

# Foundations

## Building in the Faith

*Laying a Foundation upon the Rock, Jesus Christ*

Luke 6:48

a publication of



**Village  
Ministries  
International**

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# Acknowledgments

Foundations has been developed under the direction of Village Ministries International, Inc. Since its inception, the mission of VMI has been to reach villages and remote areas of the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Often, the window of opportunity for missionary activity is open for only a brief period of time. Our organization's goal has been to identify gifted men native to these areas and equip them to carry on the delivery of sound Bible teaching after foreign involvement is discontinued, thus "making disciples" in fulfillment of the *Great Commission* given to us by our Lord and Savior.

Chapters 2 and 3 have been adapted with permission from J. Hampton Keathley III's, *The Concise Old and New Testament Survey*. Mr. Keathley's complete, unedited work is available for use on the Internet via an agreement with the Biblical Studies Foundation, a non-Profit Foundation at: [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org)

Village Ministries International wishes to thank Mr. Keathley for the use of his survey. It is indeed a valuable tool for Bible study. Some adjustments have been made in his survey to be consistent with previous releases of Foundations, specifically in the area of Biblical dates.

VMI hopes to provide Bible training materials to the parts of the world where training is so desperately desired but not available. Through this ministry, VMI is able to efficiently and effectively support a rapidly growing number of indigenous pastors and teachers with sound Bible training and teaching materials.

There are many people we need to thank for their dedication and efforts in preparing this material. First and foremost, we acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ who, in His grace, has provided our so great salvation and everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Secondly, as with any effort of this nature, there are also many who selflessly offered of their time, talents and gifts in bringing this vision to reality. They are the invisible heroes.

## Preface

This portion of VMI's *Equip* program is called Foundations, which is designed to assist the new student of the Word of God to "**grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**" (2 Peter 3:18). Therefore, the emphasis throughout Foundations is not only to understand the significance and depth of God's Word but also to aid the student in the development of his own spiritual life.

Foundations is also designed to equip the student to teach others once the student has absorbed the principles into his own soul. It is a valuable tool for "making disciples" in fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

This book contains the basic information that a student of God's Word needs to know. Chapter 1, "Getting Started," considers the importance of spiritual preparation and then gives an overview of God's Word.

Chapters 2 and 3 present a brief survey of each book in the Bible to give the student general information about the author and subject matter. Chapter 4 then leads the student through basic principles of interpretation which are designed to guide our understanding of the Scriptures.

Chapters 5 through 8 introduce the student to basic theology, giving a summary of Biblical terms and concepts, and Chapter 9 is designed to teach the student how to implement what has been learned, by actually preparing a Bible lesson.

It is our sincere prayer that Foundations will let you more fully embrace our Lord Jesus Christ through the spiritual walk of faith revealed in His Word.

*Welcome to the excitement of God's Word!*

## **Chapter 1**

# **Getting Started**

# **Section 1**

## **Personal Preparation**

### **A. Six Principles of Personal Preparation for Bible Study**

#### **1. Believe in Jesus Christ**

Personal preparation in the study of the Scripture cannot be overemphasized. The student must first believe in Jesus Christ as his Savior, because the “natural man” (the man without Christ) cannot accept or understand the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14). Therefore, salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8-9). The Spirit of God allows the student of the Word to discern spiritual things.

#### **2. Accept that the Bible is Divinely Inspired**

God’s Word proclaims itself to be divinely inspired (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Any study of the Word ought to begin by acknowledging that fact. No “leap” of faith is necessary; just a mere acceptance of the fact that the Bible is true and accurate.

#### **3. Pray**

Prayer is necessary to understand Scripture. God’s Word instructs that if anyone lacks wisdom, and asks for it, God will give it freely (James 1:5). Sincere prayer for correct knowledge and discernment will be answered, because these things are clearly within God’s will (1 John 5:14 compare [cf.] Matthew 7:7-8).

#### **4. Study Diligently and Have Patience**

Since many passages of God’s Word are not readily understood, diligence and patience are necessary when studying (2 Timothy 2:15). When we, as limited human beings, attempt to understand the unlimited mind of God, we must be aware that a competent grasp will take some time.

#### **5. Consistently Confess Your Sins**

It is also important to confess sin consistently, permitting God to cleanse our lives, so that a greater fellowship with Him may be attained (1 John 1:6-10). Realizing the need to confess our sins keeps us consistently sensitive to any thought, speech, or action that is not in accord with God’s will.

#### **6. Be Willing to Live God’s Will**

The Lord Jesus Christ said, **“If anyone is willing to do His [God’s] will, he shall know of the teaching”** (John 7:17). If the objective is to develop a relationship with the Living God, then any knowledge gained ought to support and clarify that relationship. Knowledge without love results in pride (1 Corinthians 8:1). If your objective is simply an intellectual quest and not a relationship with the Living God, then the knowledge you gain will be lacking and distorted.

### **B. Five Benefits of Personal Bible Study from God’s Word**

#### **1. Greater Faith**

The greatest theologian of the Church, the apostle Paul, said of himself that he, **“walked by faith and not by sight”** (2 Corinthians 5:7). We all enter into salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9); and according to Paul, just as we have entered, so are we to walk (Colossians 2:6-7).

#### **2. New Knowledge**

There is new knowledge to be gained from God’s Word as we **“grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (2 Peter 3:14-18). This knowledge leads us to a greater appreciation of His grace. But along with growing in knowledge, we grow in faith as we “hear” God’s Word through the Scriptures (Romans 10:17) and trust Him for everything.

#### **3. Purification of Our Life**

God’s Word is necessary for the purification of our lives because His Word is Truth (John 17:17). Although we are Believers, we do have problems with sin in our lives (1 John 1:6-10), so we must learn God’s Word in order to determine what sin(s) may be present. We then can pray intelligently for healing and cleansing (Psalm 51). Please note that Christians have often “added to” God’s Word and made these additions a basis of righteousness. This is called “legalism,” which means that men have made their own laws the standards of righteousness. The Lord Jesus Christ clearly challenged this practice (Mark 7:1-13), so we must be careful to pay careful attention to God’s stated standards.

#### 4. Power in Ministry

With the Holy Spirit at work in our lives as we study the “mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:14-16), there will be power in our ministry (Ephesians 2:10). We are in a war with Satan and his forces; therefore, we need power beyond our own strength and ability (Ephesians 6:10-18). The power comes from our submission to God’s will because it is God who is at work in us, **“to will and to work His good pleasure”** (Philippians 2:13).

#### 5. Equipment for Service

With this knowledge of God’s Word, we can practice the truth in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:16-17) and proclaim it to a lost and dying world (John 17:17-19; Hebrews 5:12). A primary objective for the communication of God’s Word is **“equipping the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ”** (Ephesians 4:11-13). To “equip” others requires that we must first be equipped ourselves.

## For Personal Study: Chapter 1, Section 1

1. The Greek word for “natural” (PSUCHIKOS) found in 1 Corinthians 2:14 is also found in 1 Corinthians 15:44, 46; James 3:15 and Jude 1:19 (where it has been translated as “worldly-minded”). Read these passages then further describe the word “natural.”
2. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What four types of profit are found in God’s Word? What is the objective?
3. What does James 1:5 promise to those who lack wisdom?
4. Read 2 Timothy 2:15. What are we to be diligent to do as students of God’s Word? What should be our objective?
5. Read 1 John 1:6-10. What is the twofold promise given for confession of our sins?
6. John 7:17 establishes a condition for determining God’s Will. What is it?
7. Read Colossians 2:6-7 and Ephesians 2:8-9. What two things are to characterize our Christian life?
8. Read 2 Peter 3:14-18. What Christian objective is stated in verse 14, and what two things are stated in verse 18 that we are to grow in?
9. Return to 1 John 1:6-10. What two things are required from Believers to be cleansed from their sins?
10. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. Who are the real enemies and how are we to fight?
11. Read Ephesians 4:11-13. What are the three stated objectives of “building up the Body of Christ”?

## **Section 2**

### **The Bible**

#### **A. What is the Bible?**

##### **1. The Written Word of God**

The Bible is not simply a common book. It was written by more than forty authors whose lives spanned over 1,500 years. Jesus Christ called it “The Book” (Hebrews 10:7). Without it man cannot know the absolute standard of righteousness nor the need for grace in his life. God chose to have His words written down so that His standards would be clear. The written Word is accepted by faith and proven by history (events that have already occurred). Man speaks to God through prayer. God primarily speaks to man through His written Word.

The great majority of people use translations of the Bible from the original languages of Scripture. Most of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. The only exceptions are found in the Book of Daniel, chapters 2 through 7 and in the Book of Ezra, chapters 4 through 7. These chapters were written in a sister language to the Hebrew called Aramaic which was the language spoken by most of the Jews at the time these books were written. All of the New Testament is written in Koine (common) Greek.

The chapter and verse breaks were added by man after initial inspiration to make it easier to find various passages. Thus, they are not inspired by God, but they do serve a valuable purpose in helping us to understand how these sections have been traditionally understood.

##### **2. The Inspired Word of God**

Every single part of the Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and is thus profitable. “Inspiration” is more than human genius, illumination and revelation, because it is divinely initiated. It is “God’s breath” expressing itself through a human personality.

##### **3. The Revelation of the Living Word of God**

The Bible is the written revelation of the Living Word of God—our Lord Jesus Christ. “Revelation” means to give new information. “Illumination” occurs when the Holy Spirit, at work inside us, makes “Revelation” understandable for the student of the Word. The written Word is not the Living Word; it is the divine description of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:12 cf. John 5:39-47).

These are important distinctions to make. The paper and ink do not contain the power, but the Power behind the paper and ink is the Spirit of God making the difference in people’s lives. To view the words as powerful in and of themselves, without being awestruck by the Author (Hebrews 12:2), misses the point.

#### **B. Organization of the Bible**

##### **1. The Two Major Divisions**

The Bible is divided into two Testaments, the Old and the New.

There are 66 total books, 39 in the Old Testament, written by over 30 different authors, and 27 in the New Testament, written by 10 authors. There are 1,189 chapters, 929 in the Old Testament, and 260 chapters in the New Testament. The Old Testament contains 23,214 verses; the New Testament contains 7,959 verses (for a total of 31,173 verses of Scripture).

A “testament” is a covenant or contract in which something of value has been offered by one person, then accepted by another person. For example, when someone desires to purchase any product, an offer is made and then accepted or rejected. Once the offer is accepted, a covenant or contract has been made. The covenant contains promises that are to govern the relationship between the two parties. A good example of a covenant is found in the vows taken for marriage. These vows are a covenant between the bride and the groom, acting as the foundation of the relationship.

The Old Testament contains the original covenants that God made with man concerning the coming Messiah. Later in our study, we will examine these covenants.

## 2. The Five Divisions of the Old Testament

The Old Testament is grouped as follows:

### a. The Law

Called the “Torah” (in Hebrew) or “Pentateuch” (in Greek it means “five books”), The Law is comprised of five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

### b. Historical Books

There are twelve historical books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.

### c. Poetical Books

The five poetical books are: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon.

### d. Major Prophets

The five major prophets are: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel.

### e. Minor Prophets

There are twelve minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

## 3. The Three Divisions of the New Testament

The New Testament documents the arrival of the Messiah and contains the new covenant made thereafter.

There is, of course, a variety of topics within the books. The historical books, for example, contain some prophecy (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), just as the book of prophecy contains some epistles (Revelation 2–3). The general designation of any book is based simply on its overall content. The New Testament is grouped into three divisions, as follows:

### a. The Historical books

The five historical books are: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts.

### b. The Epistles

The Historical books are followed by 21 Epistles (letters): Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Hebrews, James and Jude.

### c. Prophecy

There is one book of Prophecy: Revelation.

## For Personal Study: Chapter 1, Section 2

1. Read Hebrews 10:1-7. What can the written Word not do?
2. Also from Hebrews 10:1-7, what is the written Word designed to do?
3. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What is the inspired Word of God profitable for?
4. According to 2 Timothy 3:17, what is the twofold purpose of Scripture?
5. Read John 5:39-47. What is Jesus’ warning to those who study Scripture?
6. What are the primary elements of a “covenant” or “testament”?
7. What are the five divisions of the Old Testament?
8. Is it permissible to designate the Major and Minor Prophets simply as “The Prophets”?
9. What are the three divisions of the New Testament?

## **Section 3**

# **A Historical Overview**

The beauty of God's Word is in part due to its internal consistency, even though it was written by so many different authors over such a long period of time. History looks at events that happened in the past.

The sequence of the events outlined below shows a marvelous motion through the unfolding and then the folding up of human history. By looking at these major events, we can clearly trace the introduction and conclusion of such a marvelous story. We can also gain some clear insights into a question philosophers have been asking for centuries: "Why are we here?"

The following overview is designed to be just that, an overview. We will spend the rest of our lives filling in the details. For now, let us learn from the major historical events that God has placed in front of us. Later in this lesson, we'll see an excellent overview of God's wonderfully consistent plan.

### **A. Description of the Events**

#### **1. Creation**

In the beginning of the Bible, Genesis documents the original creation of the heavens and earth (Genesis 1:1; 2 Peter 3:6). At the end of the Book in Revelation, the original creation is destroyed, making way for the creation of a "New Heaven and New Earth" (Revelation 21–22).

#### **2. Satan's Rebellion**

Sometime before the creation of man, Satan rebelled against God (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28). The purpose of this first rebellion is intricately woven throughout the Scriptures, and all of the ramifications of this conflict are not easily understood. What is understood is that a war has been raging between God and Satan since before man's creation (Revelation 12) and that Satan's final rebellion will occur after the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ on earth, just before the creation of the new heaven and earth (Revelation 20:7-10).

#### **3. Earth and Man**

God prepared the earth to be inhabited by man (Genesis 1:2–2:3: as a footnote, the words "formless" [Hebrew TOHU] and "void" [Hebrew BOHU] mean, "uninhabitable," and, "void of population," respectively). The problem is that there was an invader, Satan, who continually sought to challenge God. When the Lord imprisons Satan for the duration of the future Millennial Kingdom (1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ, see Revelation 20:1-3), He will once again perfect earth for man (Isaiah 60–66).

#### **4. The First and Last Adam**

The first man, Adam, was designed to be the head over all creation (Genesis 1:28; 2:4-25). He was placed in the Garden of Eden to cultivate and keep it. The "Last Adam," the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:45), will establish a literal physical Headship for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4). He is "last" in the sense that there is no one else who will come into existence as a perfect being.

#### **5. Man's Battle with Satan**

When Adam "fell" in the Garden of Eden, he became subject to Satan, the "ruler of this world" (Genesis 3; John 12:31; 16:11). God will later subject Satan to Christ just before the Millennial Kingdom begins (Revelation 20:1-3).

#### **6. All of Mankind Judged**

God permits man to descend into evil, but He will eventually deal with all mankind. In Genesis 4–10, we find the background that led to the great Flood, which occurred because of God's displeasure with mankind's disobedience (Genesis 6:1-13). God will again deal with all mankind when Jesus Christ returns at the Second Advent, after the seven-year period of Tribulation. At that time, He will separate the remainder of mankind into the "sheep" (Believers) and the "goats" (unbelievers) (Matthew 25:31-46).

#### **7. Babylon**

After the Flood of Noah, the earth was repopulated, but soon people began again to turn in the wrong direction—away from God. In Babylon, they constructed the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11), which was

indicative of their attempt to save themselves. They thought that if they could build a tower high enough, they could escape God's wrath (such as that of the Flood) by ascending to heaven. The foundation they built the tower upon was a religion known as "humanism," which supposes that man can save himself through religious and/or economic means. Beliefs such as this are the basis of all the world's religious systems. Only Christianity realizes that man can't save himself; therefore, man needs a Savior. Some humanistic attitudes are displayed in the Bible by those who stood in opposition to the Living God. These attitudes were found in the Babylon of the past (Isaiah 47) and Tyre (Ezekiel 26–27) and remain with us today. The same attitudes are found in the world's religions, which believe that man ascends to godhood in stages and thus saves himself. During the Tribulation, God will destroy the Babylonian organizations that have been created (Revelation 17–18).

#### **8. Israel**

After dispersing the people from Babel and distributing various languages to the nations, the Lord called Abraham to be the founder of a new nation, Israel (Genesis 12). Through the miraculous conception of his son, Isaac, and the birth of his grandson, Jacob, the promise made to Abraham about the Messiah was continued (Genesis 22:1-18; 28:14). The people of Israel were eventually removed from their land and dispersed throughout the world for their idolatrous practices, but the Lord's promises remained. Israel will be supernaturally re-gathered after the Tribulation and blessed with the Millennial Kingdom (Matthew 24:29-31).

#### **9. The Advents of Jesus Christ**

The First Advent of Jesus Christ took place at the perfect time in God's plan for history (1 Timothy 2:6). The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John relate the wonderful history of Jesus' birth, ministry, death, burial and resurrection. Jesus Christ was clearly the "Suffering Servant" so beautifully foretold in Isaiah 53. The Second Advent of Jesus Christ will take place after the Tribulation when Christ actually sets foot on the earth again and conquers His enemies (Zechariah 14:1-8; Revelation 19:11-19), thus ushering in the Millennial Kingdom. This time He will come as the "Conquering King."

#### **10. Opposing Ministries**

The Gospels also beautifully portray the public ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). Christ's ministry was one of service to others (Matthew 20:28). This is in clear contrast to the ministry of the Antichrist (also known as the "man of lawlessness") who will have a "ministry" of self-service, seeking to draw all attention and worship to himself (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation 6–16).

#### **11. The Church**

After the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ to the right hand of God the Father, the Church was "called out" to spread the good news of forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Acts of the Apostles). The Church bears the responsibility for "making disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:18-20) until she is "called" up for the marriage to her Lord, the Bridegroom (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; Revelation 19:7-10).

## B. Summary

When we analyze the sequence of the events just described, we see a marvelous, symmetrical pattern emerge. It is the unfolding and then the folding up of human history. It is illustrated by the following chart. Match the numbers together and you will see the overview of God's plan.<sup>1</sup>

1. Creation of the original heavens and earth—Genesis 1:1; 2 Peter 3:6
2. Satan's first rebellion—Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28
3. Earth prepared for man—Genesis 1:2–2:3
4. The Headship of the First Adam—Genesis 2:4-25
5. Man subjected to Satan—Genesis 3
6. All of mankind judged—Genesis 4–10
7. Construction of the Tower of Babel—Genesis 11
8. Israel called as a nation—Genesis 12
9. First Advent of Jesus Christ—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
10. Ministry of Jesus Christ—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
11. Church called out—Acts
11. Church called up—1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58
10. Ministry of the Antichrist—2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation 6–16
9. Second Advent of Jesus Christ—Revelation 19:11-19
8. Israel re-gathered as a nation—Matthew 24:29-31
7. Destruction of Babylonian organizations—Revelation 17-18
6. All of mankind judged—Matthew 25:31-46
5. Satan subjected to Christ—Revelation 20:1-3
4. The Headship of the Last Adam—Revelation 20:4
3. Earth perfected for man—Isaiah 60–66
2. Satan's final rebellion—Revelation 20:7-10
1. Creation of a new heaven and earth—Revelation 21–22

## For Personal Study: Chapter 1, Section 3

1. Read Genesis 1–2 and Revelation 21–22. What do they reveal?
2. Read Isaiah 14:12-14 and Revelation 20:7-10. What is Satan's original sin, and what is his final destiny?
3. Read Genesis 1:2–2:3 again and Isaiah 60–66. In Genesis the earth was made perfect, but due to the Fall of Adam, it became imperfect. What does the Isaiah passage then indicate?
4. Read Genesis 3, 1 Corinthians 15:45 and 1 Peter 2:22-24. What is the difference between the first man, Adam, and the "last Adam" which is Jesus Christ?
5. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. Who are our real enemies and how do we fight them?
6. Read Genesis 6:1-13 and Matthew 25:31-46. What is the common theme of those chapters?
7. Read Revelation 17–18. The Babylonian religion was humanism, meaning that mankind can save itself. Without attempting to identify all the symbolism in those chapters, seek to find the two main ways humanism manifests itself. (Hint: Chapter 17 is one way, Chapter 18 is the other.)
8. Read Genesis 12:1-3, Hebrews 11:8-12 and Revelation 21:10-27. When will be the complete and total fulfillment of the promise to Abraham?
9. Read Isaiah 53, Zechariah 14:1-8 and Revelation 19:11-19. Simply describe the difference between the First Advent of Jesus Christ and the Second Advent.
10. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 and Matthew 20:28. What is the major difference between the ministry of Jesus Christ and the ministry of the "Antichrist"?
11. Read Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. What is the major function of the Church until she is called up to meet the Lord?

