrifice and OfferingLev. 1-7
- II. Worship as Dedicated ServiceLev. 8-10
- III. Worship as SeparationLev. 11-15
- IV. Worship as Assurance of SalvationLev. 16-17
- V. Worship as a Life of HolinessLev. 18-22
- VI. Worship as Personal CommitmentLev. 23-27

Historical Setting: At the foot of Mt. Sinai, God reveals guidelines for holy living for his people.

Key Event: The Day of Atonement. This was an ordinance established by God for the people of Israel to be reconciled back to God once a year.

Key Theme: Worshipping God in the awareness of his Holiness

This book introduces in more detail the sacrifices that the people offered as an expression of their repentance towards God and their desire to remain in covenant with him. Many practical rules and guidelines are given for their health as a nation.

The message that cries out from Leviticus is the holiness of God. "You must be holy because I am holy" - Lev. 19:1, 2. Sin must be dealt with and the sacrificial system points to Christ who alone can deal with sin forever.

There is an emphasis on celebration. Instructions are given for festivals where thanksgiving, praise and worship are offered to God.

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OLD TESTAMENT

NUMBERS

AUTHOR: MOSES

DATE: 1450-1410 B.C.

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. At Sinai Num. 1-9
 - A. Organising the camp Num. 1-4
 - B. Cleansing and dedication Num. 5-9
- II. The Lost Generation Num. 10-19
 - A. The journey to Kadesh Num. 10-12
 - B. Israel's disobedience Num. 13-14
 - C. Years of wandering Num. 15-19
- III. The New Generation Num. 20-36
 - A. Kadesh to Moab Num. 20-21
 - B. Balaam Num. 22-25
 - C. Preparation for victory Num. 26-30
 - D. Promises of victory Num. 31-36

Historical Setting: The story unfolds in the vast wilderness of the Sinai area.

The Division of Numbers: The book of Numbers is divided into three sections.

The **chapters 1-10** deal with preparation to enter into the Promised Land. The tribes are numbered and Israel is prepared to come into God's presence and to possess God's inheritance. **Chapters 11-25** reveal how disobedience and lack of faith in God led to a whole generation being lost. This generation of Israelites spent forty years wandering in the desert and **chapters 26-36** are basically the new generation and its preparation to enter the Promised Land.

Key Events: Judgement on Miriam and Aaron Ch.12. Judgement on Korah Ch.16. Salvation from snake bite Ch.21.

Key Theme:

The word of God - Chapters 1-10 state that everything was done according to the word of God. Israel enjoyed God's specific blessing **6:22-27**. Numbers demonstrates the power and confidence that come from God's word.

- Joshua and Caleb's boldness came from God's promise that he would give them the land.
- Balaam was unable to resist God's word of blessing and blessed Israel rather than cursed them. **Chapters 24:13**

- God's word was unchanging. When God declared that the Israelite who disobeyed, would not enter the Promised Land, it came to pass. **Chapters 14:20-35**

Apostasy - The term apostasy mean 'standing away from' In Numbers it describes Israel's standing away from its covenant relationship with God. Israel had seen the glory of God and the certainty of the Promised Land but they refused to hear the word of God. **Chapter 14.**

Judgement - Those who knowingly reject God do not go unpunished. Even though God forgave them, he could not overlook the contempt they had shown him **14:18-23.**

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The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

DEUTERONOMY

AUTHOR: MOSES

DATE: 1407-1406 B.C.

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Moses' Review of History Deut. 1-4
 - A. What God has done for Israel Deut. 1-3
 - B. How Israel is to respond Deut. 4
- II. Moses' Presentation of the Treaty with God Deut. 5-28
 - A. Fundamental principles of relationship Deut.5-11
 - B. Specific examples of requirements Deut. 12-26
 - C. Challenge to personal commitment Deut. 27-28
- III. Moses' Exhortation to Complete Commitment Deut. 29-30
- IV. Moses' Last Acts Deut. 31-34

Historical Setting: The people are on the east side of the Jordan with Canaan in view. Moses is about to hand over leadership to Joshua and here he delivers a farewell address to prepare the Israelites for their entrance into Canaan. The address Moses gave was a renewal of the covenant.

Key Event: The people are receiving instruction prior to Joshua taking charge.

Key Theme: This book is a summary of the grace and kindness of God whose plan is for His people to possess the land.

Moses wanted the people to realise that if they did things God's way then there would be many blessings and promises but a turning away from God would lead to curses and despair.

This book as we have commented, calls us to remember who God is and what he has done. **Deuteronomy 8:2**

There is a review of the Ten Commandments, laws for proper worship, laws for ruling the nation, laws for human relationships, and the consequences of obedience and disobedience. **Deuteronomy 28.**

Blessings of prosperity, being revered by the nations, and being the head and not the tail are promised if they listen and obey God (**chapter 28:13**). Curses of failure, disease, war, drought and defeat by enemies, sowing much and reaping little and others because of failure to listen to the Lord.

Moses called the people to commitment - **Deuteronomy 29.**" Look today I have set before you, life and death. Choose life."

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The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

THE HISTORY BOOKS. JOSHUA - 2 SAMUEL

These books are the exciting story of how Joshua leads God's people Israel into the Promised Land and how King David becomes the greatest of the kings of Israel. There are many powerful accounts of outstanding characters who by faith, see the enemies of God's people overcome.

JOSHUA

DATE: 1406 B.C.

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Preparation for War Josh. 1-5
- II. The Military Campaign Josh. 6-12
- III. The Division of the Land Josh. 13-21
- IV. Joshua's Call to Commitment Josh. 22-24

Historical Setting: At the time of Israel going into the Promised Land, many of the superpowers were relatively weak. The Hittites had faded from the scene and neither Babylon nor Egypt could maintain a military presence in Canaan. The Assyrians would not start sending in armies until centuries later. As the nation moved towards the Promised Land, only Edom offered resistance and Moab was forced to let Israel pass through her land.

The book of Joshua gives us the history of Israel's moving out and the conquest of the Promised Land.

Key Events: Entering and conquering the land of Canaan.

Key People: Joshua, Rahab, Achan, Caleb.

Key Themes:

Boldness, courage, listening to God's tactics. Joshua was an outstanding military leader and a strong spiritual man. He was willing to listen to God and was willing to correct things when they went wrong.

Discussion point: Most Christians will be appalled at the notion of destroying one race of people so another could occupy their land but this is what happens in the book of Joshua. Israel moved into a land that was already occupied and

chased out the inhabitants. However they believed they were carrying out God's mandate. How will you defend the Israelite's position?

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OLD TESTAMENT

JUDGES

DATE: 1375 - 1040 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Causes of the Judges Era Jud. 1:1-3:6
- II. Conditions During the Judges Jud. 3:7-16:31
Seven Cycles of Oppression/Deliverance
 1. Othniel Jud. 3:7
 2. Eglon Jud. 3:12-31
 3. Deborah and Barak Jud. 4:1-5:31
 4. Gideon Jud. 6:1-8:32
 5. Tola and Jair..... Jud. 8:33-10:5
 6. Jephthah Jud. 10:6-12:15
 7. Samson Jud. 13:1-16:31
- III. Human Consequences of the Judges` Era Jud. 17:1-21:25

Historical Setting: The time of settling into the land but before kings are appointed in Israel.

Key Events: The life of Gideon. The life of Samson.

Key People: Gideon, Samson, Deborah, Barak

Key Themes:

This book introduces us to a cycle of events which reveal the mercy of God and the fickleness of his people. The cycle runs from the people falling into sin and calling on God for a deliverer. God mercifully raises up a deliverer and the people overcome their enemies and are revived spiritually. However, after a while complacency sets in and the people fall into the hands of their enemies and the need to cry out for a deliverer begins again.

Key Chapter: Judges 6. God is with His mighty man even though Gideon feels so weak.

Key Verse: Judges 17:6. *'In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.'*

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OLD TESTAMENT

RUTH

AUTHOR: UNKNOWN

DATE: 1375-1050 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Ruth remains loyal to Naomi Ruth 1
- II. Ruth works in Boaz's field Ruth 2
- III. Ruth submits to Naomi's plan Ruth 3
- IV. Ruth & Boaz are married Ruth 4

Historical Setting: A dark time in Israel's history just after the Judges.

Key Events: Ruth's promise to remain loyal to her mother-in-law after losing her two sons and husband. Ruth marries Boaz and comes into the Royal line which will lead to Jesus.

Key People: Ruth, Naomi, Boaz

Key Themes:

This wonderful story reveals the faithfulness of God, kindness, integrity, protection and prosperous blessing.

The principle of redemption is clearly laid out in the book of Ruth.

The grandfather of great King David is born to Ruth and a Moabite comes by God's grace into the royal line which will lead to Jesus.

Key Chapter: Chapter 4: Boaz redeems Ruth and becomes a "type of Christ".

Key Verse: Ruth 4 v14: *'The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. . . .'*

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OLD TESTAMENT

1 SAMUEL

DATE: 1050-931 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Eli and Samuel 1 Sam. 1-7
- II. Samuel and Saul 1 Sam. 8-15
- III. Saul and David 1 Sam. 16-31

Historical Setting: This book describes the transition from the time of the Judges (Samuel is the last Judge) to Kings. Samuel was born 1105 BC. The call of Samuel coming at a time when the word of the Lord was rare, is a special story to consider. Ch.3

Key Event: The call of Samuel. The anointing of Saul. The anointing of David. David and Goliath. Saul and Jonathan's death.

Key People: Eli, Hannah, Samuel, Saul, David

Key Themes: 1 Samuel shows the establishment of kingship in Israel and a moving away from a theocracy (God's rule)

The consequence of disobedience - Eli and his response to God's word and Saul and his response to God's word. These two incidents demonstrate the importance God places on obedience to his command.

The choosing and empowering of David and faith in God.

Key Chapter: 1 Samuel 16

Key Verse: 1 Samuel 16:7. *'God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.'*

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OLD TESTAMENT

2 SAMUEL

DATE: 930 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. David's Triumphs 2 Sam. 1-10
- II. David's Troubles 2 Sam. 11-20
- III. Other Stories of David 2 Sam. 21-24

Historical Setting:

This book records the reign of David and shows the effectiveness of his leadership. David's kingdom will only be outshone by Jesus himself.

Key Events: David and Bathsheba. Absalom's treachery.

Key People: David, Joab, Nathan, Absalom

Key Themes:

David's successes: ch. 1-10. David becomes king of Judah, then Israel and then he conquers surrounding nations.

David's Struggles: ch. 11-24. David and Bathsheba. Turmoil in David's family and Absalom's. The story of David and Bathsheba is pivotal because the consequences are grave. However, Solomon is born out of this relationship. National rebellion and the last years of David's reign.

Key Chapter: 2 Samuel 22

Key Verse: 2 Samuel 5:12. *'And David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.'*

Discussion point: What does the story of David and Bathsheba tell you about God's sovereignty especially in relation to Solomon?

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OLD TESTAMENT

1 KINGS

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The accession and reign of Solomon1 Kings 1 – 11
- II. The divided kingdom and the accession of Ahab 1 Kings 12 – 16
- III. The Prophet Elijah 1 Kings 17 – 22

Historical setting: Most modern scholars give the end of the seventh century as the probable date for both 1 and 2 Kings to have been written. Some also argue that they were one book.

The record as mentioned above is of David's death and Solomon coming to the throne. Solomon's wealth and early success are seen and the visit of the Queen of Sheba recognising God's blessing of Solomon went beyond the record she had heard. The division of David's kingdom into Judah, two tribes, and Israel, 10 tribes, is a sorry record of the consequences of sin, rebellion and turning away from God.

Elijah stands out as powerful contrast as a man seeking to walk with God while most of the kings fall deeper into sin.

Key event: The division of the kingdom

Key people: Solomon and Elijah

Key themes: The completion of the temple

The visit of the Queen of Sheba

The allowance of foreign wives to bring their gods into Israel with them

Elijah's pronouncement of the judgement of God

The defeat of the prophets of Baal

Key chapter: 1 Kings 18

Key verse: 1 Kings 18:36-37 " O Lord the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel , today let it be known that thou art God in Israel and that I am your servant and that I have done all these things according to your word. Answer me O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that thou O Lord are God and that you have turned their heart back again."

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The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

2 KINGS

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Elijah2 Kings 1 – 2:1-11 Elijah
- II. Elisha 2 Kings 2:12- 13
- III. The decline and subsequent fall of the Northern Kingdom..... 2 Kings 14 – 17
- IV. Hezekiah – Josiah 2 Kings 18-23
- V. The last days of the Southern kingdom Judah 2 Kings 24-25

Historical setting: The end of the seventh century is the probable date for both 1 and 2 Kings to have been written. It has been argued that they were one book. The books of 1 and 2 Kings cover four centuries. Prophets like Amos, Hosea and Jeremiah are seeking to bring the people back to God. Some scholars believe Jeremiah wrote this book. It is a feasible argument that Isaiah wrote up to the time of Hezekiah and Jeremiah completed it.

Key event: The ministry of Elisha. There are thirty two records of the miraculous in Elisha's ministry. The most significant could be argued as the healing of the Syrian, Naaman chapter 5.

The other key event is when Hezekiah asks for healing and a longer life where the sun is turned backwards. Chapter 20

Key people: Elisha, Hezekiah, Josiah

Key themes: God still speaks and God still judges regardless of his people's receptiveness.

God is still a God of miracles

In the midst of many ungodly kings is the record of Josiah who seeks to bring in reforms. chapter 23

Key chapter: Chapter 4 where Elisha sees miraculous provision, barrenness healed, a boy raised from the dead and bread multiplied for 100 men.

Key verse 2 Kings 23:25" There was no king before him , that turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might according to all the law of Moses, neither after him arose there any like him." (A.V.)

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OLD TESTAMENT

I CHRONICLES

AUTHOR: EZRA

DATE: 430 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Names and genealogiesI Chron. 1:1-10:14
- II. The Divided KingdomI Chron. 11:1-29:30

Historical Setting: The book was written 430 BC recording events between 1000-960 BC. This book parallels 2 Samuel and is a commentary on it. The religious history of Judah and Israel is emphasised.