## **Section 4**

# **A Chronological Overview**

Students of the Bible must know the sequence, dates and relationship of several key historical events. Accordingly, this section provides three chronologies. The first lists ten major events found in the Bible and their dates, summarizing the importance of each. The second chronology focuses on key Old Testament events and identifies the books of the Bible that address them. The third lists the sequence of books in the New Testament.

Dates that have "B.C." after them refer to the years "before Christ." Those that have "A.D." refer to the years after Christ. (A.D. was taken from the Latin, Anno Domini, which means "in the year of our Lord.")

The dates given are based on a literal interpretation of God's Word. Many people who have studied God's Word have arrived at different dates for reasons too numerous to mention at this time. Please do not let this be a distraction. Learning the sequence of events is the most important part of this section.

Previous editions of Foundations failed to account for 60 years that were not mentioned in Genesis 11:26–12:5, but referenced in Acts 7:4. The Acts passages state that Abraham left Haran after Terah died. Terah died in Haran at the age of 205 (Genesis 11:32), and Abraham left Haran at age 75 after Terah died (Acts 7:4). This means that Terah was 130 years old when Abraham was born. The 70 years referred to in Genesis 11:26 must refer either to the birth of Nahor or Haran, probably Haran (Genesis 11:28). Hopefully, this will serve to reinforce the principles that every student must continue to compare Scripture with Scripture and let it interpret itself.

### **A. Ten Major Events and Their Dates**

#### **1. The Fall of Adam (3958 B.C.)**

A literal interpretation of the genealogies (sequences of birth) that are given in God's Word lets us arrive at a date around 3958 B.C. for the fall of Adam. The Biblical chronology is given in such a way that we must work forward from the starting point of Adam and also work backward from the 4th year of Solomon (1 Kings 6:1). The Bible gives us information concerning the years between major events. As we connect Biblical events with known dates in secular history, we can then put secular and Biblical history together.

#### **2. The Flood of Noah (2302 B.C.)**

When we follow the genealogy of Genesis 5, we find that a span of 1,656 years elapsed from the fall of Adam to the Flood of Noah. This gives us a date of 2302 B.C.

#### **3. The Promise to Abraham (1875 B.C.)**

The genealogy given to us in Genesis 11:10-26 establishes that Abraham was born 352 years after the Flood, or 2,008 years after Adam. This would indicate that he was born in 1950 B.C. We learn from Genesis 12:4 that Abraham was 75 years old when he received the promise from God that became the Abrahamic Covenant. This would mean that the promise was made in 1875 B.C.

#### **4. The Exodus of Israel (1445 B.C.)**

Genesis 12–50 reveals to us information concerning the direct descendants of Abraham. The children of Jacob (Abraham's grandson) moved to Egypt where they were eventually enslaved by the Egyptians (Exodus 1). God delivered them from Egyptian slavery by the hand of Moses. The apostle Paul tells us that a span of 430 years had passed from the promise to Abraham to the giving of The Law (Galatians 3:17). This dates the Exodus in 1445 B.C. or 2,438 years after Adam.

#### **5. The Fourth Year of Solomon (965 B.C.)**

Solomon was the third king of Israel, following his father, David, and King Saul. In 1 Kings 6:1 we are told that 480 years had elapsed from the Exodus to the fourth year of Solomon when he began to build the Temple. This lets us calculate the date as 965 B.C. or 2,918 years after Adam.

We are able to date the fourth year of Solomon from other historical records. This lets us establish a fixed date by which we may work backwards and establish the dates previously mentioned for the Exodus, the Promise to Abraham, the Flood of Noah and Adam. Man has been forced by archaeological discoveries made in the last 100 years to make some adjustments to the B.C. dates of secular history. This is part of the reason for the differences found in various dating systems.

**6. The Fall of the Northern Kingdom (721 B.C.)**

After the death of Solomon, Israel split into two separate kingdoms which became known as the “Northern Kingdom” or Israel, and the “Southern Kingdom” or Judah. The Northern Kingdom fell to the Assyrian Empire in 721 B.C. and ceased to be a kingdom.

**7. The Fall of the Southern Kingdom (586 B.C.)**

The Southern Kingdom fell to the Babylonian Empire in 586 B.C. and was taken into exile for 70 years before the Israelites were allowed to return to their homeland in 516 B.C.

**8. The Birth of Jesus Christ (1 B.C.)**

The “B.C.” and “A.D.” system of dating was not developed until the sixth century after our Lord came. It was designed to reference all historical dates to His birth. When the Church established this system, it was based on an incorrect understanding of when King Herod lived (who was mentioned in the Bible as being in power when Jesus was born, Luke 1:5). Much later it was discovered that a mistake of one or two years had been made, but the system was already well established, so instead of trying to change all the dates that had previously been established with new dates, it was decided to just say that Jesus was born in 1 or 2 B.C.

There is a difference between the Julian Calendar which begins January 1 and the Jewish Calendar which begins in September. This is the reason you may see dates written as “1–2 B.C.” or “966–965 B.C.”

**9. The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (A.D. 32–33)**

The majority of Bible scholars establish the date of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ at A.D. 32–33.

**10. The Last Book of the Bible (A.D. 96)**

This date is related to the apostle John’s exile to the Isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:9), during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian, where the Bible was completed (Revelation 22:18-19).

**B. Chronology of the Old Testament Books**

**1. Adam to the Flood (3958–2302 B.C.)**

Genesis 1–5

**2. The Flood to the Promise to Abraham (2302–1875 B.C.)**

Genesis 6–12

**3. The Promise to Abraham to the Exodus (1875–1445 B.C.)**

Genesis 12–50; Book of Job

**4. The Exodus to the 4th Year of Solomon (1445–965 B.C.)**

- |                |             |                 |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| a. Exodus      | e. Joshua   | i. 2 Samuel     |
| b. Leviticus   | f. Judges   | j. 1 Kings 1-5  |
| c. Numbers     | g. Ruth     | k. Psalms       |
| d. Deuteronomy | h. 1 Samuel | l. 1 Chronicles |

**5. The 4th Year of Solomon to the Fall of Judah (965–586 B.C.)**

- |                    |            |              |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| a. 1 Kings 6–22    | g. Obadiah | m. Isaiah    |
| b. 2 Kings         | h. Joel    | n. Nahum     |
| c. 2 Chronicles    | i. Jonah   | o. Zephaniah |
| d. Proverbs        | j. Amos    | p. Habakkuk  |
| e. Ecclesiastes    | k. Hosea   |              |
| f. Song of Solomon | l. Micah   |              |

**6. The Period of the Babylonian Exile (586–516 B.C.)**

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| a. Jeremiah     | c. Ezekiel |
| b. Lamentations | d. Daniel  |

**7. After the Babylonian Exile to the Close of the Old Testament (516–400 B.C.)**

- |             |              |            |
|-------------|--------------|------------|
| a. Ezra     | c. Zechariah | e. Malachi |
| b. Nehemiah | d. Haggai    |            |

**C. Chronology of the New Testament Books**

The sequence in which the authors wrote the various inspired New Testament books (referred to as inscripturation) is generally viewed to be as follows:

**1. History of the Life of Christ and the Early Church (A.D. 55–85)**

- |            |         |         |
|------------|---------|---------|
| a. Matthew | c. Mark | e. Acts |
| b. Luke    | d. John |         |

**2. Epistles for the Church (A.D. 46–85)**

- |                    |                 |            |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------|
| a. James           | h. Philemon     | o. Hebrews |
| b. Galatians       | i. Ephesians    | p. 1 Peter |
| c. 1 Thessalonians | j. Colossians   | q. 2 Peter |
| d. 2 Thessalonians | k. Philippians. | r. Jude    |
| e. 1 Corinthians   | l. 1 Timothy    | s. 1 John  |
| f. 2 Corinthians   | m. Titus        | t. 2 John  |
| g. Romans          | n. 2 Timothy    | u. 3 John  |

**3. Prophecy (A.D. 96)**

Revelation

**For Personal Study: Chapter 1, Section 4**

**1. Arrange these events in the correct order:**

The Fall of the Northern Kingdom  
The Flood of Noah  
The Fall of the Southern Kingdom  
The Promise to Abraham  
The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ  
The Exodus of Israel  
The Fourth Year of Solomon  
The Birth of Jesus Christ  
The Fall of Adam  
The Last Book of the Bible

**2. Which two Old Testament books cover the time span from Creation to the Exodus from Egypt?**

**3. Put these sections of Scripture in chronological order:**

|             |              |           |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| 1 Samuel    | Joshua       | 2 Samuel  |
| 1 Kings 1-5 | Deuteronomy  | Leviticus |
| Numbers     | Ruth         | Psalms    |
| Judges      | 1 Chronicles | Exodus    |

**4. Put these sections of the Old Testament in chronological order:**

|                 |         |           |
|-----------------|---------|-----------|
| 2 Chronicles    | Isaiah  | Hosea     |
| 1 Kings 6–22    | Nahum   | Joel      |
| 2 Kings         | Amos    | Zephaniah |
| Proverbs        | Micah   | Habakkuk  |
| Ecclesiastes    | Jonah   |           |
| Song of Solomon | Obadiah |           |

**5. Put these Old Testament books in chronological order:**

|          |         |              |
|----------|---------|--------------|
| Nehemiah | Ezekiel | Zechariah    |
| Daniel   | Malachi | Lamentations |
| Jeremiah | Ezra    | Haggai       |

**6. Arrange these New Testament historical books in chronological order:**

|         |      |      |
|---------|------|------|
| Matthew | Luke | Acts |
| Mark    | John |      |

**7. Arrange these New Testament books in chronological order:**

|                 |                 |            |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| Romans          | 2 Thessalonians | 2 Peter    |
| 1 Corinthians   | 1 Timothy       | 1 John     |
| 2 Corinthians   | 2 Timothy       | 2 John     |
| Galatians       | Titus           | 3 John     |
| Ephesians       | Philemon        | Jude       |
| Philippians     | Hebrews         | Revelation |
| Colossians      | James           |            |
| 1 Thessalonians | 1 Peter         |            |

## **Section 5**

### **Preparing to Study the Bible**

In the last two sections, we were introduced to the importance of knowing significant events that occurred in the past (Section 3) as well as the sequence in which they occurred (Section 4). We were laying a foundation to help answer an important question one must ask when studying the Bible: "When?" As we seek to understand the Bible, we find ourselves constantly searching for answers to questions that are important to **"handling accurately the word of truth"** (2 Timothy 2:15). God invites us to bring all of our questions to Him (Matthew 7:7-8).

The basic questions that we must ask of every verse are very simple: **who, what, when, where, why** and **how**? The answers must be considered while keeping in mind the two primary questions concerning the Christian Life: How does this help us develop a close, personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:10), and how then shall we live (John 7:17)?

#### **A. Six Basic Questions for Every Verse**

##### **1. Who?**

As we ask the question "who," we are seeking to determine who is speaking and to whom it is addressed. One example is found in Genesis 22:2 when God told Abraham to sacrifice his son, his only son, to Him. In this case, God spoke directly to Abraham, not anyone else. Therefore, we, as hearers of the Word, are not obligated to keep that command.

##### **2. What?**

"What" deals with the reality of the thing being said. Jesus Christ is referred to in Revelation 5 as "the Lamb." This does not mean that He is a shaggy, four-footed creature but refers to His sacrifice for sin (John 1:29) which is the "reality."

##### **3. When?**

The "when" question refers us to the time frame to which a particular passage may refer. For instance, Abraham's marriage to his half sister Sarah might be interpreted as immoral until the reader understands that this marriage occurred before the giving of the Mosaic Law, which forbade such practice. Since personal sin is not an issue when there is no law (Romans 4:15), we conclude that in Abraham's case, his marriage was not sin. Clear answers to the question "when" are crucial to complete understanding.

##### **4. Where?**

"Where" deals with the geography and culture in which a passage was written. Frequently in the Bible we find the phrase "up to Jerusalem." In many cultures, the phrase "up to" has come to mean to travel north. However, the Biblical intent has to do with elevation and not direction. When Jesus came from Galilee and was going "up to Jerusalem," He was actually traveling south, but going higher up in elevation.

##### **5. Why?**

The "why" question is often the most difficult question to answer. The answer is most often found through studying other passages. If one reads the phrase in Isaiah 7:14 which says, **"Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel,"** an obvious question would be "why a virgin?" We might just answer the question with, "that's the way God wanted to do it." That answer, while correct, is not complete.

As we look for the answer, we will find the passage in Romans 5 that addresses the effect the sin of Adam had on the human race. We find that through the man, Adam, each member of the human race is given a Sin Nature. If Jesus had an earthly father, He too would have had a Sin Nature. The answer to "why," in this case, is crucial to Christ's qualifications to pay for sin.

##### **6. How?**

The question of "how" is often difficult to answer as well. We might ask, "How did Jesus walk on water?" The answer is simply that He depended upon the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:18). We also might ask, "How does God control history when mankind has the freedom of choice?" That question is not as easily answered and we will explore it later in our study.

## B. Two Important Personal Questions

### 1. How Does This Help Us Develop a Close, Personal Relationship with Our Lord Jesus Christ?

This is one of the most important questions we can ask. The knowledge that we have gained through the study of God's Word must be united with faith (Hebrews 11:6), so our relationship with the Lord will grow. We must trust God's Word as accurate and dependable. The result will be a relationship with the Lord that is grounded in His love and is beyond human knowledge. The apostle Paul said it clearly in Ephesians 3:14-19 when he wrote:

***For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.***

If we are simply studying God's Word for intellectual reasons and not seeking to grow in our love for God and others (Mark 12:29-31), we are becoming arrogant (1 Corinthians 8:1). The apostle Paul, who knew more theology than any other man on earth (2 Corinthians 12:1-4), expressed his greatest desire in saying, ***“that I may know Him”*** (Philippians 3:10). Paul, as a Pharisee, had already been on an intellectual journey, but as a Christian, he began to pursue a vital relationship with the Living God.

Look for God's promises, and trust them, so you might ***“grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”*** (2 Peter 3:18).

### 2. How Then Shall We Live?

Once we come to understand the meaning of the verses we are studying, we must seek to understand how it applies to everyday life. We are given a beautiful example of this concept in Hebrews 12:1-3. Verses 1 and 2 state:

***Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.***

The illustration the writer of Hebrews chose in these two verses is that of running a race. People in the stands are watching (the heroes of Chapter 11). The race is for speed and distance, and to the victor goes the seat of honor. The contestant removes any additional weight that would slow him down, and/or any obstacles that could trip him up. His eyes are on the finish line, where the One (Jesus Christ) who has already run His race, and won, stands. Potential joy becomes more important than any fatigue experienced, so the runner endures.

Then, in verse 3, the writer applies the two verses to our lives as he writes:

***For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.***

When we face trials and opposition, pain and sorrow, shame and disgrace for the cause of Christ, we are to consider our Leader and be encouraged by Him! Realize that, ***“we do not have a great high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin”*** (Hebrews 4:15).

## C. What If We Can't Answer All of the Questions?

Questions and their answers are important. We must remember, however, that our relationship with the Living God is based on faith (Ephesians 2:8-9; Colossians 2:6), so we won't get all the answers that we seek in this lifetime. However, God has promised that eventually all our questions will be answered (1 Corinthians 13:12). Scripture provides enough information to lead us through life.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 1, Section 5**

- 1. Read Jeremiah 39:1-2 and answer the six basic questions we must ask each verse.**

Who? =

What? =

When? =

Where? =

Why? =

How? =

- 2. Read Mark 12:29-31. With what four things are we to love the Lord?**

- 3. Read Hebrews 11:6 and 1 John 2:7-11. What two things are essential to the Christian life?**



## **Chapter 2**

# **Old Testament Survey**

# Introduction

This is a short survey of the books of the Old and New Testaments. The goal is to give the reader information about the author, date of writing, key people, theme and purpose along with a summary of how Christ is portrayed in that book. Each of the book descriptions will also contain an outline of its content.

A survey of each book of the Bible is important to the student of the Word of God so that the student may reach a general understanding of the major events and topics of the Bible. It is obvious that the more time we spend studying God's Word, the more we will come to know about it. But as has been the approach of this study, we are seeking to get the big picture first so that we may be able to properly see the details later. Chapter 1 contained an overview of the entire Bible. This Chapter begins to narrow our study through an overview of the individual books.

## Comparing the Old and New Testaments

Christ is the hope and underlying theme of all the books of the Bible. On several occasions, Christ claimed that He is the theme of all of Scripture:

1. In Matthew 5:17 He said, ***"I have come not to abolish them (the Scriptures) but to fulfill them."***
2. When walking with the disciples on the Emmaus road, Luke tells us that, ***"... beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures."***
3. Later that evening, the Lord spoke to ten of the disciples and regarding that, Luke records in Luke 24:44-47, ***"These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."***
4. In John 5:39 and 40, when in dialogue with the Jews, Jesus said, ***"You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life."***

In addition, in Revelation 19:10, we are told that ***"the testimony of Jesus (about Jesus) is the spirit of prophecy."*** In other words, the very nature and purpose of prophecy, and all of Scripture for that matter, is to reveal Jesus Christ. Obviously, due to the fall and need of man, Christ is the theme of both the Old and New Testaments for it is only through Him that we can have both eternal life and life abundantly (John 10:10).

| Old Testament   |                                |   |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Law—Foundation for Christ<br>History—Preparation for Christ<br>Poetry—Aspiration for Christ<br>Prophecy—Expectation of Christ | Preparation<br>&<br>Foundation | The Old Testament lays the foundation for the coming of the Messiah Savior anticipating Him as Prophet, Priest, and King and as the suffering Savior who must die for man's sin before He reigns. |
| New Testament   |                                |   |
| Gospels   | Manifestation                  | Tells the story of the coming of the long-anticipated Savior and His person and work.   |
| Acts  | The Expansion                  | Through the work of the Holy Spirit, Acts proclaims the message of the Savior who has come.   |
| Epistles  | Explanation & Application      | Develops the full significance of the person and work of Christ and how this should impact the walk of the Christian as Christ's ambassador in the world.   |
| Revelation  | The Finish                     | Anticipates the end time events and the return of the Lord, His end time reign and the eternal state.   |

Please notice that in the outlines of the individual books, titles are not given for various sections of verses. This is for the student to do. Study each section and give it a title.

## **Section 1**

### **The Law: The First Five Books**

The first five books of the Bible are sometimes called the Pentateuch which means “five books.” They are also known as the “Books of the Law,” because they contain the laws and instruction given by the Lord through Moses to the people of Israel. These books were written by Moses, except for the last portion of Deuteronomy, because it tells about his death. These five books lay the foundation for the coming of Christ in that here God chooses and brings into being the nation of Israel. As God’s chosen people, Israel became the keepers of the Old Testament, the recipients of the covenants of promise, and the race of the Messiah (Romans 3:2; 9:1-5).