Key Events: David's success shows the reward of being a man after God's own heart. God fulfils His promise to bless those who trust and are faithful to Him. The Reign Of David. Chapter 10-29. David becomes king over all Israel. He brings the Ark to Jerusalem.

The story of Uzza inspires fear and a sense of the holiness of God.(Chapter 13). David's exploits in the military field are detailed.

David's preparations for the building of the temple. David accepts that he will not build the temple (Chapter 17).

Key People: David, Solomon

Key Themes: The Genealogies Of Israel. Chapter 1-9. Ancestry of the nation, the tribes of Israel and returnees from exile in Babylon. Some of the names are well known and some are not. Every life is valued by God and He knows why each is included.

True worship: The Ark coming to the Tabernacle and plans for building the temple illustrate the importance of worship to God and for His people.

Key Chapter: I Chronicles 17. God's Promise to David.

Key Verse: I Chronicles 14:2. *'And David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel and that his kingdom had been highly exalted for the sake of his people.'*

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The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

2 CHRONICLES

AUTHOR: EZRA

DATE: 430 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Solomon, the Temple Builder2 Chron. 1-9
- II. Roll Call of Judah's Kings2 Chron. 10-36

Historical Setting:

The book was written 430 BC recording events 970-586 BC. This book parallels 1&2 Kings and acts as a commentary on them. Righteous kings are highlighted and evil kings are exposed.

Key Events: The Reign Of Solomon. Chapters 1-9. Solomon's request for wisdom, his building and dedicating of the temple and his riches and fame are reiterated in this section.

The Kingdom Of Judah. Chapters 10-36.

The nation of Israel is split. Apostasy and reform.

The exile of Judah to Babylon.

Key People: Solomon, Queen of Sheba, Hezekiah, Josiah.

Key Themes: "If my people." This has become a revival text and remains how God longs to fill the temple of His church with His Spirit and glory.

The building of the temple.

The place and power of prayer.

The consequences of disobeying God.

Key Chapter: 2 Chronicles 7

Key Verse: 2 Chronicles 7:12-14. *"I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.*

"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

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The Bible

THE HISTORY BOOKS EZRA AND NEHEMIAH

These books cover how a remnant come back during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah and a rebuilding process begins.

EZRA

AUTHOR: NOT STATED

DATE: 450 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Exiles returnEzra 1-2
- II. The Temple Is rebuiltEzra 3-6
- III. Ezra teaches God's LawEzra 7-10

Historical Setting: This book records the beginning of a return to the land of Israel

Key Events: The beginning of restoring the temple. Ezra weeps and prays for the nation – Ch. 9.

Key People: Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Haggai, Zechariah, Darius, Artaxerxes, Ezra

Key Themes: Author not stated but probably Ezra. This book reveals the faithfulness of God as He keeps His promise to restore the people to the land.

The Return Led By Zerubbabel. Chapters 1-6

The Return Led By Ezra. Chapters 7-10. Ezra opposes intermarriage and he reads the law to the people. The word of God strengthens the people and prepares them for the work of restoration.

God has used heathen kings to bring about His purposes. Cyrus allows some Jews to go back (about 50,000). Ezra helps to establish worship at the temple that Zerubbabel had rebuilt. Ezra's weeping and prayer for the nation is answered as God sends a time of revival.

Key Chapter: Ezra 6

Key Verses: Ezra 6:21-22. *'So the Israelites who had returned from the exile ate it, together with all who had separated themselves from the unclean practices of*

their Gentile neighbours in order to seek the Lord, the God of Israel. For seven days they celebrated with joy the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because the Lord had filled them with joy by changing the attitude of the king of Assyria, so that he assisted them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel.'

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The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

NEHEMIAH

AUTHOR: NOT STATED

DATE: 445-432 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Nehemiah rebuilds Jerusalem's WallsNeh. 1:1-7:3
- II. Nehemiah Institutes ReformsNeh. 7:4-10:39
- III. Nehemiah repopulates JerusalemNeh. 11-13

Historical Setting: Author not stated but probably Nehemiah wrote the book with Ezra's support. Nehemiah is allowed by King Artaxerxes to return to Jerusalem about 445 BC. He rebuilds the walls of the city and leads the people into a time of renewal.

Key Events: Ezra renews the covenant and Nehemiah establishes policies. Nehemiah had to overcome considerable opposition and taunts from the enemy but he pulls through refusing to be distracted. Chapter 6 reveals the confidence that Nehemiah has in his God.

Key People: Nehemiah, Ezra, Sanballat, Tobiah

Key Themes: Leadership/Union; Rebuilding/Prayer. Nehemiah demonstrates great leadership skills. He knew God's call and used teamwork, planning and great courage to get the job done. He worked with the people and led them, not driving them.

Key Chapter: Nehemiah 6

Key Verses: Nehemiah 2:18; *'I also told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king has said to me. They replied "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work.'*

6:15-16; *'So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their confidence, because they realised that this work had been done with the help of our God.'*

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The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

ESTHER

AUTHOR: UNKNOWN

DATE: UNKNOWN

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Esther becomes Queen of Persia Es. 1-2
- II. Haman's hatred of Mordecai Es. 3-5
- III. Haman's Downfall Es. 6-8
- IV. The Victory of the Jews Es. 9-10

Historical Setting: The book of Esther is unique for its failure to mention God. Yet its messages of God shine clearly through as the story unfolds. The events happen about 30 years prior to Nehemiah. Queen Vashti is banished for refusing to obey her husband. Esther is chosen from among the Jewish captives to be a new Queen for the King.

The Feast of 'Purim' is celebrated today remembering the deliverance of God's people. Esther faced possible death for intervening but was persuaded by the words "you have come to the kingdom for such as a time as this".

Key Events: The attempt to destroy God's people is thwarted.

Key People: Esther, Mordecai, Ahasuerus, Haman

Key Themes: God's sovereignty - He has the right people in the right place at the right time.

Key Chapter: Esther 4

Key Verse: Esther 4:14. *' . . . For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?'*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

JOB

AUTHOR: UNKNOWN

DATE: UNKNOWN

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Disasters strike Righteous Job Job 1-3
- II. Job dialogues with Three Friends Job 4-31
 - A. Did God cause Job's suffering? Job 4-14
 - B. Do the wicked really suffer? Job 15-21
 - C. Had Job committed hidden sins? Job 22-31
- III. Elihu breaks the impasse Job 32-37
- IV. God speaks out Job 38-42

Historical Setting: Author is unknown but could possibly be Job, Moses or Solomon. The language used in the book of Job is full and beautifully descriptive. The story of Job illustrates well the sovereignty of God and that the righteous do suffer. They are not exempt because of their special relationship with God. Job was probably a contemporary with the patriarchs and so lived approximately 2000-1800 BC. Some believe this book to be the oldest of the Bible.

Key Events: Job Is Tested. **(chapters 1-2).** Job was a very wealthy man and a family man. He also enjoyed good health. All these things were taken from him. Suddenly he and his wife are left with nothing but at this stage he worships God and he does not sin saying 'shall we not accept good from God and trouble'.

Job's Comforters give their Insight. **(chapters 3-31).** In some ways these men offer a sterner test than all the previous difficulties. They have preconceived ideas as to why Job is suffering and a key conclusion is that he must have sin that he needs to repent of and matters to put right. This is not always the case and in Job's story the Bible makes it very clear that Job was not being punished because of personal sins committed.

Insights of a young man. **(chapters 32-27).** This person hearing the others offers his view. He concludes that Job had allowed pride to come in and so God was punishing him in order to humble him. While it is true that God uses suffering to purify our lives that is an insufficient explanation and cannot account for every incident of suffering and why some appear to suffer much more than others.

God speaks to Job. **(chapter 38-41).** The words that God speaks is not an answer as such but it is very powerful. Basically Job is to consider the wonder of God's creation and realise that he cannot question a God of such greatness and power. We can only marvel at who God is and worship Him.

God restores Job. **(chapter 42)**. Having learned that to have God and nothing else is sufficient, God gives many good things to Job. He prayed for his friends and the Lord prospered him greatly.

Key People: Job, His comforters

Key Themes: God is sovereign and Satan is under His control. Suffering cannot be explained but God is God.

Key Chapters: (Job 41 & 42)

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

THE POETIC AND WISDOM SECTION

The books in this section are:

PSALMS, PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES, SONG OF SOLOMON

This section contains wonderful literature which is well written and inspiring in its content. David in the Psalms has full rein to express his worship creatively. Solomon reveals the gift of wisdom but also the sadness of a man out of touch with God and the heart of a romantic.

PSALMS

AUTHOR: SEVERAL

DATE: 1440 BC - 586 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Book I..... Psalms 1-41
- II. Book II..... Psalms 42-72
- III. Book III..... Psalms 73-89
- IV. Book IV Psalms 90-106
- V. Book V..... Psalms 107-150

Historical Setting: They were written at different times in Israel's history but mostly during the reign of King David.

Key Events: As they were written at different times in history, not describing events but responding to situations and especially to God.

Key People: David

Key Themes: The Psalms are a wonderful record of every human emotion being expressed to God. The range of joy and ecstasy to despair, anger and depression are all in the Psalms. People are being real in their walk with God, sometimes understanding and enjoying His goodness and sometimes confused and hurt by events of life.

Seventy three of the Psalms were written by David, twelve by Asaph, nine by the Sons of Korah, two by Solomon. Heman, with the Sons of Korah, Ethan and Moses wrote one. Two of anonymous ones the New Testament attributes to David.

The Psalms were the Jewish song book and Jesus sang them. After the supper they sang a hymn and it was likely it was a Psalm.

The themes of praise, power, forgiveness and trust are reflected in the Psalms.

The Psalms can be divided into five books; their key theme is Worship:

Book One: 1-41. These contain themes similar to the book of Genesis. Man's fall and redemption.

Book Two: 42-72. As Exodus describes the nation of Israel coming out of slavery, so the theme of being rescued is seen in these Psalms.

Book Three: 73-89. Levitical themes like the Tabernacle and God's holiness are reflected in these Psalms. Worshipping God who is holy, coming to His temple and turning to Him is important.

Book Four: 90-106. Numbers describes the relationship of Israel to other nations. Israel's king was over them all and He is our king.

Book Five: 107-150. Deuteronomy is concerned with God and His word. Many of these Psalms reflect a love for the word of God.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

PROVERBS

AUTHOR: SOLOMON

DATE: 970 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. In Praise of Wisdom..... Prov. 1-9
- II. Proverbs of Solomon..... Prov. 10:1-22:16
- III. Words of Wise Men Prov. 22:17-24:33
- IV. More Proverbs of Solomon..... Prov. 25-29
- V. Words of Agur..... Prov. 30
- VI. Words of King Lemuel..... Prov. 31:1-9
- VII. Wifely Excellence Prov. 31:10-31

Historical Setting: The vast majority of the wise sayings come from Solomon during his reign as King of Israel. In thought and vocabulary, style, and themes the biblical proverbs are similar to Egyptian and Babylonian wisdom literature, dating a millennium before Solomon, and to Phoenician writings from 14th century Ugarit. This not only supports the biblical dating of Proverbs to Solomon's time, but also suggests that the issues explored in Proverbs reflect a common interest of all peoples for advice on how to live wisely and well.

Key Events: The type of writing is not descriptive on any particular event.

Key People: Solomon

Key Themes: Proverbs is practical wisdom for living our lives in a way that pleases God; these observations apply to all human beings, not just to the believer. It is not complicated but the core and root of wisdom are the fear of the Lord. 1:7.

Among the many themes in Proverbs:

Wisdom for young menCh. 1-9 ... e.g. 1:4

Wisdom for all peopleCh. 10-24 e.g. 1:2-3

Wisdom for leaders.....Ch. 25-31 e.g. 1:5-6

The fear of the Lord..... e.g. 10:27; 14:26-27

The wise man is compared to the fool..... e.g..... 10:8

The righteous and the wicked e.g. 10:20-21

Words and the tongue e.g. 18:4

Family..... e.g. 30:17; 20:11

Laziness and hard work..... e.g. 6:6

Key verses Proverbs 1:7 & 3:5-6

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

ECCLESIASTES

AUTHOR: SOLOMON

DATE: 935 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Prologue: Life Is Meaningless Ecc. 1:1-11
- II. Proof: Meaningless demonstrated Ecc. 1:12-6:12
- III. Preferences: Making the Best of a Meaningless Life .. Ecc. 7:1-12:8
- IV. Epilogue: Call to fear God Ecc. 12:9-14

Historical Setting: This book was probably written towards the end of Solomon's life. He reflects upon a time when he reigned supremely and yet so much had slipped. He allowed the worship of idols, brought in by his foreign wives. He describes life without God. Meaningless and full of vanity.

Key Events: Solomon is coming to the end of his life, a sad man.

Key People: Solomon

Key Themes: Meaning in life is not found in knowledge, money, pleasure, work or popularity. It can only be found in God. There are two key scriptures worth highlighting.

Chapter 5:1-2. Be careful when you enter the house of God. Listen, be still; think before you speak. God is not blessed with hasty statements or rash promises.

Chapter 12:1. Remember your creator when you are young. Those who build a good foundation in early years have an advantage. It is harder to change as you get older.

Key Chapter: Ecclesiastes 12

Key Verse: Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. *'Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.'*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

SONG OF SONGS

AUTHOR: SOLOMON

DATE: 970 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Falling in Love Song. 1:1-2:7
- II. Growing Desire Song. 2:8-3:5
- III. Wedding Song Song. 3:6-5:1
- IV. Separation Song. 5:2-8:4
- V. United Again Song. 8:5-14

Historical Setting: Early in Solomon's reign, a love story unfolds in Israel set in the Shulammite woman's garden and the king's palace.

Key Events: The marriage of two lovers.

Key People: Solomon, the Shulammite woman

Key Themes: This book is a love story. It illustrates the love between a bridegroom and his bride, it affirms the sanctity of marriage and it shows the love that God has for His people.

The book makes it clear that sexual experience is pleasing to God; it is not sordid or wrong. However, like any gift it must not be abused and found a right context to function in.

Key Chapter: Song of Songs 2

Key Verses:

Ch 2:4. *'He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love.'*

Ch 2:16. *'My lover is mine and I am his.'*

Ch 6:13. *'... , come back, O Shulammite; ... that we may gaze on you!'*

Ch 8:6-7. *'... for love is strong as death, ... many waters cannot quench love; . . .'*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

ISAIAH

AUTHOR: ISAIAH

DATE: 700 BC & 681 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Visions of Judgement Isa. 1-35
 - A. Israel's Holy One Isa. 1-6
 - B. Book of Immanuel Isa. 7-12
 - C. Oracles of judgement Isa. 13-24
 - D. Judgement and deliverance Isa. 25-35
- II. Historical Interlude Isa. 36-39
- III. Visions of Splendour Isa. 40-66
 - A. Beyond the Exile Isa. 40-48
 - B. Messiah: God's Servant Isa. 49-55
 - C. Redemption Isa. 56-59
 - D. Restoration Isa. 60-66

Historical Setting: Isaiah lived through a pivotal period of his nation's history, the second half of the 8th century BC, which saw the rise of written prophecy, but also the downfall and disappearance of the greater part of Israel. The death of King Uzziah in 740 BC meant the end of an Indian summer which both Judah and Israel had enjoyed for some 50 years. The rest of the century was dominated by empire seeking Assyrian kings, who would uproot and transplant whole populations, punishing any sign of rebellion with prompt and hideous reprisals.

Key Events: As a prophet he is speaking into events rather than describing them. The key for him is meeting God in the temple.

Time: Isaiah began his ministry during the expansion of the Assyrian empire and the decline of Israel. Under King Tiglath-Pileser 3 the Assyrians swept westward into Aram (Syria) and Canaan. The King of Aram and Israel put pressure on Ahaz king of Judah to join them in forming a coalition, but Ahaz chose instead to ask Tiglath-Pileser for help (**see 2 Kings 16**) a decision that Isaiah condemned (**chapters 7**). He predicted the fall of Judah.

Key Themes: The prophet is calling Judah back to God. His prophesy covers a wide range of issues and has been referred to as a mini Bible. Isaiah's most significant prophecies are those concerning the birth, ministry, death and resurrection and returning reign of the Messiah.

Key Chapters:

Chapter 6: Isaiah meets with the holiness of God and hears His call.

Chapter 9: The Wonderful Counsellor is promised

Chapter 11: The righteous reign.

Chapter 35: The joy of the redeemed.

Chapter 40: Strength for the weary.

Chapter 53: The Servant who suffers for us.

Chapter 61: The year of the Lord's favour.

Chapter 65: New heavens and new earth.

Key Verse: Isaiah 1:18. *“Come now, let us reason together,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

JEREMIAH

AUTHOR: JEREMIAH

DATE: 627-586 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Jeremiah's MissionJer. 1-10
- II. The Broken Covenant.....Jer. 11-20
- III. Judgement at Hand.....Jer. 21-29
- IV. New Covenant Promises.....Jer. 30-38
- V. Jerusalem FallenJer. 39-51
- VI. Historical Appendix.....Jer. 52

Historical Setting: Jeremiah prophesies as the nation of Judah slides towards destruction and occupation by the Babylonians.

Key Events: Jeremiah's call to serve God

Time: Jeremiah began prophesying halfway through the reign of Josiah and continued throughout the reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah (**2 Kings 22-24**)

Key Themes: Jeremiah is called to urge the people of God to return to Him. His ministry will be of necessity, destructive but then constructive.

Jeremiah is bold to speak of the word of God, knowing the rejection it would bring. He is aware that the people are but clay in God's hand and that they need to humble themselves or be judged.

He is also aware, by the revelation of God, that God has a new covenant in store and God will be writing on people's hearts the way He wants them to live.

Key Chapters:

- Chapter 1:..... The call of Jeremiah 'Do not be afraid'
- Chapter 18:..... The potter's house
- Chapter 23:..... The righteous branch
- Chapter 29:..... Good plans
- Chapter 31:..... New covenant, new heart.

Key Verse: Jeremiah 29:11. *"... For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future . . ."*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

LAMENTATIONS

AUTHOR: JEREMIAH

DATE: 586 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Deserted City..... Lam. 1
- II. The Rejected City Lam. 2
- III. Call for self-examination Lam. 3
- IV. Past glory remembered Lam. 4
- V. Prayer for Restoration Lam. 5

Historical Setting: Jerusalem has been destroyed by Babylon and her people lulled or taken into captivity.

Key Events: The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

Key People: Jeremiah

Key Themes: God's judgement but also his mercy. This book helps us to see the heart of God is affected by our sin and its consequences. The weeping prophet shows the sadness of living with less than God's best. Jerusalem has fallen and although anger is satisfied, there is a pleading for mercy.

Key Chapter: Lamentations 3

Key Verses: Lamentations 3:22-23. *"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness."*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

EZEKIEL

AUTHOR: EZEKIEL

DATE: 571 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Ezekiel's Call Ezek. 1-3
- II. Judah's Judgement Ezek. 4-24
 - A. A watchman's warnings Ezek. 4-7
 - B. God's glory departs Ezek. 8-11
 - C. Excuses condemned..... Ezek. 12-19
 - D. Leadership's faults Ezek. 20-24
- III. Foreign nations' fate Ezek. 25-33
- IV. Future Blessings..... Ezek. 34-48
 - A. Restoration of God's People Ezek. 34-39
 - B. Restoration of worship..... Ezek. 40-48

Historical Setting: Ezekiel prophesies to those already exiled in Babylon after the defeat of Jehoiachin.

Key Events: For Ezekiel, his call in (Ch. 1) and the revelation of the Temple (Ch 47), were overwhelming experiences of the glory of God.

Time: Ezekiel lived during a time of international upheaval. The Assyrian empire which conquered Israel was beginning to crumble. The capital, Nineveh soon fell into the hands of a combined Babylonian` and Medes` force. Three years later Pharaoh Neco 2 of Egypt marched North to assist Assyria and try to assert Egypt's influence in the Palestine region again. At Megiddo, King Josiah of Judah attempted to intercept the Egyptian force, but was crushed and killed (**2 Kings 23:29-30**)

Jehoahaz ruled for 3 months and was replaced by Neco's choice, Jehoiakim, who became his vassal in Jerusalem. The Egyptian army was soon crushed by the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar was installed as the new Babylonian king. Soon afterward Jehoiakim, who was a vassal to Nebuchadnezzar rebelled against hm;. this rebellion led to the subduing of Jerusalem and the sending of 10,000 Jews into exile (2 King 24:14). This group included Ezekiel.

Key Themes: Ezekiel announces God's judgement on Israel and other nations. He foresees the salvation of God's people.

He was a Jewish street preacher for about 22 years.

He illustrated his message with dramatic object lessons.

He lay on his side for 390 days eating only one eight ounce meal per day.

He shaved his head and beard.

He showed no sorrow when his wife died, as a sign for Israel not to mourn for Jerusalem

He is described as a watchman for God's people and was a fearless preacher of God's truth.

Key Chapters:

Chapter 1-3:..... Ezekiel's vision of God and his call.

Chapter 28: Powerful description of Satan in the garden.

Chapter 34: Poor shepherding

Chapter 37: Valley of Dry Bones (Death - Exceedingly great army)

Chapter 47: The River of God

Key Verse: Ezekiel 36:24-26. *“For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

DANIEL

AUTHOR: DANIEL

DATE: 535 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The steadfast fidelity of Daniel and his companionsDan. 1
- II. Nebuchadnezzar's Vision of the Image made of four metals...Dan. 2
- III. Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Idol and the Fiery FurnaceDan. 3
- IV. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Ruined Tree and Its meaning....Dan. 4
- V. Belshazzar's Doom Announced by the Handwriting on the Wall...Dan. 5
- VI. Decree of Darius and the Den of LionsDan. 6
- VII. Daniel's Dream of Four Beasts depicting Four World Empires....Dan. 7
- VIII. Daniel's Vision of the Ram and Goat NationsDan. 8
- IX. Daniel's Vision of the Seventy Weeks of Gentile Supremacy....Dan. 9
- X. Vision of God's Glory Introducing Outline of Coming Events....Dan. 10
- XI. Prophecies of the Immediate FutureDan. 11:1-35
 - A. Greece's Conquest of Medo-Persia.....Dan 11:1-3
 - B. The Decay of the Grecian EmpireDan. 11:4-35
 1. The Wars between Egypt and Syria.....Dan.11:4-20
 2. The Reign of Wicked Antiochus EpiphanesDan. 11:21-35
- XII. Prophecies of the Distant FutureDan. 11:36-12:13
 - A. The AntichristDan. 11:36-45
 - B. The Great TribulationDan. 12

Historical Setting: Daniel is one of a number of Jews who are faithful to God despite living in captivity. He is seen to be righteous, faithful, obedient and uncompromising in relation to his worship of God.

Key Events: Still to come, the return of Christ is heralded in this prophecy.

Key People: Daniel, Darius and Nebuchadnezzar

Key Themes: God's care and love for those who are His;
God's sovereign power over the elements i.e. fire, lions, kings;
God's foreknowledge i.e. prophecies into the future, dreams etc.
The blessings of those who live righteously.

Ch. 7-12 reveal the sovereignty of God who works out His purposes despite men's apparent power. Visions, rams, he- goat, prayer for repentance, seventy-seven weeks, Antichrist all feature in this section.

Key Chapters:

Ch. 1 Daniel will only obey God not idols.

Ch. 2 Nebuchadnezzar's dream is interpreted.

Ch. 3 The fiery furnace is overcome.

Ch. 6 Delivered from lions.

Ch. 9 Daniel's intercessory prayer.

Key Verse: Daniel 11:32. ' . . . , but the people who know their God will firmly resist him.'

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

HOSEA

AUTHOR: HOSEA

DATE: 715 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Israel's UnfaithfulnessHosea 1-3
- II. God's Indictment of Israel.....Hosea 4-6
- III. Israel's Punishment.....Hosea 7-10
- IV. Israel's RestorationHosea 11-14

Historical Setting: Hosea's ministry takes place at the end of the reign of Jeroboam II, just before the fall of Samaria. Six kings after Jeroboam II reigned within 25 years (**2 kings 15:8-17:41**). Four of these kings were murdered by their successor while in office, and one (**Hoshea**) was captured in battle.

Key Events: The unfaithful wife is loved and wanted by Hosea as God desires unfaithful Israel to repent.

Key People: Hosea and his wife Gomer

Key Themes: The first part of the book uses Hosea's family life as a symbol to convey the message the prophet received from God for Israel. God ordered Hosea to marry a prostitute, Gomer and their three children became symbolic of God's message to Israel.

Hosea foretold the Assyrian invasion of the Northern Kingdom and the fall of Samaria.

The purpose of all this, of course, was to picture God's relationship with Israel. The nation had proved unfaithful, living in idolatry and moral wickedness.

Key Chapters:

- Ch. 1 God's call to Hosea.
- Ch. 6 The call to repentance.
- Ch. 11 God's love for a sinful people.
- Ch. 14 Restoring a sinful rebellious people.

Key Verse: Hosea 14:4. *"I will heal their weariness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them."*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

JOEL

AUTHOR: JOEL

DATE: 835-796 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Plague of LocustsJoel 1:1-12
- II. A Call to RepentanceJoel 1:13-20
- III. A Preview of JudgementJoel 2
- IV. Judah Restored.....Joel 3

Historical Setting: God's people had turned to idolatry and had become prosperous but complacent. Joel warns this will lead to God's judgement.

Key Events: This clearly is the plague of locusts which heralded God's judgement.

Key theme: A call to repent. In his vision of the locust, he calls old and young (1:2-3), drunkards (1:5) farmers (1:11) priests (1:13) to repent.

He describes the locust as the Lord's army and sees in their coming that the day of the Lord is near.

His prophecy is quoted a great deal because Peter refers to parts of it on the Day of Pentecost. The outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh is still being fulfilled today. Joel urges Judah to repent and turn back to God.

He warns of terrible judgement but reminds them that God's heart is to forgive the penitent and pour out His Spirit without measure.

The Day of the Locusts ...Ch. 1-2:27

The Day of the Lord Ch. 2:27-3

Key Chapter: Joel 2. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Locusts devour and destroy but God's Spirit will bring revelation and prepare the way for final judgement.

Key Verse: Joel 2:12-13. *"Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for his is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.'*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

AMOS

AUTHOR: AMOS

DATE: 760-750 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Oracles of Judgement Amos 1-6
 - a) against the nations Amos 1:1-2:5
 - b) against Israel..... Amos 2:6-6:14
- II. Visions of Judgement Amos 7:1-9:10
- III. A Prediction of Renewal Amos 9:11-15

Historical Setting: Amos prophesied during the reign of Uzziah over Judah and Jeroboam II over Israel. Both North (Israel) and South (Judah) were enjoying great prosperity and had reached new political and military heights (**2 Kings 14:23-15:7**). It was a time of idolatry, luxurious living, immorality, injustice and oppression of the poor.

God's people were enjoying a degree of prosperity but judgement through the Assyrians is coming because of the gross injustice they allow.

Key Events: The vision Amos had of impending judgement

Key Themes: The dominant theme in the book of Amos is a call for social justice as a true sign of faith in God

He prophesied about God's judgement through the Assyrians because of their gross injustice

He warned them of God bringing His plumb line of justice and righteousness to bear.

The people are behaving corruptly and are short-changing in their business dealings.

Short-term material prosperity is nothing compared to long-term spiritual ruin so Repent! Complacency is a deadly enemy.