### **Genesis** **(The Book of Beginnings)**

**Author and Name of Book:** Moses wrote this book. The name Genesis means “beginning” and is taken from the Septuagint (LXX), which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.

**Date of Writing:** 1450–1410 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** Even a casual reading of the Book of Genesis reveals the major theme of blessing and cursing. For obedience and faith, there is blessing as in the Garden of Eden, but for disobedience, there is cursing. The entire book turns on this theme. But perhaps the main theme is the choice of a nation through Abraham and the Abrahamic covenant. Through Abraham, God promised to bless the nations (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21).

Genesis not only means “beginning,” but it is the book of beginnings. The book of Genesis gives us our historical point of reference, from which all subsequent revelation proceeds. In the book of Genesis, all the major themes of the Bible have their origin. It is a book of many beginnings: in it we see the beginning of the universe, of man and woman, of human sin and the fall of the human race, the beginning of God’s promises of salvation, and the beginning of the nation Israel as the chosen people of God because of God’s special purpose for them as the race of the Messiah and Savior. In Genesis, we learn about Adam and Eve, about Satan the tempter, about Noah, the Flood, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph and his brothers. We also have the beginning of marriage, family, work, sin, murder, capital punishment, sacrifice, races, languages, civilization, Sabbath, the first attempt at a one-world government, and Babylonianism (the religion developed at the Tower of Babel). The Bible is a historical revelation. It is the account of God’s activity in history.

A common phrase found in Genesis is “these are the generations of.” It is used eleven times to introduce the reader to the next section which gives information about what happened in connection with important events and people from the creation of the heavens and the earth to all the patriarchs of Israel.

**Key People:** Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, Jacob, Rachel, Joseph

**Christ as Seen in Genesis—Prophetically:** Immediately after the fall, the promise of salvation is given in the seed of the woman (3:15), but then the Messianic relationships are made clear throughout Genesis: the line of Seth (4:25), the offspring of Shem (9:26), the family of Abraham (12:3), the seed of Isaac (26:3), the sons of Jacob (46:3), and the tribe of Judah (49:10).

There are several key “types” that portray the Savior in Genesis. **Adam** is a type of Christ (Romans 5:14).

Adam is the head of the old creation, and Christ is the head of the new spiritual creation.

**Abel’s** offering of a blood sacrifice points to Christ who would die for us. Abel’s murder by Cain may also illustrate Christ’s death.

**Melchizedek** as the king and priest is also a type of Christ (Hebrews 7:3).

**Joseph**, who was loved dearly by his father, betrayed by his brothers, and yet became the means of their deliverance typifies Christ.



the crossing of the Red Sea, God showed His people that He was not only more powerful than any Egyptian Pharaoh but was the Sovereign LORD, YAHWEH, the God of redemption and revelation.

Once the people had crossed the Red Sea and arrived in the wilderness, God gave them His righteous law and declared that they were a treasured possession to Him and were to be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation as a testimony to the nations (Exodus 19:4-7). This holy law, including the Ten Commandments, demonstrated God's holiness, taught them how to love God and one another, but in the process, it also demonstrated how all fall short of the holiness of God and need a way of access to God that provides forgiveness. This was provided for in the Tabernacle, the sacrifices, and the Levitical Priesthood.

**Key People:** Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Pharaoh

**Christ as Seen in Exodus:** While Exodus contains no direct prophecy of Christ, there are a number of beautiful types of the Savior. In many ways, **Moses** is a type of Christ. Deuteronomy 18:15 shows that Moses, as a prophet, anticipates Christ. Both are kinsman-redeemers who were endangered in infancy, renounced their power to serve others, and functioned as mediators, lawgivers, and deliverers.

The **Passover** is a very specific type of Christ as the sinless Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36; 1 Corinthians 5:7).

The **Seven Feasts**, each of which portray some aspect of the Savior.

The **Exodus** itself, which Paul connects with baptism, pictures our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (1 Corinthians 10:1-2; Romans 6:2-3).

The **Manna** and **Water** are both portrayed as pictures of Christ (John 6:31-35, 48-63; 1 Corinthians 10:3-4).

The **Tabernacle** portrays the Savior in its material, colors, furniture, arrangement, and the offerings sacrificed there (Hebrews 9:1-10:18).

The **High Priest** quite clearly foreshadows the person and ministry of Christ (Hebrews 4:14-16; 9:11-12, 24-28).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Redemption from Egypt (1:1–18:27)

#### a. In Bondage (Subjection) (1:1–12:32)

|         |         |          |
|---------|---------|----------|
| 1:1-7   | 5:1-23  | 9:8-17   |
| 1:8-14  | 6:1-13  | 9:18-35  |
| 1:15-22 | 6:14-30 | 10:1-20  |
| 2:1-14  | 7:1-7   | 10:21-29 |
| 2:15-25 | 7:8-13  | 11:1-10  |
| 3:1-9   | 7:14-25 | 12:1-13  |
| 3:10-22 | 8:1-15  | 12:14-22 |
| 4:1-13  | 8:16-32 | 12:23-32 |
| 4:14-31 | 9:1-7   |          |

#### b. Out of Bondage (Redemption by Blood and Power) (12:33–14:31)

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 12:33-41 | 13:1-16  | 14:1-12  |
| 12:42-51 | 13:17-22 | 14:13-31 |

#### c. Journeying to Sinai (Education) (15:1–18:27)

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 15:1-21  | 16:8-21  | 17:8-16  |
| 15:22-27 | 16:22-36 | 18:1-16  |
| 16:1-7   | 17:1-7   | 18:17-27 |

### 2. Revelation from God (19:1–40:38)

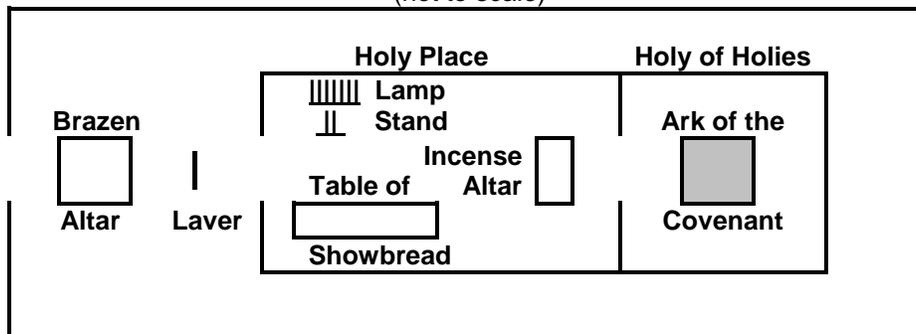
#### a. The Giving of the Law (19:1–24:18)

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 19:1-17  | 22:1-15  | 23:20-33 |
| 19:18-25 | 22:16-31 | 24:1-18  |
| 20:1-26  | 23:1-9   |          |
| 21:1-36  | 23:10-19 |          |

- b. The Institution of the Tabernacle (25:1–31:18)
- |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 25:1-9   | 26:31-37 | 29:31-46 |
| 25:10-22 | 27:1-8   | 30:1-21  |
| 25:23-30 | 27:9-21  | 30:22-33 |
| 25:31-40 | 28:1-43  | 30:34-38 |
| 26:1-14  | 29:1-9   | 31:1-11  |
| 26:15-30 | 29:10-30 | 31:12-18 |
- c. The Breaking of the Law (32:1–34:35)
- |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 32:1-10  | 33:1-11  | 34:10-28 |
| 32:11-18 | 33:12-23 | 34:29-35 |
| 32:19-35 | 34:1-9   |          |
- d. The Construction of the Tabernacle (35:1–40:38)
- |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 35:1-9   | 36:8-38  | 39:1-43  |
| 35:10-19 | 37:1-29  | 40:1-33  |
| 35:20-35 | 38:1-20  | 40:34-38 |
| 36:1-7   | 38:21-31 |          |

### Sketch of the Tabernacle

(not to scale)



## Leviticus

### (The Book of Holiness)

**Author and Name of Book:** Moses wrote this book. Leviticus receives its name from the Septuagint and means “relating to the Levites.” The Levites were the priests who were chosen of God to minister to the nation. The book of Leviticus contains many of the laws given by God to direct them in their work as priests for the worship of God.

**Date of Writing:** 1450–1410 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** Leviticus 11:45 says, *“Be holy, because I am holy.”* The directives given in the book of Leviticus showed Israel was to walk before God as a holy people. Leviticus was designed to teach Israel (1) how to worship and walk with God and (2) how the nation was to fulfill its calling as a nation of priests. The great theme of Leviticus is **holiness**. Sanctification is the process of making one holy. A holy God can only be approached on the basis of sacrifice through the mediation of a priest.

**Key People:** Moses, Aaron

**Christ as Seen in Leviticus:** Similar to Exodus, a number of types of Christ are evident in Leviticus.

The **Five Offerings** all typify the person and work of Christ in His sinless life and submission to the Father that we might have fellowship with God.

The **High Priest** is a very prominent type of Christ in Leviticus.

The **Seven Feasts** also form types of the Savior, teaching us about His perfect person, His substitutionary sacrifice, His resurrection from the dead and His atoning work.

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Laws of Sacrifice (1:1–17:16)

- |  |          |         |
|--|----------|---------|
| a. For Approach to God (1:1–7:38)            |          |         |
| 1:1-17                                       | 4:1-35   | 6:8-30  |
| 2:1-16                                       | 5:1-19   | 7:1-38  |
| 3:1-17                                       | 6:1-7    |         |
| b. For Priests (8:1–10:20)                   |          |         |
| 8:1-36                                       | 9:15-24  |         |
| 9:1-14                                       | 10:1-20  |         |
| c. Regarding Purity (11:1–15:33)             |          |         |
| 11:1-12                                      | 13:1-59  | 15:1-33 |
| 11:13-47                                     | 14:1-32  |         |
| 12:1-8                                       | 14:33-57 |         |
| d. Regarding National Atonement (16:1–17:16) |          |         |
| 16:1-28                                      | 16:29-34 | 17:1-16 |

### 2. Laws of Sanctification (18:1–27:34)

- |                                       |          |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| a. For God's People (18:1–20:27)      |          |          |
| 18:1-30                               | 19:9-37  |          |
| 19:1-8                                | 20:1-27  |          |
| b. For God's Priests (21:1–22:33)     |          |          |
| 21:1-24                               | 22:1-16  | 22:17-33 |
| c. In Worship (23:1–24:23)            |          |          |
| 23:1-25                               | 24:1-16  |          |
| 23:26-44                              | 24:17-23 |          |
| d. In the Land of Canaan (25:1–26:46) |          |          |
| 25:1-22                               | 25:35-46 | 26:1-13  |
| 25:23-34                              | 25:47-55 | 26:14-46 |
| e. Concerning Vows (27:1-34)          |          |          |
| 27:1-13                               | 27:14-34 |          |

## Numbers (Wilderness Wanderings)

**Author and Name of Book:** Moses wrote this. Numbers gets its name from the two accounts in chapters 1 and 26 of the numbering or counting of the people of Israel, first at Mount Sinai, and second on the plains of Moab.

**Date of Writing:** 1450–1410 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** Although Numbers gets its name from the numbering of the people, it is primarily concerned with nearly 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. A journey which should have only lasted eleven days became 38 years of suffering simply because of the unbelief and disobedience of the people. Numbers shows the consequence of failing to mix faith with the promises of God (Hebrews 3:16–4:2). Additionally, Numbers teaches us that while life does have its “wilderness” experiences, God’s people do not have to stay in those conditions. The choices we make chart the direction we take in our life. Joshua will illustrate this later.

Another important theme shown throughout the book of Numbers is found in God’s continual care for His people. Over and over again, regardless of their rebellion and unbelief, He miraculously supplied their needs. He provided them with water, manna and quail. He continued to love and forgive the people even when they complained, grumbled and rebelled against Him.

**Key People:** Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua, Caleb, Balak

**Christ as Seen in Numbers:** Perhaps no place is there a clearer portrait of Christ and His crucifixion than in the **lifted up serpent** (Numbers 21:4-9 cf. John 3:14).

The **rock that quenched the thirst** of the people is a type of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4).

The daily **manna** pictures Christ as the bread that came down from heaven (John 6:31-33).

The **pillar of cloud** and **fire** portray the guidance of Christ and the cities of refuge certainly portray Christ as our refuge from judgment.

Finally, the **red heifer** is also a type of Christ (Numbers 19).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Preparation at Sinai (Old Generation) (1:1–10:36)

- |  |         |          |
|--|---------|----------|
| a. The Position and Numbering of the People (1:1–4:49)             |         |          |
| 1:1-46   | 3:1-24  | 4:1-20   |
| 1:47-54  | 3:25-39 | 4:21-28  |
| 2:1-34   | 3:40-51 | 4:29-49  |
| b. The Precepts of God and Sanctification of the People (5:1–9:14) |         |          |
| 5:1-10   | 6:22-27 | 8:5-22   |
| 5:11-31  | 7:1-89  | 8:23-26  |
| 6:1-21   | 8:1-4   | 9:1-14   |
| c. The Pilgrimage Toward the Promised Land (9:15–10:36)            |         |          |
| 9:15-23  | 10:1-10 | 10:11-36 |

### 2. Failure of the Old Generation (11:1–25:18)

- |  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| a. Discontent Along the Way (11:1–12:16)   |          |          |
| 11:1-9                                     | 11:16-30 | 12:1-16  |
| 11:10-15                                   | 11:31-35 |          |
| b. Disbelief at Kadesh-Barnea (13:1–14:45) |          |          |
| 13:1-24                                    | 14:1-10  | 14:20-38 |
| 13:25-33                                   | 14:11-19 | 14:39-45 |
| c. Discipline from the Lord (15:1–25:18)   |          |          |
| 15:1-13                                    | 18:8-32  | 21:21-35 |
| 15:14-31                                   | 19:1-22  | 22:1-21  |
| 15:32-41                                   | 20:1-7   | 22:22-41 |
| 16:1-40                                    | 20:8-22  | 23:1-30  |
| 16:41-50                                   | 20:23-29 | 24:1-25  |
| 17:1-13                                    | 21:1-5   | 25:1-9   |
| 18:1-7                                     | 21:6-20  | 25:10-18 |

### 3. Preparation of the New Generation (26:1–36:13)

- |  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| a. Reorganization of Israel (26:1–27:23)         |          |          |
| 26:1-65  | 27:1-14  | 27:15-23 |
| b. Regulation of Offerings and Vows (28:1–30:16) |          |          |
| 28:1-31  | 29:1-40  | 30:1-16  |
| c. Regionalization of the Land (31:1–36:13)      |          |          |
| 31:1-24  | 33:1-49  | 35:1-5   |
| 31:25-54   | 33:50-56 | 35:6-34  |
| 32:1-42  | 34:1-29  | 36:1-13  |

## Deuteronomy (Reviewing the Law)

**Author and Name of Book:** Moses wrote this book. The English title, which comes from the Septuagint, means “second law-giving” and comes from the mistranslation of 17:18, which should have been translated as “a copy of this law.” Deuteronomy is not a second law, but rather a review and expansion of the original law given at Sinai.

**Date of Writing:** 1410 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** *Watch yourself lest you forget.* After forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the Israelites were on the eve of entering the promised land. Before they did, it was necessary (lest they forget what God had done and who they were) that they be reminded about all that God had done for them and about God's holy law which was so vital to their ability to remain in the land and function as God's holy nation and as a kingdom of priests to the nations (Deuteronomy 4:1-8). As a part of this theme or purpose, the book also emphasizes the vital necessity of teaching children to love and obey God.

Deuteronomy ends with the renewal of God's covenant with Israel (Chapter 29), Joshua's appointment as the new leader (Chapter 31), and Moses' death (Chapter 34).

**Key People:** Moses, Joshua

**Christ as Seen in Deuteronomy:** The statement about Moses in 18:15 is one of the clearest portraits of Christ. It reads, *"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him."* Further, Moses, as a type of Christ, is the only figure other than Christ to fill all three of the offices of prophet (34:10-12), priest (Exodus 32:31-35), and king (although Moses was not king, he functioned as ruler of Israel; 33:4-5).<sup>2</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Introduction (1:1-5)

### 2. Review of History (1:6–4:43)

|         |         |        |
|---------|---------|--------|
| 1:6-18  | 2:26-37 | 4:1-43 |
| 1:19-46 | 3:1-17  |        |
| 2:1-25  | 3:18-29 |        |

### 3. Review of the Law (4:44–5:33)

|         |        |         |
|---------|--------|---------|
| 4:44-49 | 5:1-21 | 5:22-33 |
|---------|--------|---------|

### 4. Applications of the Law (6:1–11:32)

|        |          |         |
|--------|----------|---------|
| 6:1-25 | 9:1-29   | 11:1-32 |
| 7:1-26 | 10:1-11  |         |
| 8:1-20 | 10:12-22 |         |

### 5. Additional Laws (12:1–26:19)

|         |          |         |
|---------|----------|---------|
| 12:1-32 | 18:9-22  | 23:1-25 |
| 13:1-18 | 19:1-13  | 24:1-5  |
| 14:1-29 | 19:14-21 | 24:6-22 |
| 15:1-23 | 20:1-20  | 25:1-19 |
| 16:1-22 | 21:1-23  | 26:1-19 |
| 17:1-20 | 22:1-12  |         |
| 18:1-8  | 22:13-20 |         |

### 6. Acceptance of the Covenant (27:1–30:20)

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 27:1-26 | 28:15-68 | 30:1-14  |
| 28:1-14 | 29:1-29  | 30:15-20 |

### 7. Change of Leader (31:1–34:12)

|          |         |         |
|----------|---------|---------|
| 31:1-13  | 32:1-52 | 34:1-12 |
| 31:14-30 | 33:1-29 |         |

## Summary: Themes to Remember

|             |                              |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Genesis     | Choice of the Nation         |
| Exodus      | Redemption of the Nation     |
| Leviticus   | Sanctification of the Nation |
| Numbers     | Direction of the Nation      |
| Deuteronomy | Teaching of the Nation       |

## Section 2

### The Historical Books

The different sections of the Old Testament each provide a specific focus with regard to the person of Christ. With Joshua through Esther, we come to the second group of books which deal with the history of the nation of Israel. These books cover the life of the nation from their possession of the land down to the two deportations and loss of the land because of unbelief and disobedience. Covering about 800 years of Israel's history, these twelve books tell about the conquering and possession of Canaan, the reigns of the judges, the establishment of Kings, the division of Israel into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, the fall of the Northern Kingdom to Assyria, the exile of the Southern Kingdom into Babylon, and the return to Jerusalem under the leadership of men like Nehemiah and Ezra.

As these books prepare us for the coming of Christ, the Messiah, they address the following issues:

| Historical Books: The Preparation for Christ <sup>3</sup>  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Joshua<br>Judges<br>Ruth   | Possession of the land by the nation<br>and the oppression of the nation  | The Rule by God: These books cover the period when Israel was ruled by God (1405–1043 B.C.).                                   |
| 1 Samuel<br>2 Samuel<br>1 Kings 1–10<br>1 Kings 11–22<br>2 Kings 1–17<br>2 Kings 18–25<br>1 Chronicles<br>2 Chronicles | Stabilization of the nation<br>Expansion of the nation<br>Glorification of the nation<br>Division of the nation<br>Deterioration of the Northern Kingdom<br>Deportation of the Southern Kingdom<br>Preparation of the Temple<br>Destruction of the Temple | The Monarchy: These books trace the history of Israel's kingdom from its establishment to its national destruction in 586 B.C. |
| Ezra<br>Nehemiah<br>Esther   | Restoration of the Temple<br>Reconstruction of Jerusalem<br>Protection of the nation's people   | The Restoration: These books describe the return of a remnant to the land after 70 years of captivity (605–536 B.C.).          |

## Joshua

### (Possession and Conquest)

**Author and Name of Book:** Joshua wrote this book. Unlike the first five books of the Old Testament, this book appropriately takes its name from the chief human personality of the book, Joshua, Moses' servant. Joshua's original name was Hoshea (Numbers 13:8; Deuteronomy 32:44) which means "salvation." But during the wilderness wanderings, Moses changed his name to YEHOSHUA, meaning "YAHWEH is salvation" (Numbers 13:16). Joshua is a contracted form of Yehoshua. This amounted to a prophetic anticipation and reminder to Joshua, to the spies and to the people that victory over the enemies and possession of the land would be by the power of the Lord rather than by human skill or wisdom or power. This book is given the name Joshua because, although Joshua was one of the world's greatest military strategists of history, his wisdom and military achievements came from the Lord who alone is our Salvation. It was the Lord Himself who brought about victory for Israel and conquered Israel's enemies, giving them possession of the land.