Key Chapters:

Ch. 5 Seek God and live. Desire justice

Ch. 7 God's plumb line

Ch. 9 Israel's restoration

Key Verse: Amos 5:24. *'But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!'*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

OBADIAH

AUTHOR: OBADIAH

DATE: UNCLEAR

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Edom's Pride to be abased Obad. 1-4
- II. Destruction of Edom Obad. 4-9
 - A. The Completeness of the Plunder Obad. 5, 6
 - B. The Betrayal of Edom's Allies Obad. 7
 - C. The Destruction of Edom's Leaders Obad. 8, 9
- III. Reasons for Edom's Downfall Obad. 10-14
- IV. Edom's Judgement is retributive Obad. 15, 16

Historical Setting: Obadiah's name means servant of the Lord or worshipper of Jehovah. It is unclear when he wrote the book but it is believed it was about 853-841 BC or 627-586 BC.

Key Events: There is no key event but a prophetic word of coming judgement

Key People: Obadiah, the Edomites

Key Themes: Obadiah is a prophecy of destruction, directed at Edom, a land across the Jordan River from Judah that was populated by descendants of Jacob's brother, Esau.

The Edomites who had been a thorn in the flesh to Israel would be judged. Obadiah said the Edomites collaborated with foreign invaders of Judah and mistreated Jerusalem's survivors; a charge which fits six occasions in Judah's history!

They were proud and arrogant but nevertheless no match for Almighty God. Edom faced destruction. God's chosen people would be restored.

Key Chapter: The Book has only one chapter

Key Verse: Obadiah v.15. *"The day of the Lord is near for all nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return upon your own head. . . ."*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

JONAH

AUTHOR: JONAH

DATE: 785-760 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Disobedience of the Prophet Jonah 1
 - A. Jonah's Missionary Call Jonah 1:1,2
 - B. Jonah's Flight to Tarshish Jonah 1:3
 - C. The Storm at Sea Jonah 1:4-10
 - D. Jonah Thrown overboard & swallowed by a great Fish Jonah 1:11-17
- II. The Deliverance of the Prophet Jonah 2
 - A. Jonah's Prayer Jonah 2:1-9
 - B. God's Answer Jonah 2:10
- III. The Declaration of God's Message through the Prophet. Jonah 3
 - A. The Threat of Judgement Jonah 3:1-4
 - B. The city-wide Repentance Jonah 3:5-9
 - C. The Judgement averted Jonah 3:10
- IV. The Displeasure of the Prophet Jonah 4
 - A. Jonah's petulant Prayer Jonah 4:1-3
 - B. God's Searching question Jonah 4:4
 - C. Jonah Sulking outside the City Jonah 4:5
 - D. Object Lesson on God's Sovereign Mercy Jonah 4:6-11

Historical Setting: In 2 Kings 14:25, we learn that Jonah's home was in Gath Hepher, in Galilee. He prophesied during the days when Assyria was threatening the Northern Kingdom, Israel. He ministered under Jereboam II.

Key Events: God sent him to preach repentance to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. Jonah disobeyed God by trying to run to Tarshish; on his way he encounters God's divine judgement and succumbs to God.

He went to Nineveh and told them about God's judgement and the people repented, which did not please Jonah.

Key Themes: Obedience, disobedience, God's Sovereignty, God's Compassion

Key Chapter: Jonah 3 The people of Nineveh turn from their evil ways

Key Verse: Jonah 4:11. *'But Nineveh has more than one hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?'*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

MICAH

AUTHOR: MICAH

DATE: 742-687 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Prediction of Wrath against Israel and Judah Micah 1
- II. The Doom of the wealthy Oppressors Micah 2:1-11
- III. The Promise of Restoration Micah 2:12,13
- IV. Denunciation of Rulers, False Prophets and Priests Micah 3
- V. The Glory of Christ's Millennial Reign..... Micah 4
- VI. The Promise of the Messiah's Coming Micah 5
- VII. Israel on Trial Micah 6
- VIII. The Nation bewails its sad state Micah 7:1-10
- IX. Future Blessing for Israel Micah 7:11-20

Historical Setting: Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea (**Hosea 1:1**) Amos. He prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah in the South. Israel had turned her back on God and Micah prophesied the downfall of its capital, Samaria (**chapter 1:5-7**) and prophesied the inevitable fall of Judah (**chapters 1:9-16**)

Three significant historical events occurred during the time of Micah:

1. Tiglath-Pileser 3 of Assyria led a military campaign against Aram (Syria), Philistia and parts of Israel and Judah. According to (**2 Kings 15:29**) the Northern kingdom lost most of its territory.
2. Samaria fell and the Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by Assyria
3. Judah joined a revolt against Assyria and was overrun by King Sennacherib and his army. Jerusalem however was spared.

Key Events: The prediction that Bethlehem would be the birthplace of the Messiah

Key Themes: His prophetic utterance concerning Bethlehem and the Messiah is the most outstanding portion of this prophecy. The prophet urges people to repent and get ready for the Messiah whom God will surely send. In Him is the plan and purpose of God to restore His people Israel.

Micah denounces rulers, priests and prophets, dishonesty, money grabbing, exploitation of the helpless and sham religion. But a bright hope is coming!
Ch 1-2. The Capital cities are on trial.

Ch 3-5. The Leaders are on trial.

Ch 6-7. The People are on trial.

God loves His people to worship and love Him, not just offer empty sacrifices.

Key Chapters: Micah 5.....The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem.
Micah 7.....Israel will rise.

Key Verse: Micah 5:2. *“ . . . But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

NAHUM

AUTHOR: NAHUM

DATE: 742-687 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Character of God, the Judge Nahum 1:1-8
- II. Certainty of the Doom of Nineveh Nahum 1:9-15
- III. Description of the Siege of Nineveh Nahum 2:1-12
- IV. God's Determination to Destroy the City Nahum 2:13-3:19

Historical Setting: Assyria had already destroyed Samaria, resulting in the captivity of Israel, which posed a great threat to Judah. King Sennacherib made Nineveh the capital of the Assyrian empire. Jonah had announced the destruction of Nineveh earlier on (**Jonah 3:4**), but the people had repented and the destruction was averted.

However, Nineveh soon reverted to its wicked ways and Nahum prophesied concerning its fall. This book could be regarded as the sequel to Jonah. Nahum prophesies after the fall of Thebes about the destruction of Nineveh.

Key Events: Nahum's prophecy will happen even though the Ninevites have been shown mercy before.

Key People: The people of Nineveh, and the people of Judah

Key Theme: The theme is again picked up that God rules and reigns and that He judges sin. Nahum prophesied against Nineveh. The prophet, a citizen of Judah, predicted the city's fall and vividly described the manner in which it was actually taken. The time for mercy, as in the day of Jonah, has passed and now judgement is coming.

Key Chapter: Nahum 1 - God is Awesome

Key Verse: Nahum 1:7. *'The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him, . . .*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

HABAKKUK

AUTHOR: HABAKKUK

DATE: 612-588 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Prophet's Problems and God's Solutions.....Hab. 1:1-2:20
 - A. The First Problem and SolutionHab. 1:1-11
 - 1. Problem: Gods' seeming Indifference to Judah's Iniquities. Hab. 1:1-4
 - 2. Solution: Gods' Judgement through the Chaldean Invasion.Hab.1:5-11
 - B. The Second Problem and Solution.....Hab. 1:12-2:20
 - 1. Problem: God's Employment of the more wicked Chaldeans to Render Judgement..... Hab. 1:12-2:1
 - 2. Solution: The Impending Downfall of the Chaldeans. Hab. 2:2-2:20
- II. The Prophet's Prayer.....Hab. 3:1-19
 - A. A Petition for MercyHab. 3:1, 2
 - B. A Vision of GodHab. 3:3-15
 - 1. God in His Majesty.....Hab. 3:3, 4
 - 2. God in His PowerHab. 3:5-15
 - C. A Declaration of TrustHab. 3:16-19

Historical Setting: Habakkuk wrote in the time of the godly King Josiah. Babylon is emerging fast and this kingdom will be used as a vehicle by God to bring judgement on His people.

Key Events: Habakkuk realises that God is sovereign and will use even the heathen for His purposes.

Key People: The people of Babylon, Habakkuk

Key Theme: His message is not directed at Israel; it contains a dialogue between Habakkuk and God.

The prophet was deeply troubled by the injustices prevailing in Judah's society despite a religious revival. Habakkuk reminds us that God is in control despite the apparent triumph of evil.

Job and the writer of Psalm 73 would have understood Habakkuk's dilemma. It is hard to understand why God's people suffer when the arrogant and wicked thrive. However, God is God and He is working out His purposes.

Key Chapter: Ch. 3. Having shared honestly with God his concerns and questions, he prays for God to move in mercy. Habakkuk's prayer in ch. 3. is an example of his love and trust in the Lord

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

ZEPHANIAH

AUTHOR: ZEPHANIAH

DATE: 640-621 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. God's Determination to execute Judgement..... Zeph. 1
 - A. on All the Earth..... Zeph. 1:1-3
 - B. on Judah and Jerusalem because of Idolatry Zeph. 1:4-6
 - C. The Day of the Lord under the Figure of a Sacrifice ... Zeph. 1:7-13
 - 1. Guests: Judah's Enemies..... Zeph. 1:7
 - 2. Victims: Wicked People of Judah Zeph. 1:8-13
 - D. The Terror of the Day of the Lord..... Zeph. 1:14-18
- II. Judah is called to Repent Zeph. 2:1-3
- III. The Doom of Gentile Nations Zeph. 2:4-15
 - A. The Philistines Zeph. 2:4-7
 - B. The Moabites and Ammonites Zeph. 2:8-11
 - C. The Ethiopians Zeph. 2:12
 - D. The Assyrians and especially the City of Nineveh Zeph. 2:13-15
- IV. Woe pronounced on Jerusalem Zeph. 3:1-7
 - A. Disobedience, Unresponsiveness, Unbelief, Impenitence Zeph. 3:1, 2
 - B. Greed of the Princes and the Judges Zeph. 3:3
 - C. Levity & Treachery of the Prophets and Sacrilege of the Priests Zeph. 3:4
 - D. The Lord's Presence of Judgement Zeph. 3:5-7
- V. Message of Comfort to the Faithful Remnant Zeph. 3:8-20
 - A. Destruction of Wicked Gentiles..... Zeph. 3:8
 - B. Conversion of the Remaining Nations..... Zeph. 3:9
 - C. Restoration of Dispersed Israel..... Zeph. 3:10-13
 - D. Rejoicing over the Second Advent of Christ..... Zeph. 3:14-17
 - E. What God Will Do for His People..... Zeph. 3:18-20

Historical Setting: Zephaniah prophesies at the time of Josiah who seeks to bring godly reforms in a nation previously dominated by evil living. **(see 2 Kings 22:1-23:30)**. Zephaniah himself seems to have been of royal blood tracing his ancestry to King Hezekiah. **(chapters 1:1)**

Key People: Zephaniah, Josiah

Key Theme: He seeks to shake people out of complacency and warn them to return to God or face judgement. Judah must be different to other nations or she faces judgement with the other nations.

Key Chapter: Zephaniah 3 - The Lord, Mighty to save.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

HAGGAI

AUTHOR: HAGGAI

DATE: 520 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The First Message: A word of RebukeHag. 1:1-15
 - A. IntroductionHag. 1:1
 - B. A Rebuke for sinful IndifferenceHag. 1:2-6
 - C. An Exhortation to Resume the WorkHag. 1:7-11
 - D. The Enthusiastic ResponseHag. 1:12-15
- II. The Second Message: A Word of Encouragement.....Hag. 2:1-9
 - A. Introduction.....Hag. 2:1, 2
 - B. An Encouragement to BuildHag. 2:3-5
 - C. A Promise of Future Glory.....Hag. 2:6-9
- III. The Third Message: A Word of PromiseHag. 2:10-19
 - A. Introduction.....Hag. 2:10
 - B. The Corrupting Effect of SinHag. 2:11-14
 - C. The Promise of Future BlessingHag. 2:15-19
- IV. The Fourth Message: A word of ProphecyHag. 2:20-23
 - A. Introduction.....Hag. 2:20
 - B. The Overthrow of Gentile Kingdoms.....Hag. 2:21, 22
 - C. The Restoration of David's ThroneHag. 2:23

Historical Setting: Cyrus king of Persia, issued a decree allowing all the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:2-4). Led by Zerubbabel, 50,000 Jews went back to Jerusalem and began working on the temple.

Key Events: The moves to rebuild the temple of God.

Key Theme: The Israelite returned to Jerusalem only to find it in ruins and a drought upon the land.

After a 16 year struggle, lethargy, both social and spiritual, had set in and it is into this situation Haggai spoke. He calls the people to build God's house and not their own.

Four times the prophet comes to the people of God. Hard times are because of wrong priorities. The glorious temple of Solomon was history but God would rebuild it

time 'glory', which would be wonderful to see. Working on the temple alone would not please God, right hearts are most important.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

ZECHARIAH

AUTHOR: ZECHARIAH

DATE: 520-480 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Opening Exhortation Zech. 1:1-6
- II. Section 1: A Series of Eight VisionsZech. 1:7-6:15
 1. The Man among The Myrtle trees, And The drove of HorsesZech. 1:7-17
 2. The Four Horns and the Four CraftsmenZech. 1:18-21
 3. The Man with the measuring Line.....Zech. 2
 4. The Cleansing Of The High PriestZech. 3
 5. The Golden Lampstand, And the Two Olive TreesZech. 4
 6. The Flying Scroll..... Zech. 5:1-4
 7. The Woman in the Basket..... Zech. 5:5-11
 8. The Four Chariots and the Crowning of the High Priest Zech. 6:1-15
- III. Section 2: The Answer to the Deputation from Bethel concerning the Fasts. In the End the Fasts shall become Festivals..... Zech. 7-8
- IV. Section 3: Prediction concerning a period of the History of the Jews and a Vision of the Ultimate Triumph of God's Kingdom Zech. 9-14
 - Messianic Element** - The Kingly MessiahZech. 9:9-13:7
 - a. First Coming In LowlinessZech. 9:9
 - b. The Prince Of PeaceZech. 9:10
 - c. CrucifiedZech. 12:10
 - d. A Shepherd Forsaken by His sheepZech. 13:7
 - Choice Selection**..... Zech. 4:6-13-1
 1. The Secret of Success In spiritual Enterprises Zech. 4:6-10
 2. The Coming of the Prince of Peace Zech. 9:9-10
 3. The Fountain of CleansingZech. 13:1

Historical Setting: This book was written over a period of time: chapters 1-8 were written between 520-518 and chapters 9-14 around 480. Zechariah along with Haggai encourages the completion of the temple.