**Date of Writing:** 1400–1370 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** Possessing, conquering, and dividing of the promised land is the theme and purpose of Joshua. The book of Joshua is designed to show God's faithfulness to His promises, doing for Israel exactly as He had promised (Genesis 15:18 cf. Joshua 1:2-6; 21:43-45). The events recorded in Joshua are selective to set forth God's special intervention on behalf of His people against all kinds of tremendous odds. The fulfillment of God's promises, as so evident in the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah and in possessing the land with its fortified cities, is the work of God and that which man could never do no matter how hard he might try (Romans 4).

**Key People:** Joshua, Rahab, Caleb

**Christ as Seen in Joshua:** Although there are no direct Messianic prophecies of Christ, there are a number of types which point to the Savior. Joshua is a type of Christ in two very important ways. First, his name, Yeshua, a shortened form of Yehoshua, meaning “YAHWEH is salvation,” is the Greek equivalent of the name Jesus. Joshua is actually called by the name Jesus in Acts 7:45. Second, Joshua is seen as a type of Christ in his work of leading Israel triumphantly into the “rest” of their promised possession, the land of Canaan (cf. Hebrews 4:8). This is an illustration of the rest we enter by faith in Christ. Joshua surely foreshadows the Savior who leads “many sons to glory” (Hebrews 2:9-10). Joshua was also met by the Commander of the Lord’s army in 5:13-15. This is undoubtedly a preincarnate appearance of Christ (which is called a “Christophany”) who was there to teach Joshua that He had come not to take sides but to take over as commander. Finally, Rahab’s scarlet cord (2:21) portrays salvation through the blood and death of Christ (cf. Hebrews 9:19-22). This Gentile prostitute heard of the mighty works of God, believed, hid the spies, was delivered when Jericho was destroyed and is found in the genealogy of Christ (Matthew 1:5).

## For Personal Study: Outline

- 1. The Invasion of Canaan (1:1–5:12)**

|         |        |        |
|---------|--------|--------|
| 1:1-9   | 2:1-24 | 4:1-24 |
| 1:10-18 | 3:1-17 | 5:1-12 |
  
- 2. The Conquest of Canaan (5:13–12:24)**

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 5:13-15 | 8:1-35   | 10:29-43 |
| 6:1-27  | 9:1-27   | 11:1-23  |
| 7:1-15  | 10:1-15  | 12:1-24  |
| 7:16-26 | 10:16-28 |          |
  
- 3. The Division of Canaan (13:1–21:45)**

|         |          |         |
|---------|----------|---------|
| 13:1-33 | 17:1-18  | 20:1-9  |
| 14:1-15 | 18:1-10  | 21:1-45 |
| 15:1-63 | 18:11-28 |         |
| 16:1-10 | 19:1-51  |         |
  
- 4. Conclusion (22:1–24:33)**

|         |          |  |
|---------|----------|--|
| 22:1-34 | 24:1-28  |  |
| 23:1-16 | 24:29-33 |  |

## Judges (Cycles of Apostasy, Judgment and Deliverance)

**Author and Name of Book:** Tradition tells us that Samuel wrote the book, but its authorship is actually uncertain. Samuel may have assembled some of the accounts from the period of the judges. Prophets like Nathan and Gad may have had a hand in editing the material (1 Chronicles 29:29).

The Hebrew title is Shophetim, meaning “judges, rulers, deliverers or saviors.” Shophet not only carries the idea of maintaining justice and settling disputes, but it is also used to mean “liberating and delivering.” First the judges deliver the people, then they rule and administer justice.<sup>4</sup>

The book gets its name from the number of leaders called judges whom God raised up to deliver Israel from their oppressors. The title for the book is best expressed in 2:16, “**Then the LORD raised up judges who delivered them from the hands of those who plundered them.**” Ultimately, however, God was Israel’s Judge and Deliverer, because it was God Himself who would first allow the times of oppression as divine discipline for Israel’s repeated apostasy (beliefs that are wrong) and then raise up judges to bring deliverance after the nation repented and cried out for help (cf. 11:27; 8:23).

**Date of Writing:** 1050–1000 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** The contrast between Joshua and Judges is striking. Israel goes from the thrill of victory to the agony of defeat, from freedom to oppression and from advancement to retreat. So why the book?

**Historically,** Judges bridges the gap from the time of Joshua to the time of the prophet Samuel and the beginning of the Monarchy (kingship) under Saul and David. It records the history of cycles of decline, oppression, prayer and deliverance. In doing so, it becomes an explanation and reason for the need of a Monarchy in Israel. With every man doing that which was right in his own eyes (21:25), the nation needed the leadership of a righteous king.

**Doctrinally,** Judges draws our attention to a number of important truths. As God had warned in Deuteronomy, obedience brings blessing, but disobedience results in God's discipline and oppression. But Judges also reminds us that when people will turn to the Lord, cry out to Him and repent, God, who is long-suffering and gracious, responds in deliverance. Judges unfolds its theme by describing cycles of departure from God, followed by oppression as a form of divine discipline, followed by appeal and repentance by the people, followed by judges whom God raised up to deliver the nation.

**Key People:** The Judges—Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Tola and Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson. The best-known judges are Deborah, Gideon and Samson.

**Christ as Seen in Judges:** Since each judge functioned as a ruler-deliverer, they served as pictures of the Savior in His work as Savior and Lord, the Righteous Deliverer King.

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Decline—An Introduction: The Reason for the Period of the Judges (1:1–3:8)

|         |        |         |
|---------|--------|---------|
| 1:1-26  | 2:1-5  | 2:11-23 |
| 1:27-36 | 2:6-10 | 3:1-8   |

### 2. Deliverance—The History and Rule of the Period of the Judges (3:9–16:31)

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 3:9-14  | 7:19-25  | 12:8-10  |
| 3:15-30 | 8:1-27   | 12:11-12 |
| 3:31    | 8:28-35  | 12:13-15 |
| 4:1-24  | 9:1-22   | 13:1-25  |
| 5:1-31  | 9:23-57  | 14:1-11  |
| 6:1-8   | 10:1-2   | 14:12-20 |
| 6:9-27  | 10:3-18  | 15:1-20  |
| 6:28-35 | 11:1-28  | 16:1-17  |
| 6:36-40 | 11:29-40 | 16:18-27 |
| 7:1-18  | 12:1-7   | 16:28-31 |

### 3. Wickedness—Apostasy and Anarchy: The Ruin of the Period of the Judges (17:1–21:25)

|         |          |         |
|---------|----------|---------|
| 17:1-13 | 20:1-17  | 21:8-25 |
| 18:1-31 | 20:18-48 |         |
| 19:1-30 | 21:1-7   |         |

## Ruth

### (An Addendum to Judges)

**Author and Name of Book:** As with Judges, the author is uncertain, although Jewish tradition points to Samuel. The book of Ruth gets its name from its main character, a young woman of Moab, the great-grandmother of David and who is in the genealogical line of the Savior (Matthew 1:5). Another book of the Bible named after a woman is Esther.

**Date of Writing:** 1050 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** Ruth is the story of a couple in Israel who, during a time of famine, moved to Moab. There the husband and his two sons died, leaving the woman (Naomi) alone with her two daughters-in-law (Orpah and

Ruth). Naomi decided to move back to Israel and Ruth insisted on returning with her. Once in Israel, they turned to a relative by the name of Boaz for help. Eventually, Ruth married Boaz.

Like a brilliant diamond, Ruth sparkles in the midst of the dark days of the book of Judges. Ruth is the story of loyalty, purity and love in a day when anarchy, selfishness and depravity was generally the rule. As such, Ruth serves as a positive picture of faith and obedience in the midst of apostasy and shows how such faith brings blessing. Ruth also serves as an important link in the ancestry of King David and, as mentioned, is found in the line of Messiah. Other purposes of Ruth are seen in the way it illustrates the truths of the Kinsman-Redeemer, the presence of a godly remnant even in times of great apostasy, and God's faithfulness to those who will walk with Him by faith. Since Ruth was a Gentile, the book illustrates God's desire to bring the Gentile world into the family of God.

It may seem surprising that one who reflects God's love so clearly is a Moabitess. Yet her complete loyalty to the Israelite family into which she has been received by marriage and her total devotion to her desolate mother-in-law mark her as a true daughter of Israel and a worthy ancestress of David. She exemplifies the truth that participation in the coming kingdom of God is decided, not by blood and birth, but by the conformity of one's life to the will of God through the "obedience that comes from faith" (Romans 1:5). Her place in the ancestry of David signifies that all nations will be represented in the kingdom of David's greater Son.<sup>5</sup>

**Key People:** Ruth, Naomi, Boaz

**Christ as Seen in Ruth:** In the Old Testament, if a person or an estate were sold into bondage, they could be redeemed if certain requirements were met by what is called the Kinsman-Redeemer. This Redeemer is called in the Hebrew a *GOEL*, meaning "close relative." This is a perfect illustration of the redemptive work of the Savior.

The *GOEL* must be a blood relative (a kinsman) of those he redeems (Deuteronomy 25:5, 7-10; John 1:14; Romans 1:3; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14-15), be able to pay the price of redemption (2:1 cf. 1 Peter 1:18-19), be willing to redeem or pay the price (3:11 cf. Matthew 20:28; John 10:15, 19; Hebrews 10:7), and be free himself, as Christ was free from the curse of sin, being without sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5).

## For Personal Study: Outline

- |   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| <b>1. The Resolve and Return of Ruth (1:1-22)</b> |         |         |
| 1:1-5   | 1:6-18  | 1:19-22 |
| <b>2. The Rights of Ruth (2:1-23)</b>             |         |         |
| 2:1-3   | 2:4-17  | 2:18-23 |
| <b>3. The Request of Ruth (3:1-18)</b>            |         |         |
| 3:1-4   | 3:5-9   | 3:10-18 |
| <b>4. The Reward of Ruth (4:1-22)</b>             |         |         |
| 4:1-12  | 4:13-17 | 4:18-22 |

## First Samuel (Transition from Judges to Kingship)

**Author and Name of Book:** We are not certain who wrote 1 and 2 Samuel. The Jewish Talmudic tradition says that it was written by Samuel. Although 1 and 2 Samuel take their name from the prophet Samuel, the prophet could not possibly have written more than part of 1 Samuel, since his death is recorded in Chapter 25. In 1 Samuel 10:25 we are told that Samuel did write a book. Also, 1 Chronicles 29:29 indicates that Nathan and Gad also wrote about the events recorded in Samuel.

Originally, the books of 1 and 2 Samuel were placed together as one book in the Hebrew Bible. These two books give the history of the monarchs of Israel in the early period of the Monarchy. Essentially, 1 Samuel is about King Saul and 2 Samuel is about King David.

Although originally one book, 1 and 2 Samuel were divided into two books by the translators of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament). This division was later followed by Jerome in the Latin Vulgate (the translation of the Bible into Latin) and by modern versions.

**Date of Writing: 1010 B.C.** (and later)

**Theme and Purpose:** Beginning with the birth of Samuel and his training in the Tabernacle, 1 Samuel describes how this great man of God led Israel as prophet, priest, and the last judge. During Samuel's leadership, the people of Israel, wanting to be like the nations, demanded a king. Under God's direction, Samuel then anointed Saul to be the first king. But Saul was rejected by God because of his disobedience. To replace Saul, again under God's directions, Samuel anointed David, a man after God's own heart, to become the king of Israel. The rest of the book describes the struggles between jealous Saul and godly David.

First Samuel continues the history of Israel where Judges left off with Samuel following Samson (cf. Judges 16:31). This book traces the transition of leadership in the nation from Judges to Kings, from a Theocracy to a Monarchy. During the period of the Judges, the people of Israel would not allow YAHWEH to rule their lives, with every man doing that which was right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6; 21:25). The Monarchy brought stability because the people were more willing to follow an earthly king. The Lord told Samuel, ***"Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them"*** (8:7).

God had intended to give Israel a king (Genesis 49:10; Deuteronomy 17:14-20), but the people insisted on the king of their choice instead of waiting for God's king. Saul was rejected by the Lord because he failed to learn the truth that ***"to obey is better than sacrifice"*** (15:22). He became characterized by mental imbalance, raging jealousy, foolishness and immorality. David illustrated the principle that ***"the Lord does not see as man sees"*** (16:7). The Lord established the Davidic dynasty because of David's obedience, wisdom and dependence on God.<sup>6</sup>

Historically, one of the key purposes of 1 Samuel is to record the divine origin of the Davidic dynasty.

**Key People:** Samuel the prophet, Saul the disobedient king, David the shepherd

**Christ as Seen in 1 Samuel:** Samuel forms an interesting portrait of Christ in that he was a prophet, a priest, and although he was not a king, he was a judge who was used of God to begin a new age in which Kings would rule.

Messiah is literally "the anointed one," and Samuel is the first Biblical book to use the word anointed (2:10). One of the primary descriptions of Messiah is found in the life of David. He was born in Bethlehem, worked as a shepherd, was ruler over Israel and became the ancestor of Messiah the King through the Davidic dynasty. In the New Testament, Christ is described as a ***"descendant of David according to the flesh"*** (Romans 1:3).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Samuel, the Last Judge (1:1–8:22)

#### a. The Call of Samuel (1:1–3:21)

1:1-18

2:12-17

3:1-21

1:19-28

2:18-21

2:1-11

2:22-36

#### b. The Commission of Samuel (4:1–7:17)

4:1-22

6:1-21

5:1-12

7:1-17

#### c. The Concern of Samuel (8:1-22)

8:1-9

8:10-22

### 2. Saul, the First King (9:1–15:35)

#### a. The Selection of Saul (9:1–12:25)

9:1-14

10:17-27

12:12-25

9:15-27

11:1-15

10:1-16

12:1-11

- b. The Rejection of Saul (13:1–15:35)
 

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 13:1-23 | 14:24-46 | 15:1-9   |
| 14:1-23 | 14:47-52 | 15:10-35 |

**3. David, the Next King (16:1–19:24)**

- a. David, the Shepherd, Chosen and Anointed (16:1-23)
 

|         |          |  |
|---------|----------|--|
| 16:1-11 | 16:12-23 |  |
|---------|----------|--|
- b. David, the Giant Killer, Acclaimed by the Court of Saul (17:1-58)
 

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 17:1-19 | 17:20-30 | 17:31-58 |
|---------|----------|----------|
- c. David, the Friend of Jonathan, but Rejected by Saul (18:1–19:24)
 

|          |          |  |
|----------|----------|--|
| 18:1-9   | 18:20-30 |  |
| 18:10-19 | 19:1-24  |  |

**4. David, the Fugitive, Pursued by Saul (20:1–26:25)**

- a. David Protected by Jonathan (20:1-42)
 

|         |          |  |
|---------|----------|--|
| 20:1-29 | 20:30-42 |  |
|---------|----------|--|
- b. David Protected by Ahimelech (21:1-9)
- c. David Protected by Achish (21:10-15)
- d. David and His Band of Men (22:1–26:25)
 

|          |         |          |
|----------|---------|----------|
| 22:1-23  | 24:1-22 | 25:18-38 |
| 23:1-14  | 25:1    | 25:39-44 |
| 23:15-29 | 25:2-17 | 26:1-25  |

**5. The Refuge of David in Philistine Territory (27:1–31:13)**

- a. David Becomes a Philistine Servant (27:1–28:2)
- b. Saul Consults the Medium at En-Dor (28:3-25)
- c. David Dismissed by the Philistines (29:1-11)
- d. David Destroys the Amalekites (30:1-31)
- e. The Philistines and the Death of Saul (31:1-13)

## **Second Samuel**

### **(David’s Reign–Expansion of the Nation)**

**Author and Name of Book:** Since first and Second Samuel were originally one book and were artificially divided, see the previous discussion regarding the author in 1 Samuel.

**Date of Writing:** 1010 B.C. (and later)

**Theme and Purpose:** With no real break in the story of Israel's kingdom, 2 Samuel continues the narrative of the beginning of Israel's kingdom beginning with Saul's death and continuing with the reign of David. It is distinctively about the forty-year reign of David (5:4-5) and traces his reign through his triumphs and tragedies, which include his sins of adultery, murder, and their consequences on his family and the nation. The theme, as 2 Samuel recounts David's reign, could be summarized as "how sin turns triumphs into troubles." Whereas the kingdom was established under Saul, it is expanded by David. Saul's kingdom gave stability to Israel from the time of the judges, but David's reign brought growth or expansion. In the typical fashion of the Bible, which openly tells the story of its leaders, 2 Samuel portrays both the good and bad of the life of King David.

**Key People:** David, Bathsheba, Nathan, Absalom, Joab, Amnon, Ahithophel

**Christ as Seen in 2 Samuel:** With the exception of his sins, David remains a type of Christ as the king of Israel. It is in this book that God establishes the Davidic Covenant which ultimately has its fulfillment in the person of Christ.

### **For Personal Study: Outline**

- 1. The Triumphs of David (1:1–10:19)

- |   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| a. Crowning the King (1:1–5:5)                  |         |         |
| 1:1-16  | 2:12-32 | 3:31-39 |
| 1:17-27   | 3:1-5   | 4:1-12  |
| 2:1-7   | 3:6-25  | 5:1-5   |
| 2:8-11  | 3:26-30 |         |
| b. The Consolidation of the Kingdom (5:6–6:23)  |         |         |
| 5:6-25  | 6:1-11  | 6:12-23 |
| c. The Covenant Concerning the Kingdom (7:1-29) |         |         |
| 7:1-7   | 7:8-17  | 7:18-29 |
| d. The Conquests of the King (8:1–10:19)        |         |         |
| 8:1-18  | 9:1-13  | 10:1-19 |

## 2. The Transgressions of the King (11:1-27)

- a. The Adultery by the King (11:1-13)
- b. The Murder Caused by the King (11:14-27)

## 3. The Troubles of the King (12:1–24:25)

- |  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| a. Troubles at Home (12:1–13:36)         |          |          |
| 12:1-14                                  | 12:24-25 | 13:1-23  |
| 12:15-23                                 | 12:26-31 | 13:24-36 |
| b. Troubles in the Kingdom (13:37–24:25) |          |          |
| 13:37-39                                 | 17:1-14  | 20:13-26 |
| 14:1-20                                  | 17:15-29 | 21:1-22  |
| 14:21-33                                 | 18:1-18  | 22:1-51  |
| 15:1-12                                  | 18:19-33 | 23:1-7   |
| 15:13-37                                 | 19:1-7   | 23:8-39  |
| 16:1-4                                   | 19:8-43  | 24:1-14  |
| 16:5-14                                  | 20:1-9   | 24:15-17 |
| 16:15-23                                 | 20:10-12 | 24:18-25 |

# First Kings

## (David's Death–Disruption of the Kingdom)

**Author and Name of Book:** The author is unknown, although the Jews credit its writing to Jeremiah. As Dr. Charles Ryrie points out:

Whoever the author or compiler of these books was, he used historical sources (11:41; 14:19, 29). He likely was one of the exiles who lived in Babylon, perhaps an unknown one, or Ezra or Ezekiel or Jeremiah (though someone other than Jeremiah would have had to write the last chapter of 2 Kings, since Jeremiah apparently died in Egypt, not Babylon; Jeremiah 43:6-7).<sup>7</sup>

First and Second Kings, originally one book (like 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Chronicles) and simply called “Kings” in the Hebrew tradition (Melechim), are appropriately titled, since they trace the history of the Kings of Israel and Judah from the time of Solomon to the Babylonian captivity. First Kings abruptly ends with the beginning of the reign of Ahaziah in 853 B.C.

**Date of Writing: About 550 B.C.** The release of Jehoiachin from prison is the last event recorded in 2 Kings. This took place in the 37th year of his imprisonment (560 B.C.). Therefore 1 and 2 Kings could not have been written before that event. It seems unlikely that the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity in 516 B.C. had taken place when 1 and 2 Kings were written; had it occurred, the author would probably have referred to it. Probably 1 and 2 Kings were completed in their final form between 560 and 516 B.C.<sup>8</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** After David's death (Chapters 1–2), his son Solomon became king. Chapters 1–11 trace the life and reign of Solomon, including Israel's rise to the peak of her glory, the spread of the nation's kingdom, and the construction of the Temple and palace in Jerusalem. But in Solomon's later years, he drifted from the Lord because of his pagan wives who wrongly influenced him and turned his heart away from the worship of God in the Temple.

The king with the divided heart left behind a divided kingdom. For the next century, the book of 1 Kings traces the twin histories of two sets of Kings and two nations of disobedient people who are growing indifferent to God's prophets and precepts (principles).<sup>9</sup>

The next king was Rehoboam, who lost the northern part of the kingdom. After this the Northern Kingdom, which included ten tribes, was known as Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, which included the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, was called Judah. In the last chapters of 1 Kings, the focus is on the evil of King Ahab and the righteous prophet Elijah who condemned Ahab's wickedness and Israel's disobedience.

The central theme, therefore, is to show how disobedience led to the disruption of the kingdom. The welfare of the nation depended on the faithfulness of its leadership and people to the covenants of God with Israel. First Kings not only gives a record of the history of these kings, but it demonstrates how the success of any king (and of the nation as a whole) depends on the measure of the king's allegiance to God's law or truth. The book truly illustrates how ***"righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people"*** (Proverbs 14:34). Unfaithfulness to God's covenant resulted in decline and captivity.

**Key People:** Solomon, Jeroboam, Rehoboam, Elijah and Elisha, Ahab, Jezebel

**Christ as Seen in 1 Kings:** Like David, Solomon is one of the greatest types of Christ in the Old Testament, portraying the Messiah in His future reign on earth. Solomon especially does this as his fame, glory, wealth, and honor all speak of Christ in His earthly kingdom. Solomon also portrays Christ in the great wisdom he demonstrated.

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The United Kingdom: The Forty Year Reign of Solomon (1:1–11:43)

- |   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| a. Solomon's Accession (1:1–2:46)           |          |          |
| 1:1-10                                      | 2:1-9    | 2:28-35  |
| 1:11-37                                     | 2:10-18  | 2:36-46  |
| 1:38-53                                     | 2:19-27  |          |
| b. Solomon's Wisdom (3:1–4:34)              |          |          |
| 3:1-5                                       | 3:10-15  | 4:1-19   |
| 3:6-9                                       | 3:16-28  | 4:20-34  |
| c. Solomon's Temple (5:1–8:66)              |          |          |
| 5:1-12                                      | 7:13-51  | 8:54-61  |
| 5:13-18                                     | 8:1-11   | 8:62-66  |
| 6:1-38                                      | 8:12-21  |          |
| 7:1-12                                      | 8:22-53  |          |
| d. Solomon's Fame (9:1–10:29)               |          |          |
| 9:1-9                                       | 10:1-13  |          |
| 9:10-28                                     | 10:14-29 |          |
| e. Solomon's Decline and Downfall (11:1-43) |          |          |
| 11:1-13                                     | 11:14-40 | 11:41-43 |

### 2. The Divided Kingdom: The First Eighty Years of the Two Kingdoms (12:1–22:53)

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| a. The Cause of Division (12:1-24)                      |          |
| 12:1-15   | 12:16-24 |
| b. The Reign of Jeroboam In <b>Israel</b> (12:25–14:20) |          |
| 12:25-33  | 13:11-34 |
| 13:1-10   | 14:1-20  |
| c. The Reign of Rehoboam in <b>Judah</b> (14:21-31)     |          |
| d. The Reign of Abijam in <b>Judah</b> (15:1-8)         |          |
| e. The Reign of Asa in <b>Judah</b> (15:9-24)           |          |
| f. The Reign of Nadab in <b>Israel</b> (15:25-31)       |          |
| g. The Reign of Baasha in <b>Israel</b> (15:32–16:7)    |          |
| h. The Reign of Elah in <b>Israel</b> (16:8-14)         |          |
| i. The Reign of Zimri in <b>Israel</b> (16:15-20)       |          |
| j. The Reign of Omri in <b>Israel</b> (16:21-28)        |          |

- k. The Reign of Ahab in **Israel** (16:29–22:40)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 16:29-34 | 19:1-8   | 21:11-29 |
| 17:1-16  | 19:9-21  | 22:1-12  |
| 17:17-24 | 20:1-12  | 22:13-28 |
| 18:1-19  | 20:13-25 | 22:29-40 |
| 18:20-35 | 20:26-43 |          |
| 18:36-46 | 21:1-10  |          |
- l. The Reign of Jehoshaphat in **Judah** (22:41-50)
- m. The Reign of Ahaziah in **Israel** (22:51-53)

## **Second Kings**

### **(Dispersion–Willful Sin Has a Mournful End)**

**Author and Name of Book:** Since 1 and 2 Kings were originally one book and were artificially divided, see the previous discussion regarding the author in the 1 Kings overview.

**Date of Writing: About 550 B.C.** (see information on 1 Kings)

**Theme and Purpose:** Second Kings continues the history of Elijah and his successor, Elisha, but it also continues what might be termed the “Tale of the Two Kingdoms.” As such, it continues to trace the history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah until they are finally conquered and taken into captivity. Israel fell to Assyria in 722 B.C. and Judah fell to the Babylonians in 586 B.C. In both kingdoms the prophets continued to warn the people that God would punish them unless they repented.

Second Kings teaches that willful sin in a nation has a mournful end. In 1 and 2 Samuel, the nation is born, in 1 Kings it is divided, and in 2 Kings it is dispersed. After years of pleading with His people through the prophets, God’s patience finally turns to discipline just as He promised. Because both books were originally one, 1 and 2 Kings share the same theme and goal. They teach us how unfaithfulness (disobedience to God’s law and rebellion) must lead to God’s discipline even to the extent of an overthrow of the monarchy. The two kingdoms collapsed because of the failure of the kings to rule righteously and give heed to God’s truth.

**Key People:** Elijah, Elisha, Josiah, Naaman, Hezekiah

**Christ as Seen in 2 Kings:** Elijah naturally anticipates the forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist (Matthew 11:14; 17:10-12; Luke 1:17). Elisha in many ways reminds us of Jesus Christ in His ministry. Irving L. Jensen compares and summarizes their ministry in this manner:

Elijah is noted for great public acts, while Elisha is distinguished by the large number of miracles he performed, many of them for individual needs. Elijah’s ministry emphasized God’s law, judgment, and severity. Elisha supplemented this by demonstrating God’s grace, love and tenderness. Elijah was like John the Baptist, thundering the message of repentance for sin. Elisha followed this up by going about, as Christ did, doing deeds of kindness, and by doing miracles attesting that the words of the prophets were from God.<sup>10</sup>

Note carefully the instructive contrasts Ryrie demonstrates for us in the content of 1 and 2 Kings.<sup>11</sup> These contrasts clearly demonstrate the truth that Willful Sin has a Mournful End.

| <b>I &amp; 2 Kings in Contrast</b>              |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1 Kings</b>                                  | <b>2 Kings</b>                             |
| Begins with King David                          | Ends with the King of Babylon              |
| Opens with Solomon’s glory                      | Closes with Jehoiachin’s shame             |
| Begins with the blessings of obedience          | Ends with the curse of disobedience        |
| Opens with the building of the Temple           | Closes with the burning of the Temple      |
| Traces the progress of apostasy                 | Describes the consequences of apostasy     |
| Shows how the kings failed to rule God’s people | Depicts consequences of that failure       |
| Introduces the prophet Elijah                   | Introduces the prophet Elisha              |
| Emphasizes the patience of the Lord             | Confirms the Lord’s sure punishment of sin |



# First Chronicles

## (Preparation of the Temple)

**Author and Name of Book:** Chronicles (originally both 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book) does not identify the author, but Jewish tradition has recognized Ezra as its author. The consistency of style throughout the book indicates that, although several sources were used in compiling the book, one editor shaped the final product. The various sources include the prophetic records by Samuel (1 Chronicles 29:29), Isaiah (2 Chronicles 32:32), and others (2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 20:34; 33:19); but particularly a source called “The Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel” (2 Chronicles 16:11; 25:26). The content suggests a priestly authorship because of the strong focus on the Temple, the priesthood, the line of David and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The belief that Ezra is the compiler of the book is also supported by the common themes of Ezra and Chronicles such as the building and dedication of the Temple.

Although the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles cover the same period of Jewish history, the perspective is very different. While the content is similar, it is not simply a repetition, but more of a spiritual commentary on the history of the people of Israel. The books of Kings relate man’s viewpoint while the books of Chronicles give God’s perspective.

Originally one book with 2 Chronicles (until 180 B.C.), the Hebrew title means “the words (affairs) of the days,” which refers to the history of Israel from Adam to the Babylonian captivity and Cyrus’s decree allowing the exiled Jews to return. In a sense it is a “miniature Old Testament,” tracing in capsule form the flow of Old Testament history.<sup>12</sup>

When producing the Septuagint, the translators divided Chronicles into two sections. At that time it was given the title, “Of Things Omitted,” referring to the things omitted from Samuel and Kings. The name “Chronicles” comes from the title that Jerome gave it in his Latin Vulgate Bible (A.D. 385-405). Jerome meant his title in the sense of “The Chronicles of the Whole of Sacred History.”<sup>13</sup>

**Date of Writing: 450–425 B.C.**

**Theme and Purpose:** First Chronicles begins with an outline of history from Adam through the death of King Saul. The rest of the book is about the reign of King David. The books of Chronicles seem like a repeat of Samuel and Kings, but they were written for the returned exiles to remind them that they came from the royal line of David and were God’s chosen people. The genealogies point out the Davidic promises which had their source in those pledged to Abraham that He would make him the father of a great nation, one through which He would bless the nations. The main theme is God is faithful to His covenant.

Chronicles emphasizes the role of the Law, the priesthood, and the Temple. Although Solomon’s Temple was gone, the second Temple could be regarded as the Remnant’s link to the first. This book also taught that the past was pregnant with lessons for their present. Apostasy, idolatry, intermarriage with Gentiles and lack of unity were the reasons for their recent ruin. It is significant that after the Exile, Israel never again worshiped foreign gods.<sup>14</sup>

**Key People:** As mentioned, it is a book about David, although others that were prominent in 1 Samuel are also important here like Nathan, Bathsheba and Uriah.

**Christ as Seen in 1 Chronicles:** What was said in 1 and 2 Samuel regarding David as a type of Christ would also be applicable here.

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Genealogies from Adam to David (1:1–9:44)**
  - a. Adam to Abraham (1:1-27)
  - b. Abraham to Jacob (1:28-54)
  - c. Jacob to David (2:1-55)
  - d. David to the Captivity (3:1-24)

- |  |         |         |
|--|---------|---------|
| e. Genealogies of the Twelve Tribes (4:1–8:40) |         |         |
| 4:1-23   | 7:1-5   | 7:20-29 |
| 4:24-43  | 7:6-12  | 7:30-40 |
| 5:1-26   | 7:13    | 8:1-32  |
| 6:1-81   | 7:14-19 | 8:33-40 |
- f. Jerusalem's Inhabitants (9:1-34)
- g. The Family of Saul (9:35-44)

## 2. The Rise and Anointing of David (10:1–12:40)

- a. The Death of Saul (10:1-14)
- b. The Accession of David (11:1-3)
- c. The Capture of Jerusalem (11:4-9)
- d. The Heroes of David (11:10–12:40)

## 3. David's Reign (13:1–29:21)

- a. David and the Ark (13:1–17:27)
  - 1) David Brings the Ark to Chidon: Uzza's Death (13:1-14)
  - 2) David's Fame and Victory Over the Philistines (14:1-17)
  - 3) David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem (15:1-29)
  - 4) David's Celebration and Arrangements for the Ark (16:1-43)
  - 5) David's Desire to Build a Temple: The Davidic Covenant (17:1-27)
- b. David's Wars (18:1–20:8)
 

|         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 18:1-17 | 19:10-19 |
| 19:1-9  | 20:1-8   |
- c. David's Sinful Census (21:1-30)
- d. David's Preparations for the Temple (22:1-23:1)
- e. David's Organization of the Levites (23:2–26:32)
  - 1) Numbering of and Duties of the Levites (23:2-32)
  - 2) Dividing the Levites Into Twenty-Four Groups (24:1-31)
  - 3) Assigning the Musicians (25:1-31)
  - 4) Appointing Gatekeepers (26:1-19)
  - 5) Assigning the Treasures (26:20-28)
  - 6) Delegating Magistrates (26:29-32)
- f. David's Civil Leaders (27:1-34)
- g. David's Last Instructions to the People and to Solomon (28:1-21)
- h. David's Offerings and Worship (29:1-21)

## 4. The Accession of Solomon and Death of David (29:22-30)

# Second Chronicles

## (Destruction of the Temple)

**Author and Name of Book:** As previously mentioned, 1 and 2 Chronicles were originally one book. As with 1 Chronicles, it does not state who wrote it, but Jewish tradition, which identifies the author as Ezra, and the consistency of viewpoint and style suggest it was probably the work of one person sometimes referred to by writers as the chronicler. In support of Ezra as the author are certain similarities like the extensive lists, the Levites and the Temple. Whoever the author was, he had access to a number of official sources like:

1. The Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah (27:7; 35:27; 36:8)
2. The Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel (16:11; 25:26; 28:26; 32:32)
3. The Book of the Kings of Israel (20:34; 33:18)
4. The Records of the Book of the Kings (24:27)
5. The Book of Nathan, the Prophecy of Ahijah, and the Visions of Iddo (9:29)
6. The History of Shemaiah (12:15)
7. The Records of Iddo (13:22)
8. The Writings of the Prophet Isaiah (26:22)
9. The Sayings of Hozai (33:19)
10. The Laments (35:25)
11. The Writings of David and His Son Solomon (35:4)



|                             |          |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|
| d. Jehoshaphat (17:1–20:37) |          |          |
| 17:1-2                      | 18:28-34 | 20:14-19 |
| 17:3-19                     | 19:1-4   | 20:20-25 |
| 18:1-7                      | 19:5-11  | 20:26-34 |
| 18:8-11                     | 20:1-4   | 20:35-37 |
| 18:12-27                    | 20:5-13  |          |
| e. Jehoram (21:1-20)        |          |          |
| f. Ahaziah (22:1–23:15)     |          |          |
| 22:1-4                      | 22:8-12  | 23:12-15 |
| 22:5-7                      | 23:1-11  |          |
| g. Joash (23:16–24:27)      |          |          |
| 23:16-21                    | 24:3-7   | 24:20-22 |
| 24:1-2                      | 24:8-19  | 24:23-27 |
| h. Amaziah (25:1-28)        |          |          |
| 25:1-13                     | 25:14-16 | 25:17-28 |
| i. Uzziah (26:1-23)         |          |          |
| 26:1-5                      | 26:6-15  | 26:16-23 |
| j. Jotham (27:1-9)          |          |          |
| k. Ahaz (28:1-27)           |          |          |
| 28:1-4                      | 28:5-15  | 28:16-27 |
| l. Hezekiah (29:1–32:33)    |          |          |
| 29:1-4                      | 30:13-27 | 32:9-19  |
| 29:5-19                     | 31:1-2   | 32:20-33 |
| 29:20-36                    | 31:3-21  |          |
| 30:1-12                     | 32:1-8   |          |
| m. Manasseh (33:1-20)       |          |          |
| 33:1-9                      | 33:10-20 |          |
| n. Amon (33:21-25)          |          |          |
| o. Josiah (34:1–35:27)      |          |          |
| 34:1-7                      | 34:22-30 | 35:20-27 |
| 34:8-13                     | 34:31-33 |          |
| 34:14-21                    | 35:1-19  |          |
| p. Joahaz (36:1-4)          |          |          |
| q. Jehoiakim (36:5-8)       |          |          |
| r. Jehoiachin (36:9-10)     |          |          |
| s. Zedekiah (36:11-21)      |          |          |

### 3. The Decree of Cyrus (36:22-23)

## Ezra (Reconstruction of the Temple and Restoration of the People)

**Author and Name of Book:** Although the book of Ezra does not name its author, Jewish tradition as recorded in the Talmud recognizes Ezra as its author. Ezra wrote these books using various documents (4:7-16), genealogies (2:1-70) and personal notes (7:27–9:15) as his sources.

The fact that Ezra is the principal character of the major sections of Ezra lends further support to his authorship. He takes part in the events described in Chapters 1–10 and also in Chapters 8–10 of Nehemiah. In both cases, the passages are written in the first person.

Tradition holds that Ezra was the founder of the “Great Synagogue” (meaning the great assembly) where the books of Old Testament scripture were assembled. Another tradition says that he collected the Biblical books into a unit and that he originated the synagogue form of worship.<sup>16</sup>

In the ancient Hebrew Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah were treated as one book and called “The Book of Ezra.” Modern Hebrew Bibles designate the two-fold arrangement of Ezra and Nehemiah as in the English versions.



# Nehemiah

## (Reconstruction of the City)

**Author and Name of Book:** Although some believe Nehemiah wrote this book because of the words, “*The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah*” (1:1), there are those who believe the evidence suggests Ezra is the author of Nehemiah and used Nehemiah’s notes and accounts as though quoting him. Many scholars also support the belief that Nehemiah authored the book bearing his name because much of the book is presented as a personal account of the circumstances surrounding his return to Jerusalem (1:1–7:73; 12:31–13:31).<sup>17</sup>

Although originally one book with Ezra, the last half of the book draws its name from Nehemiah, who was a contemporary of Ezra and cupbearer to the king of Persia. Nehemiah’s name means “YAHWEH consoles or comforts.”