Key Events: Completing the temple and looking forward to the Messiah coming

Key People: Joshua, Zerubbabel

Key Theme: Although Zechariah has only 14 chapters it is quoted forty times in the New Testament; it is the most Christ-centred of all the Minor Prophets. The symbolic visions, plus his messages and revelations, all enhance the importance of this book. Zechariah prophesies the entry into Jerusalem of Jesus on a

donkey. The people who have returned from exile must get on with the job of restoring the temple. The Messiah is coming and ultimately His rule and reign will restore everything according to God's word.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

OLD TESTAMENT

MALACHI

AUTHOR: MALACHI

DATE: 430 BC

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Lord's Charges against Israel, their Replies, and His threatened Judgements.....Mal. 1:1-3:15
 - A. IngratitudeMal. 1:1-5
 - B. Sacrilege by the Priests.....Mal. 1:6-14
 - C. Condemnation of the PriestsMal. 2:1-9
 - D. Divorce and Mixed MarriagesMal. 2:10-16
 - E. Denial of God's Holiness and Justice.....Mal. 2:17
 - F. Parenthesis: Messiah's Coming in Judgement.....Mal. 3:1-6
 - G. The Backsliding of the PeopleMal. 3:7
 - H. Robbing God of Tithes and OfferingsMal. 3:8-12
 - I. False Charges against GodMal. 3:13-15
- II. The Blessing of the Remnant and the Judgement of the WickedMal. 3:16-4:6
 - A. The Restoration of the Faithful RemnantMal. 3:16-18
 - B. The Judgement of the Wicked.....Mal. 4:1
 - C. The Coming of the Messiah to the RemnantMal. 4:2,3
 - D. Closing Exhortation to Obedience, with Promise of the Coming of Elijah the Prophet.....Mal. 4:4-6

Historical Setting: The people have begun to return to the land and rebuild but their complacency needs a strong prophetic rebuke.

Key Events: The prediction of John the Baptist, paving the way for Jesus

Key People: Malachi and the Priests

Key Theme: Malachi is the last of the Minor Prophets; his name means 'my messenger'. He was faced with the failure of the priests of Judah to fear God and to serve the people conscientiously during difficult times. This contributed to Judah's indifference toward the will of God. The people blamed the supposed unfaithfulness of the Lord for their social and economic troubles and not their own unfaithfulness to God and each other. This showed in the way in which they offered their sacrifices.

Malachi told the people that they must offer God the best and not the poorest, weakest offering they thought they could get away with. They must not rob God. They must bring the full tithe into the storehouse, because the blessing

God can pour out is overwhelming. He also encourages faithfulness in marriage.

This is the last time God pleads with His people in the Old Testament period. After this there will be silence for four centuries until God's purpose is fulfilled. The Messiah is coming and His forerunner, who is John the Baptist, will prepare the way.

Key Chapter: Malachi 4

Key Verses: Malachi 2:17 *'You have wearied the Lord with your words. "How have we wearied Him?" you ask. By saying, "All who do evil are good in the eyes of the Lord, and he is pleased with them" or "Where is the God of justice?"*

Malachi 3:8 *"Will a man rob God?" Yet you rob me. But you ask, "How do we rob you?" In tithes and offerings.'*

Malachi 4:6 *'He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers.'*

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

New Testament

The Synoptic Gospel

There are four Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They were written at different times. The earliest was Mark about 45 A D. We need to remember that the order in which books appear in the Bible is not necessarily the order in which they were written.

The beginning of Gospel writing coincides with the end of the first Christian era. As eyewitnesses and ministers of the word were removed by death so the value of a written record was felt much more acutely. Obviously God was using these natural circumstances to bring about His word in written form and indeed as John was to write, He brought back to their memories details and events which their natural mind would otherwise have forgotten.

SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

A study of Matthew, Mark and Luke reveals that there is a considerable amount of material that is common to all three. The substance of 606 out of the 661 verses of Mark reappear in abridged form in Matthew; some 380 of the 661 verses of Mark reappear in Luke. Only 31 verses of Mark have no parallel in Matthew or Luke. About 300 verses of Matthew have no parallel in any of the other Gospels and the same is true of 520 verses in Luke. Material which appears in Matthew and Luke but not in Mark has been referred to as "Q". The fact remains that wherever Matthew, Mark and Luke got their material from for the Gospels, the whole matter was watched over by the Holy Spirit. We read today God's Word which He used man to write. The synoptic are descriptive and they give us an overview of the birth, life, teaching, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE LAND OF THE GOSPELS

Palestine is about the size of Wales. The coastal plain, central mountains, the Jordan rift and desert made for great variety in a small area. We can only speculate how many miles Jesus must have walked in this hot climate as He went from town to town and village to village. How long did it take to climb to a quiet place to seek God's face in prayer?

Israel, remarkably, has not changed so much over the last two centuries and those who visit do not find it difficult to imagine the events that the Gospels describe.

POLITICAL CLIMATE

By New Testament times the Jewish people had lived under foreign occupation for about 500 years since returning to their own land. Under Greek rule they had adopted the Greek language of the empire. This was to prove very significant as the New Testament was to be written in Greek, a rich language and a relatively common language of the day.

In 190 BC the Greek, Antiochus the Great was defeated by the Romans and Israel was under their rule. The Jews were allowed to keep their religion and even a king, but Rome had the final word, hence the role of Pontius Pilate.

Jesus was born into this background with Augustus as Roman Emperor. The Romans collected taxes and dispensed justice ruthlessly. Feelings ran high against the Romans so Jesus did not want to precipitate trouble with constant public claims to be the Messiah. Such claims would have easily been understood.

JEWISH RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The **Pharisees** were a strict sect, legalistic and with a tendency to introduce their own nit-picking rules. Many were godly men but some were so self-righteous they ended getting firm rebukes from Jesus.

The **Sadducees** came mostly from families of priests. They were not as strict as the Pharisees.

The **Scribes** were not a sect but experts in the Law. They were teachers who interpreted the Law and applied it to everyday life.

The **Zealots** were red hot nationalists dedicated to throwing out the Romans.

THE CONTENT OF THE SYNOPTIC

Generally speaking.

The Gospels record the eternal being, human ancestry, birth, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Son of Man. They give us a selection of incidents and do not claim to give us everything Jesus said and did.

1. All reveal a unique personality that we need to know.
 2. All record the ministry of John the Baptist.
 3. All record the feeding of the five thousand.
 4. All record the betrayal by Judas; the denial by Peter; the trial; crucifixion, and literal resurrection of Christ.
 5. All record the resurrection ministry of Christ.
- All point forward to Jesus' Second Coming.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW

AUTHOR: MATTHEW

DATE: AD 60-65

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Origin and Infancy of Jesus the Messiah Matt. 1-2:23
- II. The Beginning of the Ministry of Jesus the Messiah Matt. 3-4
- III. The Ethics of the Kingdom of God. The Beatitudes Matt. 5-7
- IV. Jesus the Doer of Mighty Works Matt. 8-9:34
- V. Jesus and His Mission Preachers Matt. 9:35-10:42
- VI. The Claims of Jesus the Messiah Matt. 11-12
- VII. Seven Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven Matt. 13:1-52
- VIII. The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth and the
Martyrdom of John the BaptistMatt. 13:53-14:12
- IX. Withdrawal of Jesus from Herd's DominionMatt. 14:13-17:27
- X. Life in the Messianic CommunityMatt. 18
- XI. The Journey to Jerusalem Matt. 19-20
- XII. The Messiah's Challenge to Jerusalem Matt. 21-22
- XIII. Denunciation of the Scribes and PhariseesMatt. 23
- XIV. The Fall of Jerusalem,
and the coming of the Son of ManMatt. 24
- XV. Three Parables of JudgementMatt. 25
- XVI. The Passion Narrative Matt. 26-27
- XVII. The Resurrection of Jesus and Post-Resurrection Narratives
The Great Commission. Go and make DisciplesMatt. 28

Historical Setting: Jesus was born in Bethlehem during the Roman occupation of Palestine. His life and ministry all happen under Roman rule and His crucifixion was according to Roman execution methods. Palestine had a limited amount of self-government under Roman control, hence King Herod.

Key Events: The birth of Jesus; The Sermon on the Mount; The death of Jesus; The resurrection of Jesus; The commission of Jesus.

The purpose of Matthew: The Gospel of Matthew is written to a Jewish audience and Matthew's special interest is to show that:

- **Jesus was the Messiah:** Matthew continually repeats the saying 'all this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophets' (**1:22; 2:15,17,23; 4:14; 8:17.**)

- **Jews and the church** : Matthew writes as if his audience were familiar with the Jewish faith. It is only in this Gospel that the message of the Cross is limited 'to the lost sheep of Israel' **(10:6;15:24)**. Matthew is also very anti-Jew, denouncing their leaders. Matthew has a love-hate relationship towards Israel, evidence of someone that has found in Jesus, the true meaning of the Jewish faith

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

MARK

DATE: AD 55-65

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Manifestation of the Servant-SonMark. 1:1-11
- II. The Servant-Son is TestedMark. 1:12-13
- III. The Servant-Son at WorkMark. 1:14-13:37
- IV. The Servant-Son Obedient to the Point of DeathMark. 14-15
- V. The Ministry of the Risen Servant-Son, in Authority Mark. 16

Historical Setting: Jesus was born in Bethlehem during the Roman occupation of Palestine. His life and ministry all happen under Roman rule and His crucifixion was according to Roman execution methods. Palestine had a limited amount of self-government under Roman control, hence King Herod. The Roman Empire is ripe for the Gospel.

The first Gospel - Mark is believed to be the first of the four Gospels. It is generally believed that Matthew and Luke used Mark as a resource for their own writing. It is believed that Mark's Gospel was something unique because never had so many of the stories of Jesus been put together into the form we now know as the Gospel.

The purpose of the Gospel

Mark wrote his Gospel for different reasons, even though all was to lead people to understand what Jesus had done for them; some of the reasons he wrote it were:

- **To give non- Jewish people (Gentiles) the opportunity to hear the Gospel**
- **To encourage Christians who were going through a difficult time**
- **To argue for the reliability of the Christian faith**
- **To explain how important the death of Jesus was**

Mark is reckoned to have contact with Peter and derived much information from him regarding the life of Christ. Mark had a rough missionary experience with Paul but recovered well and wrote this Gospel full of conviction that Jesus is God. Mark depicts Jesus as the Servant. Jesus is seen as the mighty worker serving his Father. Mark mentions more miracles than sermons of Jesus. Mark is in five principal divisions.

There is some discussion regarding the last verses of Mark 16:9-20. Nothing here contradicts the rest of Scripture and whether they were added out of context or

not, they demonstrate the **acts** which highlight signs and wonders following the preaching of the word.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

LUKE

DATE: AD 60

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The IntroductionLuke. 1:1-4
- II. The Human Relationships of Jesus.....Luke. 1:5-2
- III. The Baptism, Ancestry and Testing of JesusLuke. 3-4:13
- IV. The Ministry of the Prophet-Man in GalileeLuke. 4:14-9:50
- V. The Journey of the Son of Man from Galilee to Jerusalem.....Luke. 9:51-19:44
- VI. The Rejection and Sacrifice of the Son of ManLuke. 19:45-23
- VII. The Resurrection, Resurrection Ministry, Ascension.....Luke. 24

Historical Setting: Jesus was born in Bethlehem during the Roman occupation of Palestine. His life and ministry all happen under Roman rule and His crucifixion was according to Roman execution methods. Palestine had a limited amount of self-government under Roman control, hence King Herod. Luke wrote from Rome or possibly Caesarea.

The purpose of Luke -Luke is different from the other Gospels. He is the only known Gentile to have a book in the New Testament. This Gospel seems to have been written for well-educated and sophisticated Roman and Greek citizens.

What Luke wanted to achieve can be summed up in about four points:

- Luke is interested in telling the story of Jesus in the context of history, showing that the story of Jesus was just a continuation of God's past dealings with his people, Israel.
- Luke wanted to show people that Jesus came to 'seek and save the lost' **(19:10)** Luke tries to show that the coming of the kingdom meant God was working in and through Jesus.
- Luke stresses the humanity of God and recalls several miracles of Jesus and some of the best loved parables in the Bible e.g. the prodigal son.
- Luke wanted to show that the death of Christ was the normal path, set out for Jesus to secure salvation for the lost. In this Luke emphasised the generosity of God, but shows that this grace is not cheap; sinners must be willing to repent and leave their life of sin. **Luke 14:25-35**

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

JOHN

DATE: AD 85-90

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

I. Prologue	John 1:1-18
II. Jesus, the Life Giver	John 1:19-4:42
III. Jesus, Healer and Judge	John 4:43-5:47
IV. Jesus, the Bread of Life	John 6
V. Jesus, Living Water and Light of Life	John 7-8
VI. Jesus, Shepherd of Mankind	John 9-10
VII. Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life	John 11:1-54
VIII. Jesus, the Triumphant King	John 11:55-12:50
IX. Jesus, the Life of the Church	John 13-17
X. Jesus, Life from Death	John 18-21

Historical Setting: Unlike the other Gospel, was written after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and before John was exiled to Patmos.

The purpose of John's Gospel

In John 20:31 ***'But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name'*** We can clearly see from this verse that John's intentions were evangelistic. He wanted people to understand who Jesus was and what he had done. He wanted people to know that Jesus was the Son of God, hence, a lot of reference to the divinity of Christ. All of the miracles of Jesus pointed to who he was.

- **Water into wine. Ch. 2**
- **The Official's son. Ch.4**
- **Man at the Pool. Ch. 5**
- **Five thousand fed. Jesus walks on the water. Ch. 6**
- **The blind man. Ch. 9**
- **Raising Lazarus from the dead. Ch. 11**
- **The Resurrection story. Ch. 20-21**

John wanted people to know that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah (**Chapters 7:26-27; 10:24**) To John, Jesus was the fulfilment of the Messianic hope of the Jewish people.

1:41 'the first thing Andrew did was to find Simon and tell him, 'we have found the Messiah.'

4:29 'Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could this be the Christ?'

11:27 'Yes, Lord', she told him 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.'

The 'I AM's' declare powerfully His uniqueness:

- 1. I AM the bread of life. John 6:35**
- 2. I AM the light of the world. John 8:12**
- 3. I AM the door. John 10:9**
- 4. I AM the good shepherd. John 10:11**
- 5. I AM the resurrection and the life. John 11:25**
- 6. I AM THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. John 14:6**
- 7. I AM the true vine. John 15:1**

John and the synoptic gospels

When you compare John with the synoptic Gospels, you will immediately notice a considerable difference.

1. A large amount of information found in the synoptic is absent from John's Gospel, while information in John's Gospel is not in the synoptic.
2. While the synoptic Gospels concentrate on the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, John's attention is fixed on the ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem.
3. While Jesus speaks in parables in the synoptic Gospels, in John's Gospel, it is more discourse and dialogues.
4. There are also differences in the chronological order of the events leading to Jesus death.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

ACTS

AUTHOR: LUKE

DATE: AD 63-70

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Preparation for mission Acts 1
- II. Power Acts 2
- III. Mission to the Jews Acts 3-12
- IV. Mission to the Gentiles Acts 13-20
- V. Paul's Imprisonment Acts 21-28

Historical Setting: The birth and development of the Early Church in the 1st Century AD. The book covers a period of about thirty years and we know that Luke has painstakingly researched events when the church is born and is to be engulfed in persecution but is triumphant.

Key Events:

1. The Ascension of Jesus. Ch. 1
2. The Coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Ch. 2
3. The Appointment of Deacons. Ch. 6
4. Revival in Samaria. Ch. 8
5. Paul's Conversion. Ch. 9
6. Cornelius and the Gentiles. Ch. 10
7. Missionary journeys. Ch. 13-28

The purpose of Acts

The book of Acts is the bridge between what Jesus did in the Gospels and what he began to do with his church after he ascended into heaven. The purpose of the book can be summarized from the statement in

Chapter 1:8 "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"

Luke basically goes on to show how the Gospel expanded from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Acts presents also:

- The historic basis of the Christian origin. It speaks of the founding of the church and how it grew.
- The defence Christians gave in an established culture with its own teaching and ideas **(4:8-12; 25:8-11)**

- The strength of the Church in the face of bitter persecution shows that the church had supernatural backing to have grown the way it did.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

AN OVERVIEW OF THE EPISTLES

The letters of the New Testament make up about one third of it. They tell us what the apostles taught and give us an insight into some of the challenges that the early Christians faced. Many of those challenges are faced by us today in some form or other.

Clearly Paul is the instrument God used for the majority of the letters. He is first introduced to us in the book of Acts as one who fiercely persecuted the church but later became one of its most enterprising missionaries. After Paul became a Christian, he travelled throughout the Mediterranean sharing the good news about Jesus. As part of his ministry he wrote many letters to Christian churches, answering their questions, encouraging them and teaching them how to live the Christian lifestyle.

PAUL'S LETTERS:

Paul is responsible for 13 letters; Hebrews is anonymous; James and Jude wrote one each and Peter wrote two and John wrote three.

Paul's letters fall naturally into four groups:

- 1 **1 & 2 Thessalonians** were probably the earliest and announce Christ's return
- 2 **Romans, Galatians** and **1 & 2 Corinthians** emphasise the Gospel which Paul preached.
- 3 **Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians** and **Philemon** were written from prison.
- 4 Pastoral letters were written to **Timothy, 1 & 2 Timothy** and **Titus**.

The other letters can be grouped under the heading 'General letters'. **Hebrews** tends to stand on its own and **2 & 3 John** are addressed to a specific person or church.

The Gospel Letters:

When writing to the Galatians, Paul is concerned that folk are turning to another gospel. He writes showing how the Gospel came to him and confronts those who would seek to add to it.

Paul had become aware of the problems that the Corinthians were having and wrote to answer some of the matters raised. He asserts here that despite great weakness, he will preach Christ and Him crucified.

Paul's letter to the Romans is a powerful, theological treatise where the theme of righteousness by faith is expounded. The practical outworkings of this truth

are shared and the love of God in sending His Son to die for us, is powerfully proclaimed.

The Prison Letters

We know that Paul was imprisoned and that some of that time he had quite a lot of freedom to write and live his life. Writing to the Ephesians and the Colossians, clear positive teaching about the person of Christ and the doctrine of the Church were able to combat the growing number of heresies which came upon the scene.

Philemon receives a letter from Paul, encouraging him to forgive Onesimus, the runaway slave.

Philippians prepares the way for Timothy's visit and Paul expresses his appreciation for their practical support.

The Pastoral Letters

Timothy and Titus have been given some weighty responsibilities in church leadership. Paul writes to encourage them and gives instruction that can help them build the church and seek out godly leadership to leave in charge of the local church.

THE GENERAL LETTERS

1 Peter - seeks to encourage suffering Christians. The main encouragement is to consider the sufferings of Jesus.

2 Peter - warns against a heresy which encouraged immorality and seeks to protect the Christian against the forces of evil which would love to threaten church-life.

1, 2, & 3 John - Docetism, a heresy which regarded Christ as a heavenly being, incapable of suffering, and so denied His incarnation, was beginning to take root and spread. These letters uphold that Jesus is God in human form and the only way of salvation.

James - tends to be very practical, giving encouragement and warning. There is a particularly powerful section about the use of the tongue.

Jude - Again a concern about heresy is shared but the might power of God to keep us from falling, is taught.

THE BACKGROUND TO THE LETTERS

Old Testament - The letter writers were familiar with the Old Testament and use some of the language and imagery of it.

Hellenism. Greek influence was strong in some of the places Paul preached and it is here that the very clever mind that Paul had, was used to share the wisdom of God being superior to men.

Paganism. The New Testament Church grew up in a very pagan society. Immorality and idol worship were rife, presenting a very clear challenge for the new believers to turn from this, to live God's way.

Judaism. The Pharisees' attitudes that Jesus faced were present but Paul often began his city mission in the synagogue.

THE MAIN THEMES OF THE LETTERS

God is Holy .He is sovereign. He is Father. He is Creator and Author of the new creation and He is the one who reconciles.

Christ is God in human form. He is the Messiah; He is Lord. He gave up the heavenly sphere to save us, He is the exact image of the living God.

Man desperately needs saving from the corrupt society in which he lives, but also from the corruption in himself. The new life which Christ offers to those who repent and put their faith in Him, is to be expressed by being an active participant in the local church. From that place Christ will reach out to the immediate locality and the world.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

ROMANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 57

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. IntroductionRom. 1;1-17
- II. Righteousness: Man's Great NeedRom. 1:18-3:20
- III. Righteousness as God's GiftRom. 3:21-5:21
- IV. Righteousness Living TodayRom. 6-8
- V. Righteousness in HistoryRom. 9-11
- VI. Righteousness in CommunityRom. 12-16

Historical Setting: Paul in preparation for a visit to Rome, writes this letter. Paul had always wanted to go to Rome. He could not have realised that his eventual arrival would be as a prisoner.

The purpose of Romans

Paul says very little about his purpose for writing this letter. The only way we can find out why Romans was written is to understand Paul's circumstance at the time of writing.

Paul

- He might have written to Rome to introduce himself and raise support for his mission to Spain.
- He might have written to explain his theological stand knowing he was going to be visiting soon and especially just after having a running with the Corinthian church and the wrong report spreading among the Romans about him. **(Romans 3:8)**.
- He might have written Romans, as simply a preparation speech to be given with the collection he was taking to Jerusalem.

Key Themes:

The Gospel: Romans 1-11 tell us the Gospel which Paul preached, describe the sinfulness of man and the work of grace which restores us to a holy God.

The great theme of Romans is faith in Christ as the only ground of man's acceptance by God. He treats all men alike whether Jew or Gentile. The impact of Romans has been to inspire great men like Augustus, Luther, Bunyan and Wesley. The fire of God, lit by the Roman Christians, caused them to be used by God to help shape the history of the Church.

The Gospel and Israel: Romans 9-11. Romans is written in an orderly way rather like a lawyer arguing a case. As a Jew, Paul was concerned about the fate of

his people. He encourages them to come through Christ and to know that God has not forgotten them.

Christian believers have roots in the Old Testament Jewish world and we owe a great deal to God who achieved and revealed so much through the saints of Old Testament times. Paul prays that Israel will be saved and experience the power of the Cross which he describes in the earlier chapters.

Christian Living: Romans 12-16. Paul exhorts believers to behave in a godly manner.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

1 CORINTHIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 55

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	1 Cor. 1:1-9
II. Divisions in the Church	1 Cor. 1:10-4:21
III. Discipline of the Immoral	1 Cor. 5-6
IV. Divorce and Marriage	1 Cor. 7
V. Doctrinal Disputes	1 Cor. 8:1-11:1
VI. Conducting Worship	1 Cor. 11:2-34
VII. Defining Spirituality	1 Cor. 12-14
VIII. Understanding Resurrection	1 Cor. 15
IX. Conclusion	1 Cor. 16

Historical Setting: Paul is thought to have written this letter during his 3rd missionary journey, to deal with serious issues at Corinth that were threatening its progress.

The purpose of Corinthians:

1. He wrote this letter to clarify an earlier letter he had written (**chapters 5:9-11**)
2. He also wanted to respond to a report he had heard from Chloe's household about the church in Corinth (**chapters 1:10-12**).
3. He wanted to answer questions that the Corinthians had sent to him. (**chapter 7:1**).
4. He wanted to deal with criticism levied at his ministry. (**Chapters 4:1-18**)

There were a number of problems in the Corinthian church which Paul needed to address. Some issues he was directly aware of and some had been conveyed by messages and messengers.

Paul needed to lay down a clear apostolic line to which they needed to respond.

- There is concern regarding a partisan approach to leadership.
- They were tolerating sexual sin.
- They were flirting with the Lord's supper.
- They were abusing spiritual gifts.
- They were doubting the Resurrection.

But they were still God's people whom He loved and wanted to bring to maturity.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

2 CORINTHIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 55-57

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

I. Personal Items	2 Cor. 1-2
II. New Covenant Ministry	2 Cor. 3-13
A. Principles	2 Cor. 3-5
B. Practice	2 Cor. 6-7
C. Giving	2 Cor. 8-9
D. Authority	2 Cor. 10-13

Historical Setting:

After writing 1 Corinthians, Timothy made a visit to Corinth and came back with disturbing news about events in Corinth. This made Paul change the plan he had outlined in **1 Corinthians 16:5-9** and travelled straight for Corinth.

However, when Paul arrived, he found himself the object of a hurtful attack, **(chapters 2:5; 7:12)**, made by a certain individual and the Corinthians did not come to his support. This proved to be a painful visit for Paul and the Corinthians and he had to change his travel plans once again and instead of returning to Corinth after the projected visit to Macedonia, he went back to Ephesus **(chapters 1:23; 2:1)**.

Once back in Ephesus, Paul writes the "heavy letter", the one that is now lost. It seems Paul told them in this letter to take action against the troublemakers in their midst **(chapters 2:3-4; 7:8; 12)**.

Most likely this letter was carried by Titus, indicating Paul's restlessness to meet with him and hence leaving the ministry in Troas and going to Macedonia. In Macedonia he got embroiled in the bitter persecution facing the church **(chapters 7:5)** but the coming of Titus was a great relief especially hearing of the Corinthians' zeal to demonstrate their loyalty to him by punishing the one who had caused so much hurt. **(chapters 7:6-7)**.

It is on the back of Titus that Paul now writes 2 Corinthians.

Key Themes: 2 Corinthians is a very intense and personal letter from the pen of the apostle Paul. Paul speaks plainly to the people but clearly he loves them greatly.

- The cost of being an apostle of Jesus Christ
- Dealing with false teachers.
- The importance of giving
- The role and authority of an apostle

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

OVERVIEW OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

GALATIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 49

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Paul's Apostleship Gal. 1-2
- II. Salvation and Faith Gal. 3-4
- III. Godliness and the Spirit Gal. 5-6

Historical Setting: Paul writes to the churches in Galatia to speak into the growing problem of how much Jewish ritual was appropriate and inappropriate.

The purpose of Galatian

Paul's reason for writing this letter is stated clearly in the first chapter of the book.

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel - which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and trying to pervert the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Basically Paul's main reason for writing this Gospel is to prevent the Galatians from abandoning the Gospel of truth and becoming apostate. This is done in three different sections.

The first part of the book is defending the divine origin of the Gospel (**1:1; 11-12; 2:6-9**)

In the second part of the book Paul uses the Old Testament as his defence, to show that God's promise to Abraham was by faith and not by works. (This is important because those who opposed him had a Jewish background).

The third part of the book basically spells out the practical outworking of the Gospel.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

EPHESIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 49

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. God's Living Church Eph. 1-2
- II. The Church as the Body and God's Family Eph. 3:1-4:16
- III. The Christian's Life of Love Eph. 4:17-6:24

Historical Setting: Paul writes from Rome during his time of imprisonment to encourage and strengthen believers.

The purpose of Ephesians

This letter was not written to face any particularly false teaching, but to encourage the mainly Gentile church.