**Date of Writing:** The historical setting is simply that of the last half of the ancient Hebrew book of Ezra-Nehemiah which means it was written about **445 B.C. to 425 B.C.**

**Theme and Purpose:** The book of Nehemiah continues the history of the Jews who returned from exile. Nehemiah gave up his position as cupbearer to Artaxerxes, the Persian king, to become governor of Jerusalem and led the people in repairing the city walls. Ezra and Nehemiah lived at the same time (Nehemiah 8:2, 9). They were both men of God but served YAHWEH in different capacities. While Ezra was a priest and more involved with the religious restoration of the returning remnant, Nehemiah was a layman and served in a political capacity as Governor in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah was also written to show the obvious hand of God in the return of His people to their homeland in the years after their exile. Under the leadership of Nehemiah, they accomplished in 52 days what had not been done in the 94 years since the first return under Zerubbabel. By obedient faith, they were able to overcome what appeared to be insurmountable (overwhelming) opposition.<sup>18</sup>

**Key People:** Nehemiah, Artaxerxes, Sanballet, Ezra

**Christ as Seen in Nehemiah:** Nehemiah portrays Christ’s willingness to leave His high position in order to bring about His work of restoration. Further, the decree of Artaxerxes marks the beginning point of Daniel’s prophecy of seventy weeks of years which, though interrupted by an unspecified time, begins the countdown for the return of Messiah (Daniel 9:25-27).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The Rebuilding of the Walls (1:1–7:73)

- |  |         |         |
|--|---------|---------|
| a. Preparation for Rebuilding (1:1–2:20) |         |         |
| 1:1-11                                   | 2:1-10  | 2:11-20 |
| b. Rebuilding (3:1–7:73)                 |         |         |
| 3:1-32                                   | 5:1-13  | 6:15-18 |
| 4:1-8                                    | 5:14-19 | 7:1-65  |
| 4:9-23                                   | 6:1-14  | 7:66-73 |

### 2. The Restoration of the People (8:1–13:31)

- |   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| a. The Renewal of the Covenant (8:1–10:39)                  |          |          |
| 8:1-8   | 8:13-18  | 10:1-27  |
| 8:9-12  | 9:1-38   | 10:28-39 |
| b. The Obedience of the People to the Covenant (11:1–13:31) |          |          |
| 11:1-19   | 12:27-30 | 13:10-14 |
| 11:20-36  | 12:31-47 | 13:15-22 |
| 12:1-21   | 13:1-3   | 13:23-31 |
| 12:22-26  | 13:4-9   |          |

# Esther

## (Protection of God's People)

**Author and Name of Book:** The book gives no hint of who wrote it, but whoever it was knew the Persian culture well. The account has all the marks (indications) of a person who was there, for he described the events as an eyewitness. Therefore, he was probably a Jew. Some have suggested that Ezra or Nehemiah wrote the account but no specific evidence supports that view.<sup>19</sup>

The book takes its name from the chief character, whose Hebrew name Hadassah (Myrtle) was changed to the Persian name Ester, which most likely means "star."

**Date of Writing:** The events of Esther occurred between the sixth and seventh chapters of Ezra, between the first return led by Zerubbabel and the second return led by Ezra. Esther was written sometime between **470 and 465 B.C.**, during the latter years of Xerxes' reign (10:2-3), or in the reign of his son Artaxerxes (464–424 B.C.).

**Theme and Purpose:** Esther tells the story of a beautiful Jewish girl whom King Xerxes of Persia chose to be his queen. When Haman planned to murder all the Jews, Queen Esther's cousin Mordecai persuaded Esther to try to save her people. Risking her own life, she appealed to the king and rescued the Jews. Although this is the only book in the Bible which does not include the name of God, the theme and purpose of the book is to show God's providential care of His people in their trials and persecutions.

**Key People:** Esther, Haman, Mordecai, Xerxes (Ahasuerus, Hebrew form of the name of the king of Persia)

**Christ as Seen in Esther:** Esther provides a fitting picture of Christ in that she was willing to put herself in the place of death for her people's salvation and also in that she acted as an advocate for them. In addition, we also see how God continued to providentially protect the Jews through whom He would give the Messiah.

### For Personal Study: Outline

- 1. The Danger to the Jews (1:1–3:15)**
  - a. The Choice of Esther as Queen in Place of Vashti (1:1–2:23)

|         |        |         |
|---------|--------|---------|
| 1:1-9   | 2:1-7  | 2:17-20 |
| 1:10-22 | 2:8-16 | 2:21-23 |
  - b. The Conspiracy of Haman Against the Jews (3:1-15)
  
- 2. The Deliverance of the Jews (4:1–10:3)**
  - a. The Decision of Esther for the Jews (4:1–5:14)

|        |         |        |
|--------|---------|--------|
| 4:1-8  | 4:15-17 | 5:9-14 |
| 4:9-14 | 5:1-8   |        |
  - b. The Defeat of Haman (6:1–7:10)

|         |        |  |
|---------|--------|--|
| 6:1-9   | 7:1-6  |  |
| 6:10-14 | 7:7-10 |  |
  - c. The Decree of King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) and Mordecai (8:1-17)

|       |        |  |
|-------|--------|--|
| 8:1-8 | 8:9-17 |  |
|-------|--------|--|
  - d. The Defeat Over the Enemies of the Jews (9:1-19)

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 9:1-10 | 9:11-19 |  |
|--------|---------|--|
  - e. The Days of the Feast of Purim (9:20-32)
  - f. The Declaration of Mordecai's Fame and Exaltation at Court (10:1-3)

## **Section 3**

### **The Poetical Books**

**Introducton:** The previous survey of the first 17 books (Law and History), Genesis through Nehemiah, covered the whole history of the Old Testament. All the remaining books, Poetical and Prophetical, fit into the history of those 17 books. The next section to be covered, the Poetical, is a much smaller section consisting of five books—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon. Before examining them, we should note certain characteristics possessed by all five of these books.

The student needs to clearly understand that the term “poetical” refers only to their form. They are not simply the product of human imagination. These books portray real human experience.

**Relationships:** While the 17 books which we have already seen are historical, these five poetical books are experiential. They describe events that happened to individuals. While the historical books were concerned with a nation, the poetical books are more concerned with the attitudes and feelings of the people. The historical books dealt with the Hebrew race. The poetical books deal with the human heart.

The poetical books are not the only poetry in the Old Testament Scriptures. There are large portions of poetry in the writings of the prophets, which we shall see later.

The Old Testament divides into four major sections which relate to the nation of Israel as God’s chosen people from the standpoint of their major characteristics or focus:

1. The Law—Relates to Israel’s Moral Life
2. The Historical—Relates to Israel’s National Development and Life
3. The Poetical—Relates to Israel’s Spiritual Life
4. The Prophetical—Relates to Israel’s Future Life as Fulfilled in the Messiah

The five Poetical Books can also be viewed in their relationship to each other.

1. The Book of Job—Blessing through Suffering
2. The Psalms—Praise through Prayer
3. The Proverbs—Wisdom through Precept
4. Ecclesiastes—Truth through Reality
5. Song of Solomon—Joy through Union

**Periods of Hebrew Poetry:** While Hebrew poetry occurred throughout Old Testament history, there were three primary periods of poetic literature:

1. The Patriarchal Period—Job (around 1750 B.C.)
2. The Davidic Period—Psalms (around 1050 B.C.)
3. The Solomonic Period (around 950 B.C.)
  - a. Song of Solomon—a young man’s love
  - b. Proverbs—a middle-aged man’s wisdom
  - c. Ecclesiastes—an old man’s sorrow (around 950 B.C.)<sup>20</sup>

**Christ in the Poetical Books:** As noted previously, Christ, the Messiah, is the heart of all the Bible. With the two disciples on the Emmaus road who were so saddened and confused over the events of the previous days as the crucifixion, death, and reports of the resurrection, the resurrected Savior came alongside and explained the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures (Luke 24:27). Then later, when he appeared to the eleven, He said: **“These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled”** (Luke 24:44).

With this in mind, before beginning the overview of each of these poetical books, it would be well to get their Christological perspective. Regarding this element, Norman Geisler writes:

Whereas the foundation was laid for Christ in the Law, and preparation was made for Christ in the books of History, the books of Poetry reveal the aspiration (need) for Christ in the hearts of the people. They encouraged a life fulfilled in Christ in both an explicit and an implicit way, both consciously and unconsciously.<sup>21</sup>

Job shows the need for mediation by Christ. Psalms shows the need for communion with Christ. Proverbs shows the need for wisdom in Christ. Ecclesiastes shows the need for an ultimate satisfaction. Song of Solomon shows the need for a love union with Christ.

## Hebrew Poetry

**The Nature of Hebrew Poetry:** Hebrew poetry is unlike English poetry which emphasizes rhyme and meter. Hebrew poetry relies on other characteristics for its impact. Parallelism (which is a comparison of the content of the different lines) is the chief characteristic of Biblical poetry. Hebrew poetry also contains many “figures of speech.”

**The Three Kinds of Hebrew Poetry:** There are three kinds of Hebrew poetry: (1) Lyric poetry, which was originally accompanied by music on the lyre (the Psalms); (2) Didactic (teaching) poetry, which, using statements of truth, was designed to communicate basic principles of life (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes); (3) Dramatic poetry, which used conversation to communicate its message (Job and Song of Solomon).

### The Two Key Elements of Hebrew Poetry: Parallelism and Figures of Speech

#### Parallelism

Hebrew poetry repeats and rearranges thoughts. Parallelism refers to the comparison of those thoughts. There are several types of parallel arrangement of thoughts:

- A. Synonymous–The thought of the first line is basically repeated in different words in the second line (Psalms 2:4; 3:1; 7:17).
- B. Antithetical–The thought of the first line is emphasized by a contrasting thought in the second line (Psalms 1:6; 34:10). They are often identified with “but.”
- C. Synthetic–The second line explains or further develops the idea of the first line (Psalms 1:3; 95:3).
- D. Climactic–The second line repeats with the exception of the last terms (Psalm 29:1).
- E. Emblematic–One line conveys the main point, the second line illuminates it by an image (Psalms 42:1; 23:1).

#### Figures of Speech

A Figure of Speech occurs when one thing is used to represent another. Hebrew poetry uses figures of speech to communicate thoughts and feelings.

For example, “**one who delights in the Law of the Lord**” will be “**like a tree firmly planted**” (Psalm 1:2-3). The “**one who delights**” is not a literal “tree” but is compared to a tree. You find the words “like” or “as” in these kinds of sentences (Psalms 5:12; 17:8; 131:2).

Another Figure of Speech compares one thing to another by use of the word “is.” In Psalm 23:1, David says, “**The Lord is my Shepherd.**” David is not a shaggy haired, four-footed animal, but is cared for by the Lord as a shepherd would care for his sheep (Psalms 84:11; 91:4).

At times an exaggeration or overstatement is used to emphasize a point. In Psalm 6:6, David says that “**Every night I make my bed swim, I dissolve my couch with tears.**” This statement emphasizes his sadness. David does not cry enough to make his bed float (Psalms 78:27; 107:26).

Sometimes a question is used to confirm or deny a fact rather than to make an inquiry. When David asks, “**Who is like You**” in Psalm 35:10, his desire is to emphasize the greatness of God, not simply to receive an answer of “no one” (Psalms 56:8; 106:2).

The final example of a figure of speech is to use some part of an animal to describe God’s Person. This is designed to convey certain truths about God. For example in Psalm 17:8 we find David asking the Lord to “**hide him in the shelter of His wings.**” God is not a bird, but David is asking God for protection like a mother bird would give its young (Psalm 91:4).





- b. Second Speech: God's Justice and Prudence Proved (34:1-37)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 34:1-9   | 34:16-20 | 34:31-37 |
| 34:10-15 | 34:21-30 |          |
- c. Third Speech: The Advantages of Pure and Consistent Holiness (35:1-16)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 35:1-8 | 35:9-16 |  |
|--------|---------|--|
- d. Fourth Speech: God's Greatness and Job's Guilt in Accusing God of Unfairness (36:1–37:24)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 36:1-16  | 36:24-33 | 37:14-20 |
| 36:17-23 | 37:1-13  | 37:21-24 |

**4. God's Revelation from the Whirlwind (38:1–42:6)**

- a. The First Revelation (38:1–40:5)
  - 1) God's Omnipotence Proclaimed in Creation (38:1–39:30)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 38:1-7   | 38:25-30 | 39:5-12  |
| 38:8-11  | 38:31-33 | 39:13-18 |
| 38:12-15 | 38:34-38 | 39:19-25 |
| 38:16-18 | 38:39-41 | 39:26-30 |
| 38:19-24 | 39:1-4   |          |
  - 2) Job's Self-Condensing Confession (40:1-5)
- b. The Second Revelation: God's Power and Man's Weakness; Job's Humble Response (40:6–42:6)
 

|          |          |        |
|----------|----------|--------|
| 40:6-9   | 40:19-24 | 42:1-6 |
| 40:10-14 | 41:1-11  |        |
| 40:15-18 | 41:12-34 |        |

**5. Final Comments (42:7-17)**

- a. God's Rebuke of the False Comforters (42:7-9)
- b. Job's Restoration and Reward (42:10-17)

## The Psalms (Praise through Prayer)

**Author and Name of Book:** The Book of Psalms is the longest book of the Bible and perhaps the most widely used book in Scripture because of the way it speaks to the human heart in all of our experiences in life. Again and again sighing is turned into singing through prayer and praise. For the most part, although the texts of the Psalms do not designate their authors, the titles do often indicate their author. The following chart designates the authors of these Psalms as they are found in the titles:<sup>24</sup>

| Authorship of the Psalms |    |   |
|--------------------------|----|---|
| David                    | 78 | Psalms 1–41; 51–70; 86; 103; 108–110; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138–145                 |
| Asaph                    | 12 | Psalms 50; 73–83  |
| Korahites                | 12 | Psalms 42–49; 84–85; 87–88  |
| Solomon                  | 2  | Psalms 72; 127  |
| Moses                    | 1  | Psalm 90  |
| Ethan                    | 1  | Psalm 89  |
| Anonymous                | 44 | Psalms 71; 91–102; 104–107; 111–121; 123; 125–126; 128–130; 132; 134–137; 146–150 |

In the Hebrew language, the Book of Psalms is titled "Praise" or "Book of Praises." Only one Psalm (145) is designated by the word "praise," but praise is the heart of the Psalms. Psalms are "songs or poems sung with musical accompaniment." The word "psalm" comes from a Hebrew word which means "to pluck a stringed instrument" as an accompaniment to singing.

**Date of Writing:** With their very broad chronological range, the wide variety of themes, and the many different audiences living under a variety of conditions, the Psalms reflect a multitude of moods and experiences that make them extremely important to the reader regardless of the day in which he lives. Regarding the date of the various Psalms, Gleason Archer writes:

Of these, the earliest would naturally be Psalm 90, by Moses, presumably composed about 1405 B.C. The Davidic Psalms would have originated between 1020 and 975 B.C.; those of Asaph from approximately the same period; Psalm 127 from the period of Solomon's reign, possibly 950 B.C. It is hard to date the descendants of Korah and the two Ezrahites who are mentioned; presumably they were pre-exilic. of the Psalms not carrying titles, some were undoubtedly Davidic (e.g., 2 and 33) and the others date from later periods all the way up to the return from exile (such as 126 and 137, the latter of which is at least as late as the Exile). No convincing evidence, however, has been offered for the dating of any of the psalms later than approximately 500 B.C.<sup>25</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** The Psalms provide us with a message of hope and comfort through the common theme of worship. They are, in essence, an antidote to fear and complaining through a personal response to the person and work of God. They are an expression of the worship, faith, and spiritual life of Israel. In the Psalms we have a mirror of the heart of God's people recording the simple, universal human experiences of man in the light of God's person, promises, plan and presence.

In the collection of the 150 Psalms, there occurs a great variety of feelings, circumstances and themes. This means it is difficult to make any generalizations about a theme or purpose, but it is safe to say that all the Psalms involve a personal response on the part of the Believer toward the goodness and grace of God. Often they include a record of the psalmist's own inner emotions of discouragement, anxiety or thankfulness, even when faced with the opposition of God's enemies or in view of God's varied providences (actions). But whether the psalmist is occupied with a mournful or a joyous theme, he is always expressing himself as if in the presence of the living God. There are a few Psalms, of course, which mostly contain the thoughts and revelations of God Himself, such as Psalm 2, but these are most exceptional.<sup>26</sup>

Many of the Psalms survey the Word of God, His attributes and are Messianic in their scope in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

**Divisions of the Psalms:** The Psalms are really five books in one. Each of the following book divisions conclude with a doxology (an expression of praise to God), while Psalm 150 occupies the place of the doxology and forms an appropriate conclusion to the entire collection.

Epiphanius said, "The Hebrews divided the Psalter into five books so that it would be another Pentateuch." The Midrash of Psalm 1:1 states, "Moses gave the Israelites the five books of the Law, and to correspond to these, David gave to them the Book of the Psalms in five books."<sup>27</sup>

The correspondence to the Pentateuch may be seen in the following outline:<sup>28</sup>

1. Psalms about Man and Creation (1–41)–Corresponds to Genesis
2. Psalms about Israel and Redemption (42–72)–Corresponds to Exodus
3. Psalms about Worship and the Temple (73–89)–Corresponds to Leviticus
4. Psalms about Our Sojourn on the Earth (90–106)–Corresponds to Numbers
5. Psalms about Praise and the Word of God (107–150)–Corresponds to Deuteronomy

Another way of looking at the book divisions:

| Book | Psalms         | Author            | General Content   |
|------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| I    | Psalms 1–41    | David             | Songs of worship  |
| II   | Psalms 42–72   | David & Korah     | Hymns of petition |
| III  | Psalms 73–89   | Mainly Asaph      | Hymns of petition |
| IV   | Psalms 90–106  | Mainly Anonymous  | Anthems of praise |
| V    | Psalms 107–150 | David & Anonymous | Anthems of praise |

**Categories or Types of Psalms:** As to their types, the following illustrates a generally agreed upon set of categories:

1. **Lament** (Sorrow) or **Petition**, either individual (Psalm 3) or communal (Psalm 44)
2. **Thanksgiving** or **Praise**, either individual (Psalm 30) or communal (Psalm 65)
3. **Trust** in God (Psalm 4)

4. **Enthronement** hymns of YAHWEH: Psalms concerning Jerusalem (Psalm 48) and Royal Psalms (some of which are Messianic; Psalms 2, 110)
5. **Didactic (teaching)** and **Wisdom** Psalms (Psalms 1, 37, 119)
6. **Theme** Psalms: the Psalms may also be classified according to special themes as: Creation Psalms (Psalms 8, 19), Nature Psalms (Psalms 19, 104), Acrostic or Memory Device Psalms (Psalms 111, 112, 119), the Exodus (Psalm 78), Repentance (Psalm 6), Pilgrim Psalms (Psalm 120), Messianic Psalms and those that include prophecies about Messiah, like Psalms 2, 8, 16, 22, 40, 45, 72, 110, 118.

**Key People:** Although the titles to the Psalms do sometimes point to the subject or author of the Psalm, like David or Korah, the text of the Psalms does not. Rather, the focus seems to be more on the people of God in their worship and walk with the Lord.

**Christ as Seen in Psalms:** Many of the Psalms are Messianic and speak of the person and work of Christ. They fall into the following categories:

1. **Typically Messianic:** These Psalms are less obviously Messianic. The psalmist in some way is a type of Christ (cf. 34:20; 69:4, 9), but other aspects of the passage do not apply. Perhaps, in this case Jesus and the apostles were applying familiar psalmic expressions to their experiences (e.g., 109:8 in Acts 1:20).
2. **Typological-Prophetic:** Although the psalmist describes his own experience, the language is such that it points beyond his own life and becomes historically true only in the person of Christ (22).
3. **Indirectly Messianic:** When the Psalm was written, it referred to the house of David or a specific king, but will find its final and ultimate fulfillment only in the person of Christ (2, 45, 72).
4. **Purely Prophetic:** These are Psalms that refer directly to Christ without any reference to any other person or son of David (110).
5. **Enthronement:** These are Psalms that anticipate the coming of the Lord and the establishment of His Kingdom as fulfilled in the person of Messiah, Christ (96-99).