Key themes

Paul's purpose in writing to the Ephesians is that they might have a greater revelation of the work of God in their lives. He goes into some detail to explain what God has done for them in the salvation planned before creation and executed in history with the appearance of Jesus.

He also speaks of the Church as the mystery of God silently being planned but gradually being revealed to the world. The church is seen in the relationship that a man and his wife should enjoy in Christian marriage. The church and the saints that make up its numbers are under tremendous spiritual attack and so should be well armed with the armour God supplies.

- Understanding in relation to Christ, God's eternal purpose for the church
- The reconciliation of individuals to God as an act of grace **(2:1-10)**
- The reconciliation of individuals to one another because Christ's death has broken the barrier
- The church as God's manifold wisdom to all authority **(3:7-13)**
- The giving of gifts for God's service in the church

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

PHILIPPIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 61

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	Phil. 1:1-11
II. Paul's Imprisonment	Phil. 1:12-30
III. Imitating Christ's Humility	Phil. 2:1-18
IV. News of Epaphroditus	Phil. 2:19-30
V. Warnings	Phil. 3:1-4:1
VI. Personal Exhortations	Phil. 4:2-9
VII. Thanks and Farewell	Phil. 4:10-23

Historical Setting: The first chapter makes it clear that Paul was in prison when he wrote the book of Philippians (**chapters 1:12-26**). From the record in Acts we know that Paul had periods of imprisonment in Rome and Caesarea (**Acts 24:27**).

The purpose of Philippians

Paul wrote this letter to encourage a church that was so dear to him and close to his heart. As we read through this book, you find numbers of reasons why Paul wrote this letter.

1. He wanted the Philippians to know that his imprisonment had not in any way weakened the Gospel (**chapters 1:12-26**)
2. He wanted to explain why he was sending Epaphroditus back when he should have remained with Paul to help.
3. He wanted to encourage them not to allow a party spirit rob them of their unity and encouraged them to live in a way that fosters the unity of the Spirit. (**chapters 2:1-11**)
4. He wanted to educate them about a wrong idea of perfection and materialism among Christians (**chapters 3:12-21**).
5. He wanted to acknowledge the gift they had sent to him (**chapters 4:10, 14-18**)

Key themes

The person of Jesus (chapters 2:1-11)
Righteousness by faith (Chapters 3:4-10)

The noun 'joy' or the verb 'rejoice' are mentioned sixteen times. Joy in prayer **(chapters 1:4)**; joy in the proclamation of the Gospel **(Chapters 1:18)** joy in suffering **(chapters 2:17)**.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

COLOSSIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 60

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Prayers for the ColossiansCol. 1:1-14
- II. The Pre-eminence of ChristCol. 1:15-29
- III. Exposure of Errors Col. 2
- IV. The Life of HolinessCol. 3:1-4:1
- V. Final Words and GreetingsCol. 4:2-18

Historical Setting: Epaphras paid Paul a visit in Rome and informed him of the state of the churches in the Lycus Valley. While most of what he said was encouraging, he brought a report of a new teaching sweeping through the Colossian church which was heretical. Paul who was in prison writes to encourage the believers.

The purpose of Colossians

To thoroughly refute the Colossians` heresy . This was done by a presentation of the supremacy of Christ.

- He is the image of God (chapters 1:15)
- The Creator (chapters 1:16)
- The Sustainer of all things (chapters 1:17)
- The Head of the church (chapters 1:18)
- The Firstborn from the dead i.e. first to be resurrected to live (Chapters 1:18)
- The Fulness of deity lived in his bodily form (Chapters 1:19; 2:9)
- The Reconciler (chapters 1:20-22).

The Colossian heresy

The Colossian heresy is not defined in the letter; the only way we can detect what it might have been, is by looking at Paul's counter argument. Here is some of what is believed to have been the 'heresy' that Paul spoke against:

The spirit of religious ceremonies - This held to strict rules about the kind of food and drink that was permissible and about religious festivals (**chapters 2:16-17**) and circumcision (**chapters 2:11; 3:11**)

Asceticism - A self-imposed worship of do's and don'ts (**Chapters 2:21, 23**)

Angel worship - (chapters 2:18)

Wrong teaching on Christ - (chapters 1:15-20; 2:2-3,9)

Secret knowledge - The Gnostics boasted about their secret knowledge that was exclusive, hence Paul's emphasis on "Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom" **(chapters 2:2-3)**

Human tradition - This seems to fall into two categories Jewish and Gnostic. It has been said that the Colossians' heresy was a mixture of an extreme form of Judaism and the beginnings of Gnosticism **(chapters 2:4,8)**

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

1 THESSALONIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 51

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introduction 1 Thess. 1
- II. A Relationship described 1 Thess. 2-3
- III. Exhortation and Conclusion 1 Thess. 4-5

Historical Setting: Many believe this was Paul's first letter hence the early date. Paul and Silas fled from Thessalonica because of Jewish opposition to the Gospel and went to Berea (**Acts 17:10**). When the Jews heard Paul was in Berea, they came after him and he had to flee to Athens (**Acts 17:14**). Timothy later joined Paul and was sent back to Thessalonica (**1 Thess. 3:1-5**). Paul then moved on to Corinth where Silas and Timothy came to join him. It is after the report from Timothy that 1 Thessalonians was written. (**1 Thess. 3:6**)

The purpose of 1 Thessalonians

Paul had left new converts abruptly because of persecution with very little support in the midst of persecution. 1 Thessalonians was written to strengthen, encourage and inform.

- He wanted to encourage them in their trials (**chapters 3:3-5**)
- He wanted to give instruction concerning godly living (**Chapters 4:1-8**)
- He wanted to communicate a work ethic to the Thessalonian converts (**chapters 4:11-12**)
- He wanted to give them instruction concerning the fate of those who die before the return of Christ. (**chapters 4:13,14**)

Key themes

Eschatology (Doctrine of the last things) Ref (**Chapters 1:9-10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23-24**)

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

2 THESSALONIANS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 51 OR 52

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. God's Justice..... 2 Thess. 1
- II. The Man of Lawlessness 2 Thess. 2
- III. The Command to Work..... 2 Thess. 3

Historical Setting: Paul writes a follow up letter to clear up some of the confusion relating to Jesus' coming.

The purpose of 2 Thessalonians

The situation in the church is still the same from the first letter and Paul's reason was pretty much the same as the first letter. He wrote

- To encourage persecuted Christians (**Chapter 1:4-10**)
- To encourage the believers to be diligent in their faith and work for a living (**Chapters 2:13-3:15**)
- To correct certain misunderstanding that had developed concerning the return of Christ (**chapters 2:1-12**)

Key themes

The theme is the same as the first book. It deals primarily with the subject of eschatology. 38% of this book deals with this subject.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

1 TIMOTHY

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 64

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Salutations 1 Tim. 1:1, 2
- II. Paul's Charge to Timothy 1 Tim. 1:3-20
 - A. Charge to silence false teachers..... 1 Tim. 1:3-11
 - B. Thanksgiving for the true grace of God..... 1 Tim. 1:12-17
 - C. Restatement of the charge of Timothy 1 Tim. 1:18-20
- III. Instructions concerning Church Life 1 Tim. 2:1-3:16
 - A. Regarding prayer 1 Tim. 2:1-7
 - B. Regarding men and women 1 Tim. 2:8-15
 - C. Regarding Elders and Deacons 1 Tim. 3:1-13
 - D. Regarding conduct in the Church 1 Tim. 3:14-16
- IV. Apostasy in the Church 1 Tim. 4:1-16
 - A. Warning against the impending Apostasy 1 Tim. 4:1-5
 - B. Positive instruction in view of the impending Apostasy 1 Tim. 6:6-16
- V. Specific Instructions concerning various Classes of Believers 1 Tim. 5:1-6:2
 - A. Different age groups 1 Tim. 5:1,2
 - B. Widows 1 Tim. 5:3-16
 - C. Elders..... 1 Tim. 17-25
 - D. Bondservants and Masters..... 1 Tim. 6:1,2
- VI. False Teachers and the Love of Money 1 Tim. 6:3-10
- VII. Closing Charges to Timothy 1 Tim. 6:11-21

Historical Setting: Paul writes just prior to imprisonment at about the time of Nero burning Rome.

The purpose of 1 Timothy

This is the first of the pastoral letters that Paul wrote. The aims of this particular letter is spelt out in chapter three of this book

***'Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.'* (Chapters 3:14-15)**

Paul wanted to instruct Timothy to:

- Develop the ministry he had committed into his hands. **(chapters 1:3,18)**
- Help him refute false teaching that was trying to gain a foothold in the Ephesian church **(chapters 1:3-7; 4:1-8; 6:3-5, 20-21)**
- Encourage him to work out the running of God's household effectively **(chapters 3:1-13; 5:17-25)**

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

2 TIMOTHY

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 64

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introductory Greeting to Timothy 2 Tim. 1:1-5
- II. Exhortations to Timothy..... 2 Tim. 1:6-2:13
 - A. to Fidelity 2 Tim. 1:6-18
 - B. to Endurance 2 Tim. 2:1-13
- III. Fidelity versus Apostasy 2 Tim. 2:14-4:8
 - A. Faithfulness to true Christianity 2 Tim. 2:14-26
 - B. The coming Apostasy..... 2 Tim. 3:1-13
 - C. The man of God's resource in view of the Apostasy 2 Tim. 3:14-4:8
- IV. Personal Requests and Remarks 2 Tim. 4:9-22

Historical Setting: Paul writes from prison to exhort Timothy to fulfil his calling

The purpose of 2 Timothy

Paul's reason for writing this letter was an urgent request to Timothy to come and join him. This letter is written specially for Timothy.

In this letter Paul communicates his loneliness. "**Everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes**" **Chapters 1:15**. Demas had deserted him (**Chapters 4:10**). Crescens, Titus and Tychicus were away (**chapters 4:10-12**) and only Luke was with him . Paul basically longed for Timothy his fellow worker in the Lord's company.

Paul was also concerned about the church that was undergoing Nero's persecution at this time. He encourages Timothy to carry on with the work of the Gospel and if necessary, to suffer for it (**Chapters 1:8; 2:30**)

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The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

TITUS

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 64

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Salutation.....Titus 1:1-4
- II. Elders in the CongregationTitus 1:5-9
- III. Error in the CongregationTitus 1:10-16
- IV. Exercise in the CongregationTitus 2:1-15
- V. Exhortation in the Congregation.....Titus 3:1-11
- VI. Conclusion.....Titus 3:12-15

Historical Setting: Paul writes to Titus probably from Macedonia between his Roman imprisonment.

The purpose of Titus

The church in Crete was planted by Paul and Timothy when they visited the island. Titus was left in charge of the church. This letter was written to encourage Titus and to give him instructions on how to conduct the affairs of the church. This letter was sent by Zenas and Apollos (3:13).

Paul wrote to Titus to counsel and exhort him concerning ministerial duties and doctrines.

He also talked about the importance of good works.

Titus was encouraged to live a righteous life that was different from those around him because the Cretans were very ungodly people (**chapters 1:5-12**)

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

PHILEMON

AUTHOR: PAUL

DATE: AD 60

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Salutation.....Phile. vv. 1-3
- II. Paul's Thanksgiving and Prayer for Philemon.....Phile. vv. 4-7
- III. Paul's Plea for OnesimusPhile. vv. 8-20
- IV. Closing remarks.....Phile. vv. 21-25

Historical Setting: Paul writes from prison to Philemon, a believer in the region of Colosse and was a slave owner. One of his slaves, Onesimus, had stolen from him and run away, a crime which was punishable by death under Roman law. Onesimus met Paul on his journeys and became a Christian and decided to go back to his master.

Paul writes this letter urging Philemon to treat Onesimus as a brother and forgive him.

The purpose of Philemon

This book has only one chapter and describes the relationship that God desires between Apostle Paul, the master Philemon and the servant Onesimus.

The book demonstrates three things in particular:

1. The apostle exercises authority lovingly not heavily.
2. Philemon is a man who refreshes the saints but like all of us, forgiving is costly.
3. Onesimus is useful to God and Paul even though his behaviour could have easily led to the accusation of being useless.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

HEBREWS

AUTHOR: UNKNOWN

DATE: BEFORE AD 70

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. IntroductionHeb. 1:1-4
- II. A Superior Nature.....Heb. 1:5-2:18
- III. A Superior RevelationHeb. 3:1-4:13
- IV. A Superior PriesthoodHeb. 4:14-7:28
- V. A Superior Covenant.....Heb. 8-9
- VI. A Superior Sacrifice.....Heb. 10
- VII. Response to Jesus.....Heb. 11:1-13:19
- VIII. Conclusion.....Heb. 13:20-25

Historical Setting: Jewish Christians are suffering terrible persecution in the run-up to the destruction of the temple AD 70 and some of them are beginning to think of going back to Judaism.

AD 70?

The reason for believing that this letter was written around AD 70 is because information in the letter show that the recipients had been Christians for some time (chapters 5:12) and they had experienced persecution for a while (10:32-34); some of their original leaders had passed away (13:7). The destruction of the temple took place in AD 70 but there is no reference to that incident in the book of Hebrews. The author of the book wrote as if all the rituals were still going on (9:6-9) hence the belief that it was written before AD 70.

The purpose of the book of Hebrews

It was written to testify to the supremacy of Jesus Christ in comparison to the Old Testament laws and rituals.

It was written to encourage the recipients not to give up and drift back into Judaism (2:1-4)

It was written to show how the Christian age surpassed that of the Old Testament era.