**Specific Prophetic Fulfillments Applied to Christ:**

| Prophecy              | Psalm    | New Testament Passage             |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Birth              | 104:4    | Hebrews 1:7                       |
| 2. Humiliation        | 8:4      | Hebrews 2:6                       |
| 3. Deity              | 45:6     | Hebrews 1:8                       |
| 4. Ministry           | 69:9     | John 2:17                         |
| 5. Rejection          | 118:22   | Matthew 21:42                     |
| 6. Betrayal           | 41:9     | John 13:18                        |
| 7. Crucifixion Events | 22       | Matthew 27:39, 43, 46; Luke 23:35 |
| 8. Resurrection       | 2 and 16 | Acts 2:27                         |
| 9. Ascension          | 68:18    | Ephesians 4:8                     |
| 10. Reign             | 102:26   | Hebrews 1:11                      |

**For Personal Study: Outline**

**1. Book I: Songs of Worship (Psalms 1–41)**

- Psalm 1: The Blessed Man: Two Ways of Life Contrasted: The Word and the World
- Psalm 2: The Messiah King: The Confederacy Against God and Christ
- Psalm 3: Quietness Amid Troubles: Protection in Danger
- Psalm 4: An Evening Prayer of Trust in God
- Psalm 5: A Morning Prayer of God's Confidence in God's Presence
- Psalm 6: A Prayer of a Soul in Deep Anguish
- Psalm 7: A Prayer for Refuge
- Psalm 8: The Glory of the Creator and Man's Dignity
- Psalm 9: A Prayer of Thanksgiving for God's Justice
- Psalm 10: A Prayer for the Overthrow of the Wicked
- Psalm 11: The Lord as a Refuge and Defense
- Psalm 12: A Prayer for Help Against Lying Tongues
- Psalm 13: A Prayer for Help in Trouble
- Psalm 14: A Description of the Folly and Wickedness of Man

- Psalm 15: A Description of the Godly Man
- Psalm 16: The Lord as the Refuge of the Saints
- Psalm 17: A Prayer for Deliverance through God's Justice
- Psalm 18: A Prayer of Praise for Deliverance
- Psalm 19: God's Revelation in His Creation, Work and Written Word
- Psalm 20: Prayer for Victory Over Enemies
- Psalm 21: The Lord as the Strength of the King
- Psalm 22: A Portrait of the Cross: A Psalm of Anguish and Praise
- Psalm 23: A Portrait of the Divine Shepherd: A Psalm of the Goodness of God
- Psalm 24: A Psalm of the King of Glory
- Psalm 25: An Acrostic Psalm: A Prayer for Deliverance, Guidance and Forgiveness
- Psalm 26: The Plea of Integrity and for Redemption
- Psalm 27: A Prayer of Fearless Confidence in the Lord
- Psalm 28: Prayer for Help and Praise for Its Answer—The Lord My Rock
- Psalm 29: The Powerful Voice of God
- Psalm 30: A Prayer of Thankfulness for God's Faithfulness in a Time of Need
- Psalm 31: A Prayer of Complaint, Petition and Praise
- Psalm 32: The Blessing of Forgiveness and Trust in God
- Psalm 33: Praise to the Lord as the Creator and Deliverer
- Psalm 34: Praise to the Lord as the Provider and Deliverer
- Psalm 35: A Prayer for Justice and Rescue from Enemies
- Psalm 36: The Wickedness of Men Contrasted With the Loving Kindness of God
- Psalm 37: A Plea for Resting in the Lord
- Psalm 38: A Prayer for Reconciliation, Acknowledging The Heavy Burden of Sin
- Psalm 39: A Prayer Acknowledging the Frailty of Man
- Psalm 40: Praise for the Joyful Experience and Expectation of Salvation
- Psalm 41: Praise for God's Blessings in Adversity

## 2. Book II: Hymns of Petition (Psalms 42–72)

- Psalms 42–43: Longing for God and Hoping in the Lord's Salvation
- Psalm 44: National Lament and Prayer for Redemption
- Psalm 45: The Wedding Song of a Son of David
- Psalm 46: God is Our Refuge and Strength
- Psalm 47: The Lord is the Victorious King
- Psalm 48: Praise for Mount Zion, the Beautiful City
- Psalm 49: The Emptiness of Riches Without Wisdom
- Psalm 50: The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving
- Psalm 51: Confession and the Forgiveness of Sin
- Psalm 52: The Futility of Boastful Wickedness
- Psalm 53: A Portrait of the Godless
- Psalm 54: The Lord as Our Help
- Psalm 55: The Lord Sustains the Righteous
- Psalm 56: Trust in the Midst of Our Fears
- Psalm 57: The Exaltation of the Lord in the Midst of Isolation
- Psalm 58: The Righteous Shall Surely Be Rewarded
- Psalm 59: Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies
- Psalm 60: Prayer for Deliverance of the Nation
- Psalm 61: Prayer from a Fainting Heart
- Psalm 62: Waiting on the Lord
- Psalm 63: Thirsting for God's Love
- Psalm 64: Prayer for Protection
- Psalm 65: God's Bounty for Earth and Man
- Psalm 66: Remember What God Has Done
- Psalm 67: A Call for All to Praise God
- Psalm 68: God is a Father to the Oppressed
- Psalm 69: Prayer for Deliverance According to God's Compassion
- Psalm 70: Prayer for the Poor and Needy
- Psalm 71: Prayer for the Aged
- Psalm 72: The Glorious Reign of Messiah

### **3. Book III: Hymns of Petition (Psalms 73–89)**

- Psalm 73: Prayer for an Eternal Perspective
- Psalm 74: Plea for Help in a Time of National Adversity
- Psalm 75: Justice is the Lord's
- Psalm 76: The Victorious Power of the God of Jacob
- Psalm 77: In the Day of Trouble, Remember God's Greatness
- Psalm 78: Lessons from Israel's History
- Psalm 79: A Plea for the Lord to Remember the Sheep of His Pasture
- Psalm 80: Israel's Plea for God's Mercy
- Psalm 81: A Plea for Israel to Listen to the Lord
- Psalm 82: Unjust Judges Rebuked
- Psalm 83: Prayer for Judgment on Israel's Enemies
- Psalm 84: A Deep Longing for the Presence of God
- Psalm 85: Prayer for Revival
- Psalm 86: Prayer for Mercy on the Nation
- Psalm 87: The Joy of Living in Zion
- Psalm 88: A Prayer in the Darkness of Despair
- Psalm 89: Claiming God's Person and Promises in Affliction

### **4. Book IV: Anthems of Praise (Psalms 90–106)**

- Psalm 90: Teach Us to Number Our Days
- Psalm 91: In the Shelter of the Most High
- Psalm 92: Praise of the Lord
- Psalm 93: YAHWEH Reigns Gloriously
- Psalm 94: YAHWEH is the Judge of the Earth: Vengeance is His
- Psalm 95: Let Us Kneel Before Our Maker: A Call to Worship
- Psalm 96: Worship the Lord Who Will Judge the World in Righteousness
- Psalm 97: Rejoice! The Lord Reigns
- Psalm 98: Sing a New Song to the Lord
- Psalm 99: Exalt the Lord Who Reigns
- Psalm 100: Serve the Lord With Gladness: He is the Lord and He is Good
- Psalm 101: Commitment to a Holy Life
- Psalm 102: Prayer of a Saint Who is Weighed Down
- Psalm 103: Bless the Lord: His Compassions Never Fail!
- Psalm 104: The Lord's Care Over All Creation
- Psalm 105: The Lord's Faithful Acts in Salvation History
- Psalm 106: A Remembrance of YAHWEH's Love and Israel's Disobedience

### **5. Book V: Anthems of Praise (Psalms 107–150)**

- Psalm 107: Praise for God's Deliverance from Manifold Troubles
- Psalm 108: Praise and Prayer for Victory
- Psalm 109: A Prayer for Vindication and Judgments Against Enemies
- Psalm 110: Messiah Pictured as the Priest King Warrior
- Psalm 111: Celebration of God's Faithfulness
- Psalm 112: The Triumph of Faith
- Psalm 113: Praise to the Exalted Lord Who Comes Down to the Lowly
- Psalm 114: Praise for the Exodus
- Psalm 115: The Impotence of Idols and the Greatness of the Lord
- Psalm 116: Praise to the Lord for Deliverance
- Psalm 117: The Praise of All People
- Psalm 118: Praise for the Lord's Saving Goodness
- Psalm 119: In Praise of the Scriptures
- Psalm 120: Prayer for Deliverance from Slanderers
- Psalm 121: The Lord is My Guardian
- Psalm 122: Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem
- Psalm 123: Plea for Mercy
- Psalm 124: Our Helper is the Maker of Heaven and Earth!
- Psalm 125: Peace Be on Israel
- Psalm 126: Praise for Restoration

Psalm 127: Praise for Children, a Gift from the Lord  
 Psalm 128: The Family Blessed by the Lord  
 Psalm 129: The Prayer of the Persecuted  
 Psalm 130: Waiting for God's Redemption  
 Psalm 131: Childlike Trust in the Lord  
 Psalm 132: Prayer for the Lord's Blessing on Zion  
 Psalm 133: The Blessedness of Brotherly Unity  
 Psalm 134: Praise to the Lord in the Night  
 Psalm 135: Praise for the Wondrous Works of God  
 Psalm 136: Praise for God's Mercy Which Endures Forever  
 Psalm 137: Tears Over Captivity  
 Psalm 138: The Lord Answers Prayer and Delivers the Humble  
 Psalm 139: The Lord Knows Me  
 Psalm 140: Prayer for Deliverance: You Are My God  
 Psalm 141: May My Prayer Be Like Incense  
 Psalm 142: No One Cared But the Lord; He Alone is My Portion  
 Psalm 143: Prayer for Guidance; Lead Me on Level Ground  
 Psalm 144: The Lord is My Rock and My Warrior  
 Psalm 145: Praise for the Lord's Greatness and Wonderful Works  
 Psalm 146: Praise to the Lord, an Abundant Helper  
 Psalm 147: Praise to the Lord Who Heals the Brokenhearted  
 Psalm 148: Praise to the Lord, the Wise Creator  
 Psalm 149: Praise to the Lord Who Delights in His People  
 Psalm 150: Praise to the Lord

## Proverbs

### (Wisdom through Precept)

**Author and Name of Book:** According to 1 Kings 4:32, Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs, and while he wrote most of the proverbs in this book, later chapters indicate that he was not the only author of the book. Three sections of the Proverbs are ascribed to Solomon: Chapters 1:1–9:18; 10:1–22:16, and 25:1–29:27. However, the proverbs in the latter section (25:1–29:27) were selected from Solomon's collection by King Hezekiah's committee (25:1). Proverbs 22:17 refers to the "sayings of the wise," and 24:23 mentions additional "sayings of the wise." Proverbs 22:17-21 serves as an introduction which suggests that these sections stem from a circle of wise men, not from Solomon himself. Chapter 30 is specifically attributed to Agur, son of Jakeh, and 31:1-9 to King Lemuel.

Proverbs obviously gets its name from its contents—short sayings or principles that convey truth in a pointed way. The Hebrew word for proverb means "parallel," "similar" or "a comparison." It refers to a comparison that underlies the moral principle. Not only can a proverb center in a comparison of similar concepts but also in a comparison of opposites called an antithesis.

The title comes from the fact that this writing is a summary of moral and spiritual instruction designed to enable one to live wisely.

**Date of Writing: 950–700 B.C.** As a book of wisdom, Proverbs is not an historical book but rather the product of the school of wisdom in Israel. Solomon's proverbs were written before his death in 931 B.C., and others were collected by Hezekiah's scribes around 700 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** As suggested by the name of the book and the meaning of the term "proverb," the theme and purpose of the Book of Proverbs is wisdom for living. It, therefore, offers special instruction on every issue of life: sin, goodness, wealth, poverty, the tongue, pride, humility, justice, family (parents, children, discipline), vengeance, strife, gluttony, love, laziness, friends, life and death. No book is more practical in terms of wisdom for daily living than Proverbs.

The fundamental theme is "***The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge***" (1:7a). The absence of a fear of God leads to a foolish life. To fear the Lord is to stand in awe of His holy character and power. At the same time, Proverbs shows that true wisdom leads to the fear of the Lord (2:1-5).

**Key People:** The Proverbs were written for everyone, so no individual is mentioned.

**Christ as Seen in Proverbs:** In Chapter 8, wisdom is viewed as a person and seen in its perfection. It is Divine (8:22-31), it is the source of biological and spiritual life (3:18; 8:35-36), it is righteous and moral (8:8-9) and it is available to all who will receive it (8:1-6, 32-35). This wisdom came in the flesh in the person of Christ *“in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”* (Colossians 2:3). *“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption”* (1 Corinthians 1:30 cf. 1 Corinthians 1:22-24).<sup>29</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Introduction: The Purpose of Proverbs (1:1-7)**
2. **The Precepts of Wisdom: Proverbs to Youth (1:8–9:18)**
  - a. Obey Parents (1:8-9)
  - b. Avoid Bad Company (1:10-19)
  - c. Heed Wisdom’s Call and Advice (1:20-33)
  - d. Avoid the Adulteress (2:1-22)
  - e. Trust and Honor God (3:1-12)
  - f. The Blessings of Wisdom (3:13-20)
  - g. Be Kind and Generous to Others (3:21-35)
  - h. Get Wisdom (4:1-9)
  - i. Avoid Bad Company (4:10-19)
  - j. Above All, Keep Your Heart (4:20-27)
  - k. Do Not Commit Adultery (5:1-14)
  - l. Be Faithful to Your Own Spouse (5:15-23)
  - m. Avoid Surety (6:1-5)
  - n. Shun Laziness (6:6-19)
  - o. Avoid Adultery (6:20-35)
  - p. Avoid the Adulteress (7:1-27)
  - q. Wisdom and Folly Contrasted (8:1–9:18)
3. **The Proverbs of Solomon (10:1–24:34)**
  - a. Proverbs Contrasting the Godly and the Wicked (10:1–15:33)
  - b. Proverbs Encouraging Godly Lives (16:1–22:16)
  - c. Proverbs Concerning Various Practices (22:17–23:35)
  - d. Proverbs Concerning Various People (24:1-34)
4. **The Proverbs of Solomon Copied by Hezekiah’s Men (25:1–29:27)**
  - a. Proverbs Concerning Relationships with Others (25:1–26:28)
  - b. Proverbs Concerning Actions (27:1–29:27)
5. **The Words of Agur (30:1-33)**
  - a. Personal Words (30:1-14)
  - b. Numerical Proverbs (30:15-33)
6. **The Words of Lemuel (31:1-9)**
7. **The Capable Wife (31:10-31)**

# **Ecclesiastes**

## **(Truth through Reality)**

**Author and Name of Book:** There are two lines of evidence (external and internal) that point to Solomon as the author of Ecclesiastes. For the external evidence, the Jewish tradition attributes the book to Solomon. Internally, a number of lines of evidence show that Solomon was surely the author. First, the author identifies himself as ***“the son of David, king in Jerusalem”*** (1:1). Then, references in the book to the author’s superior wisdom (1:16), extreme wealth (2:7), opportunities for pleasure (2:3) and extensive building activities (2:4-6) all suggest Solomon as the author. There is simply no other descendant of David who measured up to these descriptions.

The name Ecclesiastes comes from the title given it in the Septuagint. The Greek word means “assembly.” The Hebrew title means “one who convenes and speaks at an assembly,” or “a preacher.”

**Date of Writing: 931 B.C.** According to Jewish tradition, Solomon wrote the Song of Solomon in his early years, expressing a young man’s love. He wrote the Proverbs in his mature years, manifesting a middle-aged man’s wisdom. He reportedly wrote Ecclesiastes in his declining years, revealing an old man’s sorrow (cf. 12:1). Perhaps Ecclesiastes is the record of Solomon’s regret for and repentance from his grave moral lapses (mistakes) recorded in 1 Kings 11. The Book of Ecclesiastes, then, would have been written just before Solomon’s death and subsequent division of his kingdom that occurred in 931 B.C.<sup>30</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** The basic theme is the emptiness of life apart from God. In the development of this theme, four key purposes emerge:

First, in seeking to demonstrate that life without God has no meaning, Solomon is seeking to demolish confidence in human-based achievements and wisdom; he shows that all of man’s goals or the “way that seems right to man” must of necessity lead to dissatisfaction and emptiness. Solomon recorded the emptiness of his own experiences to make his readers desperate for God. He sought to show that their quest for happiness cannot be fulfilled by man himself in the pursuits of this life.

Second, Solomon affirms the fact that much in life cannot be fully understood, which means we must live by faith, not by sight. Life is full of unexplained events. There is much in life that man cannot comprehend nor control, but by faith, we can rest in the sovereign wisdom and work of God. Much like the Book of Job, Ecclesiastes not only affirms that man is finite (limited), but that he must learn to live with mystery. Life on earth, “life under the sun,” cannot provide the key to life itself. In view of this, man must have more than an earthly outlook; he must have the upward look to God, fearing and trusting Him.

Third, Ecclesiastes presents a realistic view of life that is in contrast with the Book of Proverbs. It shows that life differs from the ideals of Proverbs. Proverbs 10:16 affirms that justice is both to the righteous and the wicked, but Ecclesiastes 8:14 observes that this is not always the case, at least not in this life. Are these contradictions? No, because Proverbs is noting the general principles of God without noting the failings that occur because we live in a fallen, sinful world. Ecclesiastes points out that while a righteous order exists, as affirmed in Proverbs, it is not always evident to man as he views life “under the sun” from his finite perspective.

Fourth, Solomon showed that man, left to his own strategies will always find life empty, frustrating and mysterious. The book, however, does not mean that life has no answers, that life is totally useless or meaningless. Meaning and significance can be found, he explained, in fearing God. Frustrations can thus be replaced with contentment through fellowship with God.

**Key People:** King Solomon

**Christ as Seen in Ecclesiastes:** Since Christ alone is man’s means to God where man finds wholeness and satisfaction, or life and life more abundantly (John 10:10; 7:37-38), the emptiness experienced in life can only be filled through a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus. Man’s aspiration for significance and satisfaction are found only in the Savior.

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Introduction: The Problem Stated (1:1-3)**
2. **The Problem Demonstrated (1:4–2:26)**
  - a. The Futility of the Cycles of Life (1:4-11)
  - b. The Futility of Human Wisdom (1:12-18)
  - c. The Futility of Pleasure and Wealth (2:1-11)
  - d. The Futility of Materialism (2:12-23)
  - e. Conclusion: Enjoy and Be Content with the Providences of God (2:24-26)
3. **God's Immutable Plan for Life (3:1-22)**
  - a. He Predetermines the Events of Life (3:1-11)
  - b. He Predetermines the Conditions of Life (3:12-13)
  - c. He Judges All (3:14-21)
  - d. Conclusion (3:22)
4. **The Futility of the Circumstances of Life (4:1–5:20)**
  - a. Evil Oppression (4:1-3)
  - b. The Emptiness of Hard Work (4:4-12)
  - c. The Emptiness of Political Success (4:13-16)
  - d. The Emptiness of Human Religion (5:1-7)
  - e. The Emptiness of Human Riches (5:8-17)
  - f. Conclusion (5:18-20)
5. **The Futility of Life as a Whole (6:1-12)**
  - a. Wealth Cannot Satisfy (6:1-2)
  - b. Children Cannot Satisfy (6:3-6)
  - c. Labor Cannot Satisfy (6:7-12)
6. **Counsel for Living with Vanity (7:1–12:8)**
  - a. Counsel in View of Man's Wickedness (7:1-29)
  - b. Counsel in View of God's Providences (8:1–9:18)
  - c. Counsel in View of the Uncertainties of Life (10:1-20)
  - d. Counsel in View of the Aging Processes of Life (11:1–12:8)
7. **Conclusion (12:9-14)**

## Song of Solomon (Joy through Union)

**Author and Name of Book:** Solomon is the author. He is mentioned seven times (1:1, 5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11-12), and he is identified as the groom. Verse 1 asserts that Solomon wrote this song as one of many (in fact the best of the many) songs which he wrote (1 Kings 4:32 tells us he composed 1,005 such songs). Note that the text does not simply say, "The Song of Solomon" but "The Song of Songs, which are Solomon's."