The importance of faith in our relationship with God (chapter 11)

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

THE LETTERS FROM JAMES TO 2 PETER

JAMES

AUTHOR: JAMES

DATE AD 49

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Salutation.....James 1:1
- II. Trials and TemptationsJames 1:2-17
- III. The Word of GodJames 1:18-27
- IV. Condemnation of PartialityJames 2:1-13
- V. Faith and Works.....James 2:14-26
- VI. The Tongue: Its Use and Abuse.....James 3:1-12
- VII. Wisdom: The True and the FalseJames 3:13-18
- VIII. Covetousness: Its Cause and CureJames 4
- IX. The Rich and their coming RemorseJames 5:1-6
- X. Exhortation to Patience.....James 5:7-12
- XI. Prayer and the Healing of the SickJames 5:13-20

Historical Setting: James was the brother of Jesus. He was a leader in the Jerusalem church. This book is one of the oldest in the New Testament and has a strong Jewish flavour. He writes to encourage persecuted Christians who were once part of the Jerusalem church. The Letter is probably before the Council at Jerusalem AD 50.

The purpose of James` Letter

To instruct the people of God about godly living and conduct

To show that faith that doesn't express itself in action is no real faith.

Key Themes

James is talking mainly to believers and draws heavily on the 'Sermon on the Mount'. He issues instructions more profusely than any of the other writers. In the short space of 108 verses, there are fifty-four commands (imperative forms). James desires to see right Christian behaviour.

The issue of 'Faith and Works' is a controversial one in James and Luther considered this 'an epistle of straw', but he failed to see the point that James was making. James is concerned that our faith should express itself in practical ways. He knows that wisdom comes from God and that God will give it liberally to those who ask Him.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

1 PETER

AUTHOR: PETER

DATE AD 62-64

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Believer's Privileges and Duties..... 1 Peter 1:1-2:10
 - A. Salutation 1 Peter 1;1,2
 - B. His position as a believer..... 1 Peter 1:3-12
 - C. His conduct in the light of his position 1 Peter 1:13-2:3
 - D. His privileges in the new house and priesthood .. 1 Peter 2:4-10
- II. The Believer's Relationships..... 1 Peter 2:11-4:6
 - A. As a pilgrim in relation to the world 1 Peter 2:11,12
 - B. As a citizen in relation to government 1 Peter 2:13-17
 - C. As a servant in relation to his master 1 Peter 2:18-25
 - D. As a wife in relation to her husband 1 Peter 3:1-6
 - E. As a husband in relation to his wife 1 Peter 3:7
 - F. As a brother in relation to the fellowship..... 1 Peter 3:8
 - G. As a sufferer in relation to persecutors 1 Peter 3:9-4:6
- III. The Believer's Service and Suffering 1 Peter 4:7-5:14
 - A. Urgent imperatives for the last days 1 Peter 4:7-11
 - B. Exhortations and explanations concerning sufferings 1 Peter 4:12-19
 - C. Exhortations and salutations..... 1 Peter 5:1-14

Historical Setting: Peter is most probably writing about the time of Nero's persecutions around AD 60.

The purpose of 1 Peter

Peter seems to have two commands of Jesus in mind when he wrote this letter...

1. To encourage and strengthen the saints (Luke 22:32)

2. To feed the people of God (John 21:15-17)

This book is full of doctrinal teaching, aimed at strengthening and nourishing God's people.

The doctrine of God (1:18-19)

The doctrine of Christ (2:2--24)

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit (4:14)

Doctrine of Scripture (1:11)

Doctrine of the Church (2:4-8)

Doctrine of the last days (4:7-11)

Key Themes: Peter desires to encourage Christians who are scattered to stand firm in the evil day. He speaks powerfully of the redeeming blood of Christ. He refers to the people of God as the living stones being built into a spiritual house. He writes that when we suffer for Christ and Him alone, not through our carelessness, then we will be blessed

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

2 PETER

AUTHOR: PETER

DATE AD 67

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. Qualities of a Christian.....2 Peter 1
- II. False Teachers.....2 Peter 2
- III. Christ's Return.....2 Peter 3

Historical Setting: Peter writes from Rome about AD 67 with a consciousness that his own time on earth is nearing the end. It is believed that this letter was written in the latter part of the first century

The Purpose of 2 Peter

Peter knew his time was short and was concerned that his friends should carry on growing in their Christian walk (**chapter 1:5-11**)

To know how to deal with false teachers and evildoers who are in the church. (**chapters 2:1; 3:3-4**)

To encourage watchfulness in view of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (**chapter 3**)

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

1 JOHN

AUTHOR: JOHN

DATE AD 85-90

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- I. The Realities of the Christian Life 1 John 1:1-2:17
 - A. Recognising the Word of Life 1 John 1:1-4
 - B. Understanding the Character of God 1 John 1:5-7
 - C. Experiencing a New Kind of Fellowship..... 1 John 1:8-10
 - D. Learning from Jesus 1 John 2:1-17
 - 1. Learning How to Live..... 1 John 2:1-6
 - 2. Learning How to Love 1 John 2:6-17
- II. The Manifestation of the Christian Life..... 1 John 2:18-28
 - A. Warning against Antichrists.....1 John 2:18, 19
 - B. Saints Anointed 1 John 2:20, 21
 - C. Saints Assured..... 1 John 2:22-28
- III. The Tests of the Christian Life 1 John 2:29-3:24
 - A. The Test of Righteousness..... 1 John 2:29-3:12
 - B. The Test of Love..... 1 John 3:13-18
 - C. The Test of Obedience..... 1 John 3:19-24
- IV. The Assurance of the Christian Life 1 John 4:1-5:21
 - A. A Word of Instruction..... 1 John 4:1-6
 - B. A Word of Love 1 John 4:7-21
 - C. A Word of Faith 1 John 5:1-12
 - D. A Word of Victory 1 John 5:13-17
 - E. A Word of Confidence..... 1 John 5:18-21

Historical Setting: This book was written by John who was a first cousin of Jesus (his mother was Salome, a sister of Mary, Matthew 27:56). John writes as an older man getting towards the end of his life, about AD 90; this letter was written to believers in Jesus Christ (chapters 2:12-14) and because John spent the last days of his life in the province of Asia, it is assumed that this letter was a circular letter to the churches in Asia Minor, written while he was in Ephesus.

The purpose of 1 John

It is clear from John's letter that the recipients were facing a form of false teaching that denied the incarnation of Christ. This was an early form of Gnostic teaching which encouraged people to throw off all moral restraint. This group claimed to have special understanding of spiritual matters. John wrote this letter with two purposes in mind.

1. To expose the false teachers (chapters 2:26). He did this by showing the lack of righteous fruit in their lives, especially their lack of love for other Christians (chapters 3:14-15)
2. To give the Christians assurance of their salvation in Christ. (Chapters 5:13)

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

2 JOHN

AUTHOR: JOHN

DATE AD 90

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2 John vv. 1-3
I. A New Reason for Rejoicing	2 John v. 4
II. A New Level of Life	2 John vv. 5, 6
III. A New Source of Danger	2 John v. 7
IV. A New Basis of Appeal	2 John v. 8
V. The Manifestation of the Christian Life.....	2 John vv. 9-11
Conclusion.....	2 John vv. 12, 13

Historical Setting: About the same time as the first book was written.

The purpose of 2 John

This book was written to the 'chosen lady' which probably means a church. Some of the themes in the first book are also present in this second book.

Christians should love one another and obey God (verses 5-6) and how to treat false teachers (verse 10)

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

3 JOHN

AUTHOR: JOHN

DATE AD 90

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3 John vv. 1, 2
I. A Word of Appreciation.....	3 John vv. 3-8
II. A Word of Denunciation	3 John vv. 9, 10
III. A Word of Instruction	3 John v. 11
IV. A Word of Praise.....	3 John v. 12
Conclusion	3 John vv. 13, 14

Historical Setting: John's third letter wrote about AD 90 from Ephesus.

The purpose of 3 John

John wrote this letter around the same time and this time, it is to commend one of his workers to staying true to the faith. This letter was written to:

1. Expose Diotrephes and his teaching
2. To encourage Gaius and commend his work in the Lord

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

THE LETTERS FROM JUDE TO REVELATION

JUDE

AUTHOR: JUDE

DATE AD 65

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction Jude vv. 1, 2
- I. The Purpose of the Epistle Jude vv. 3, 4
- II. The Prophecies of the Doom of the Ungodly Jude vv. 5-19
 - A. Three Examples and Commentary Jude vv. 5-10
 - B. Three More Examples and Additional Commentary Jude vv. 11-13
 - C. Prophecy of Enoch and Commentary Jude vv. 14-16
 - D. Prophecy of the Apostles Jude vv. 17-19
- III. The Challenge to Believers Jude vv. 20-23
- Conclusion Jude vv. 24, 25

Historical Setting: Jude writes with warnings and encouragements amidst a growing background of heresy.

The purpose of Jude

This book and 2 Peter 2 seem to describe similar situations; they were both written to the same person. The reason for writing was to:

Warn believers about certain men who were false teachers (verse 4). These men were trying to convince believers that being saved by grace gave them the licence to sin since their sins would no longer be held against them.

He also writes to encourage believers to persevere and encourage them to be strong in God.

Living Hope Ministries

The Bible

NEW TESTAMENT

REVELATION

AUTHOR: JOHN

DATE AD 95

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Rev. 1:1-3
I. A Vision of the Glorified Christ	Rev. 1:4-20
A. The Trinitarian Greeting	Rev. 1:4-6
B. The Promise of Christ's Return.....	Rev. 1:7, 8
C. The Glory of Christ.....	Rev. 1:9-18
D. The Mandate and the Key	Rev. 1:19, 20
II. A Message to the Churches	Rev. 2:103:22
A. To Ephesus	Rev. 2:1-7
B. To Smyrna	Rev. 2:8-11
C. To Pergamos	Rev. 2:12-17
D. To Thyatira	Rev. 2:18-29
E. To Sardis	Rev. 3:1-6
F. To Philadelphia	Rev. 3:7-13
G. To Laodicea	Rev. 3:14-22
III. An Unveiling of the Future	Rev. 4:1-22:5
A. A Heavenly Scene	Rev. 4:1-5:14
1. The twenty-four Elders	Rev. 4:1-4
2. The Cherubim.....	Rev. 4:5-11
3. The Seven-Sealed Book	Rev. 5:1-4
4. The Lion of Judah	Rev. 5:5-14
B. The Seal Judgements.....	Rev. 6:1-8:1
1. The Four Horsemen	Rev. 6:1-8
2. The Martyr Seal.....	Rev. 6:9-11
3. The Sixth Seal.....	Rev. 6:12-17
4. The Sealing of the 144,000 Israelites	Rev. 7:1-8
5. The Identification of Gentile Believers	Rev. 7:9-17
6. The Opening of the Seventh Seal	Rev. 8:1
C. The Trumpet Judgements	Rev. 8:2-11:19
1. The First Four Trumpets	Rev. 8:2-13
2. The Fifth Trumpet of Demonic Oppression	Rev. 9:1-12
3. The Sixth Trumpet of Eastern Invasion	Rev. 9:13-21
4. The Voice of the Seven Thunders.....	Rev. 10:1-6
5. The Bittersweet Scroll	Rev. 10:7-11
6. Two Amazing Witnesses	Rev. 11:1-14
7. The Seventh Trumpet.....	Rev. 11:15-19

D. An Interpretative Interlude.....	Rev. 12:1-14:20
1. A Woman, a Child, and a Dragon.....	Rev. 12:1-7
2. The Beast out of the Sea	Rev. 13:1-10
3. The Beast out of the Land.....	Rev. 13:11-18
4. The 144,000 in Heaven	Rev. 14:1-7
5. The Announcement of the Demise of Babylon.....	Rev. 14:8-13
6. A Vision of Armageddon	Rev. 14:14-20
E. The Bowls of Wrath Judgements.....	Rev. 15:1-16:21
1. The Presentation of the Bowls to the Angels.....	Rev. 15:1-8
2. The First Five Bowls of Wrath.....	Rev. 16:1-11
3. The Sixth Bowl of Wrath - An Unholy Trinity	Rev. 16:12-16
4. The Seventh Bowl of Wrath - Consummation	Rev. 16:17-21
F. The Judgement of Apostate Religion.....	Rev. 17:1-8
1. The Scarlet Woman	Rev. 17:1-7
2. The Beast which Carries Her	Rev. 17:8-18
G. The Judgement of Great Babylon.....	Rev. 18:1-24
H. The Return of Christ.....	Rev. 19:1-21
1. The Marriage of the Lamb	Rev. 19:1-10
2. The Triumph of the Christ.....	Rev. 19:11-16
3. The Demise of the Beast	Rev. 19:17-21
I. The Millennial Age	Rev. 20:1-10
1. The Binding of Satan.....	Rev. 20:1-3
2. The Reigning of Believers of Christ	Rev. 20:4-6
3. Gog and Magog: The Final Rebellion	Rev. 20:7-10
J. The Judgement of the Great White Throne.....	Rev. 20:11-15
K. The Heavenly Kingdom.....	Rev. 21:1-22:5
1. Heavenly Relationships	Rev. 21:1-7
2. Heavenly Exclusions.....	Rev. 21:8
3. Heavenly Beauties.....	Rev. 21:9-27
4. Heavenly Provisions	Rev. 22:1-5
Concluding Invitation.....	Rev. 22:6-21

Historical Setting: Rome was beginning to enforce emperor worship. A belief that Caesar was Lord not Jesus. This led to increasing hostility between Christianity and the authorities. John writes in exile on the Island of Patmos. His powerful visions and the revelation he is given are contained in this momentous book.

The purpose of Revelation

John writes to encourage the believers in their faith and to give them courage to face the Anti Christ's force in the world, by being a faithful witness Jesus, the one and true Saviour of the world. John did this by emphasising:

1. The sovereignty of God in Christ (chapters 1:8; 5:5-14)

2. That the satanic nature of the Roman emperor demands to be worshipped as God. This demand was to reach its climax by the manifestation of the final Anti Christ.
3. The judgement of God on those who follow a false prophet rather than Christ
4. The final battle between the forces of darkness and Christ

Revelation is a book of visions. John makes it clear by not being over concerned about harmonising details but that it is the main thrust of each picture which is important. Visions should be treated as people treat parables. This means looking at the whole picture and perceiving the main idea.

The central message is **Jesus returning for his Bride.**