Regarding the name of this book, Dr. Charles Ryrie writes:

This book has been titled several ways: the Hebrew title from verse 1, The Song of Songs, which means 'the most superlative, or best, of songs'; the English title, also from verse 1, The Song of Solomon, which designates the author; and the Canticles, meaning simply 'songs,' derived from the Latin.<sup>31</sup>

**Date of Writing:** About 965 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** The Song of Solomon is a love song filled with figures of speech designed to portray God's view of love and marriage: the beauty of physical love between man and woman. The book is presented as a drama with several scenes which are seen in the outline that follows.

The Song was probably written early in Solomon's career, about 965 B.C. At this point, Solomon had sixty queens and eighty concubines (6:8), but later in his life, he would have seven hundred queens and three hundred concubines (1 Kings 11:3).

**Key People:** The bride (Shulamite), the king (Solomon), a chorus (daughters of Jerusalem)

**Christ as Seen in the Song of Solomon:** This book illustrates Christ's love for Believers.

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Title (1:1)**
2. **Falling in Love (1:2–3:5)**
  - a. The Bride's Longing for Affection (1:1-8)
  - b. Expressions of Mutual Love (1:9–2:7)
  - c. Visit of the King to the Bride's Home (2:8-17)
  - d. The Bride's First Dream of Separation (3:1-5)
3. **United in Love (3:6–5:1)**
  - a. Wedding Procession (3:6-11)
  - b. Praise for the Bride's Beauty (4:1-15)
  - c. The Marriage is Consummated (4:16–5:1)
4. **Struggling in Love (5:2–7:10)**
  - a. The Bride's Second Dream of Separation (5:2-7)
  - b. Praise for the Bridegroom's Handsomeness (5:8–6:3)
  - c. Praise for the Bride's Beauty (6:4–7:10)
5. **Maturing in Love (7:11–8:14)**
  - a. The Bride's Desire to Visit Her Home (7:11–8:4)
  - b. The Journey and Homecoming (8:5-14)

## **Section 4**

# **The Major Prophets**

### **The Prophets of Israel Viewed as a Whole**

**Introduction:** In our survey of the Old Testament, we have seen the “Books of the Law,” the “Historical Books,” and the “Poetical Books.” We now begin the last division, which is known as the “Prophets.”

The “Prophets” are usually distinguished as the “Major Prophets” and the “Minor Prophets.” The five books of the “Major Prophets” include: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel. The twelve books of the “Minor Prophets” include: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

These prophets are also known as the writing prophets, because their authors wrote or recorded their words. There were other oral prophets like Nathan, Ahijah, Iddo, Jehu, Elijah, Elisha, Oded, Shemaiah, Azariah, Hanani, Jahaziel, and Huldah who left no written records of their prophecies.

**The Authors:** The authors of the prophetic books were described or referred to by a number of terms due to the nature of their ministry and calling. They were called prophets, seers, watchmen, men of God, messengers, and servants of the Lord.

The main idea in the word “prophet” is that of an authorized spokesman. Therefore, a true prophet is one who speaks for God to man. This is clear from the description of a prophet recorded in three Old Testament passages: (1) Exodus 6:28–7:2. When Moses objected to being the spokesman for God to Pharaoh, God appointed Aaron to be Moses’ prophet, i.e., his authorized spokesman. The issue in this use is one person speaking for another. (2) Numbers 12:1-8. Aaron and Miriam, perhaps out of jealousy, sought to take Moses’ place as mediator of God’s revelation with themselves, but God dramatically intervened to show He would speak directly with Moses alone and that He would also speak through those called prophets by dreams and visions. The meaning of “prophet” is clear. (3) Deuteronomy 18:9-22. Just before the death of Moses, we have the formal announcement of the office of the prophet, on a continuing basis.<sup>32</sup> These verses make it clear that the prophet is one who speaks forth the message which God has revealed to him.

**Their Directive or Message:** As a spokesman for God, the prophet’s primary duty was to speak forth God’s message to God’s people in the historical context of what was happening among God’s people. The broad meaning of “prophecy” includes preaching about current issues, called forthtelling. The narrower meaning is that of telling events before they happen, called foretelling. Forthtelling involved insight into the will of God; it was urgent, challenging men to obey. By comparison, foretelling involved foresight into the plan of God; it was predictive, either encouraging the righteous in view of God’s promises or warning in view of coming judgment. In the process of proclaiming God’s message, the prophet would sometimes reveal that which pertained to the future, but this was only a small part of the prophet’s message. So the prophet was the divinely chosen spokesman who, having received God’s message, proclaimed it in oral, visual, or written form to the people. For this reason, a common formula used by the prophets was, “Thus says the Lord.”

As God’s spokesmen, their message can be seen in the three-fold function they had among the people of God in the Old Testament:

First, they functioned as preachers who taught and interpreted the Mosaic Law to the nation. It was their duty to warn, reprove, denounce sin, threaten with the terrors of judgment, call to repentance, and bring consolation and pardon. Their activity of rebuking sin and calling for repentance consumed far more of the prophets’ time than any other feature of their work. The rebuke was driven home with predictions about the punishment that God intended to send on those failing to pay attention to the prophet’s warning (Jonah 3:4).

Second, they functioned as predictors who announced coming judgment, deliverance, and events relating to the Messiah and His Kingdom. Predicting the future was never intended merely to satisfy man’s curiosity, but was designed to demonstrate that God knows and controls the future, and to give purposeful revelation. The prediction given by a true prophet would be visibly fulfilled. The failure of the prediction to be fulfilled would indicate that the prophet had not spoken the word of YAHWEH (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). In 1 Samuel 3:19 it is said of Samuel that the Lord was with him and let none of his prophetic words fail (literally, “fall to the ground”).

Third, they functioned as watchmen over the people of Israel (Ezekiel 3:17). Ezekiel stood as a watchman on the walls of Zion ready to trumpet a warning against religious apostasy. He warned the people against political and military alliances with foreign powers, the temptation to become involved in idolatry and Canaanite cultic worship and the danger of placing excessive confidence in religious activity and ritual.

Finally, while the prophets functioned in these ways as they communicated God's message, they occupied one major role in Israel's religious system. The prophets in Israel occupied the role of a royal diplomat or prosecuting attorney, indicting the nation for violations of the Mosaic Covenant.<sup>33</sup>

### A Comparison of the Four Major Prophets<sup>34</sup>

| Comparison of the Four Major Prophets |   |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
|                                       | Isaiah  | Jeremiah   | Ezekiel  | Daniel   |
| Propesied to:                         | Jews in Judea                                   | Jews in Judea and captivity  | Jews captive in Babylon                                    | Jews captive in Babylon and Gentile Kings  |
| Concerning:                           | Judah and Jerusalem (Isaiah 1:1; 2:1)           | Judah and Nations (Jeremiah 1:5, 9-10; 2:1-2)                      | The whole house of Israel (Ezekiel 2:3-6; 3:4-10, 17)      | Israel and Gentile Nations (Daniel 2:36-43; 9)                                     |
| During the reigns of:                 | Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah (Kings of Judah) | Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah (Kings of Judah) | Zedekiah (King of Judah); Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon) | Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah (Kings of Judah); Nebuchadnezzar (King of Babylon) |
| Dates:                                | 740–680 B.C.                                    | 627–585 B.C.   | 592–570 B.C.   | 605–536 B.C.   |
| Historical Setting:                   | 2 Kings 15–21; 2 Chronicles 26–30               | 2 Kings 22–25  | Daniel 1–6   | Daniel 1–6   |

### A Review of the Old Testament's Anticipation of Christ<sup>35</sup>

So far, our study has shown that the Law laid the foundation for Christ by the election (Genesis), redemption (Exodus), sanctification (Leviticus), direction (Numbers) and instruction (Deuteronomy) of the nation of Israel as the guardian of God's Word (Romans 3:1) and the line of the Messiah (Genesis 12:1-3; Romans 9:4-5).

Further preparation for Christ was given in the Historical Books by giving the nation the Land of Israel for their possession (Joshua). The nation was then oppressed by foreign nations and was unfaithful, still God raised up judges and found faithfulness in the nation (Ruth). Stabilization was given to the nation under King Saul (1 Samuel), then expansion under King David (2 Samuel), and glorification of the nation under Solomon's reign (1 Kings 1-10). This was followed with division in the nation (1 Kings 11-22) into the ten northern tribes and the two southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin. These both suffered deterioration (2 Chronicles) resulting eventually in deportation by Assyria and Babylon (2 Kings). Consequently, the Temple suffered with deficiency (1 Chronicles) and destruction (2 Chronicles). However, God's faithfulness to His promises remained and so there was reconstruction of the Temple (Ezra) and restoration of a remnant of the nation to the land (Nehemiah) followed by protection of God's people (Esther).

In the Poetical Books there was always spiritual aspiration for Christ with the moral foundation being laid in the Law and the national framework being developed in the books of History.

The Prophetical Books look forward with great expectation to Christ. According to Geisler this is done in the following ways:

The earlier prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos) expect a national restoration by the Messiah. Isaiah and Micah predict international salvation through the coming of Christ. But Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah warn of God's retribution on the nations. Lamentations grieves over God's retribution on His people, but Jeremiah looks for a covenantal reaffirmation in Christ. Ezekiel expects the nation's religious restoration, and Daniel predicts its political restoration. After the Babylonian captivity, Haggai and Zechariah instruct the people in their religious reconstruction and Malachi in their social and moral reconstruction, as they await the coming of the ***“sun of righteousness [that] shall rise, with healing in its wings”*** (Malachi 4:2).<sup>36</sup>

# Isaiah

## (The Salvation of YAHWEH)

**Author and Name of Book:** As the book clearly declares, the author is Isaiah, the son of Amoz, the head of an apparently influential and distinguished Jewish family. Isaiah appears to have been on familiar terms with the royal court even in the reign of Ahaz. He was evidently a well-educated student of international affairs who spent most of his time in the city of Jerusalem, where he associated with royalty and gave advice on foreign affairs. Although Isaiah was directed by God, he was often ridiculed, because he opposed any alliances with foreign powers (whether with Assyria or Egypt). As warned by the Lord in chapter six, his cause was doomed to failure, for both government and people chose to put their trust in the political alliances of man rather than in the sure person and promises of God.

An old tradition relates that he was martyred during the reign of Manasseh, possibly by being sawed in two inside a hollow log (Hebrews 11:37). Since he records the death of Sennacherib in Isaiah 37:37-38, it is fair to assume that Isaiah lived until after Sennacherib's death in 681 B.C.<sup>37</sup>

The title, Isaiah, is taken from the name of the human author who, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, composed it. The Hebrew name of this prophet means "YAHWEH is salvation," which is an excellent summary of the theme and contents of the book.

**Date of Writing: 740–680 B.C.** Isaiah had a very long ministry that ranged from around 740 to 680 B.C. His ministry began near the end of the reign of Uzziah (790–739 B.C.) and continued through the reigns of Jotham (739–731 B.C.), Ahaz (731–715 B.C.) and Hezekiah (715–686 B.C.). From the standpoint of Gentile rulers of the time, Isaiah ministered from the time of Tiglath-Pileser (745–727 B.C.) to the time of Sennacherib (705–681 B.C.) of Assyria.

**Theme and Purpose:** Isaiah's name provides the theme of the book, "salvation is of YAHWEH." This is most evident by the fact the term "salvation" occurs some 26 times in Isaiah but only seven times in all the other prophets combined. Because of this, Isaiah has been called "the evangelical prophet," because he says so much about the salvation and redemptive work of Messiah. In fact, more is said in this book about the person and work of Messiah than in any other Old Testament book.

In some respects, Isaiah is a miniature Bible. It has 66 chapters while the Bible has 66 books. The first 39 chapters of Isaiah correspond to the 39 books of the Old Testament which largely anticipate the coming of Messiah. The last 27 chapters of Isaiah neatly parallel the 27 books of the New Testament because they speak a great deal about Messiah and His Kingdom as the Servant of the Lord. Chapters 1–39 speak of man's great need of salvation, while chapters 40–66 reveal God's provision of Salvation in Messiah and His kingdom.

**Key People:** Isaiah the prophet is the key human being, but YAHWEH by the way He is focused on as the Mighty One of Israel, as the Holy One of Israel and as the Lord God of Hosts, is clearly the chief focus of Isaiah's book.

**Christ as Seen in Isaiah:** No book of the Old Testament presents a portrait of Christ that is as complete and comprehensive as does Isaiah. Isaiah portrays Messiah in His sovereignty above (6:1f), birth and humanity (7:14; 9:6; 11:1), in His ministry by the Spirit (11:2f), His divine nature (7:14; 9:6), His Davidic descent (11:1), His work of redemption as our substitute (53), His ministry as the Servant Savior (49–52) and much more.

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Prophecies of Condemnation and Judgment (1:1–39:8)

#### a. Prophecies Against Judah (1:1–12:6)

##### 1) The Condemnation of Judah (1:1–5:30)

|         |         |        |
|---------|---------|--------|
| 1:1-9   | 2:12-22 | 5:1-7  |
| 1:10-17 | 3:1-12  | 5:8-30 |
| 1:18-31 | 3:13-26 |        |
| 2:1-11  | 4:1-6   |        |



- b. Prophecy of Israel's Deliverer; the Salvation of the Suffering Servant (49:1–57:21)
 

|          |         |         |
|----------|---------|---------|
| 49:1-13  | 52:1-15 | 56:1-12 |
| 49:14-26 | 53:1-12 | 57:1-21 |
| 50:1-11  | 54:1-17 |         |
| 51:1-23  | 55:1-13 |         |
- c. Prophecies of Israel's Glorious Future; God's Program for Peace (58:1–66:24)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 58:1-12  | 61:1-11  | 65:1-16  |
| 58:13-14 | 62:1-12  | 65:17-25 |
| 59:1-8   | 63:1-6   | 66:1-2   |
| 59:9-21  | 63:7-14  | 66:3-9   |
| 60:1-14  | 63:15-19 | 66:10-24 |
| 60:15-22 | 64:1-12  |          |

## **Jeremiah**

### **(Warnings against Sin and Judgment)**

**Author and Name of Book:** As with Isaiah, this book clearly identifies its human author who is Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, from the priest's city of Anathoth in the land of Benjamin (1:1). Jeremiah dictated his prophecies to Baruch, his secretary. Jeremiah is often called the "weeping prophet" (9:1; 13:17), or the "prophet of loneliness," perhaps because he was commanded not to marry (16:2). He is also known as the "reluctant prophet" (1:6), but he faithfully proclaimed God's judgments on the Southern Kingdom of Judah, even though he experienced opposition, beatings and imprisonment (11:18-23; 12:6; 18:18; 20:1-3; 26:1-24; 37:11–38:28).

The book takes its name from its author, Jeremiah. The name Jeremiah means "YAHWEH establishes."

**Date of Writing: 627–585 B.C.** Jeremiah lived at the same time as Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Daniel, and Ezekiel. His prophetic ministry began in 626 B.C. and ended sometime after 586. His ministry was immediately preceded by that of Zephaniah. Since Ezekiel began his ministry in Babylon in 593, he too was a late contemporary of this great prophet in Jerusalem. How and when Jeremiah died is unknown, although Jewish tradition asserts that Jeremiah was put to death while living in Egypt (Hebrews 11:37).

**Theme and Purpose:** Two themes are prominent: (1) warnings of God's judgment against sin, and (2) the message of hope and restoration if the nation would genuinely repent.

**Key People:** The key person throughout is Jeremiah, his preaching, resistance and persecution.

**Christ as Seen in Jeremiah:** Many pictures of Christ are seen in Jeremiah: He is portrayed as the Fountain of Living Waters (2:13; cf. John 4:14), the balm of Gilead (8:22), the Good Shepherd (23:4), a Righteous Branch (23:5) and the Lord our Righteousness (23:6). He is seen as the One who will bring in the New Covenant (31:31-34).

Another prophecy in Jeremiah has significant Messianic implications. The curse on Jehoiachin (Jeconiah, Coniah) meant that no physical descendant would succeed him to the throne (22:28-30). Matthew 1:1-17 traces the genealogy of Christ through Solomon and Rehoboam to His legal (but not His physical) father, Joseph. No son of Joseph could sit upon the throne of David, for he would be under the curse of Jehoiachin. Luke 3:23-38 traces Christ's lineage (genealogy) backward from Mary (His physical parent) through David's other son Nathan (Luke 3:31), thereby avoiding the curse. The Righteous Branch will indeed reign on the throne of David.<sup>38</sup>

### **For Personal Study: Outline**

1. **Jeremiah's Call and Commission (1:1-19)**
  - a. The Call (1:1-10)
  - b. The Confirmation of the Call (1:11-19)
2. **Prophecies to Judah (2:1–45:5)**
  - a. The Condemnation of Judah (2:1–25:38)
    - 1) Judah's Willful Sin (2:1–3:5)

|  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| 2) Judah's Chastening (3:6–6:30)                                       |          |          |
| 3:6-10   | 4:19-31  | 6:1-21   |
| 3:11-25  | 5:1-13   | 6:22-30  |
| 4:1-18   | 5:14-31  |          |
| 3) Judah's Wrong Religion (7:1–10:25)                                  |          |          |
| 7:1-34   | 9:1-26   |          |
| 8:1-22   | 10:1-25  |          |
| 4) Judah's Breaking of God's Covenant (11:1–13:27)                     |          |          |
| 11:1-17  | 12:1-6   | 13:1-11  |
| 11:18-23   | 12:7-17  | 13:12-27 |
| 5) Judah's Coming Drought (14:1–15:9)                                  |          |          |
| 14:1-12  | 14:13-22 | 15:1-9   |
| 6) Judah's Prophet Re-commissioned (15:10–16:13)                       |          |          |
| 15:10-21   | 16:1-13  |          |
| 7) Judah's Sins (16:14–17:27)  |          |          |
| 16:14-21   | 17:1-18  | 17:19-27 |
| 8) Judah and the Sovereign Potter (18:1-23)                            |          |          |
| 9) Judah as a Broken Jar (19:1–20:18)                                  |          |          |
| 19:1-15  | 20:1-6   | 20:7-18  |
| 10) Judah's Kings (21:1–23:8)  |          |          |
| 21:1-14  | 22:13-30 |          |
| 22:1-12  | 23:1-8   |          |
| 11) Judah's False Prophets (23:9-40)                                   |          |          |
| 12) Judah's Captivity (24:1–25:38)                                     |          |          |
| 24:1-10  | 25:12-31 |          |
| 25:1-11  | 25:32-38 |          |
| b. The Conflicts of Jeremiah (26:1–29:32)                              |          |          |
| 1) Judah's Reaction to Jeremiah's Ministry (26:1-24)                   |          |          |
| 26:1-6   | 26:7-15  | 26:16-24 |
| 2) Judah's Advice from Jeremiah: Submit to Nebuchadnezzar (27:1–29:32) |          |          |
| 27:1-22  | 28:1-17  | 29:1-32  |
| c. Judah's Hope of Restoration (30:1–33:26)                            |          |          |
| 30:1-17  | 31:27-40 | 33:1-13  |
| 30:18-24   | 32:1-15  | 33:14-26 |
| 31:1-26  | 32:16-44 |          |
| d. Events Before the Fall of Jerusalem (34:1–38:28)                    |          |          |
| 34:1-22  | 36:20-26 | 38:1-16  |
| 35:1-11  | 36:27-32 | 38:17-28 |
| 35:12-19   | 37:1-10  |          |
| 36:1-19  | 37:11-21 |          |
| e. The Fall of Jerusalem (39:1-18)                                     |          |          |
| 39:1-10  | 39:11-18 |          |
| f. Events After the Fall of Jerusalem (40:1–45:5)                      |          |          |
| 40:1-16  | 42:1-22  | 44:20-30 |
| 41:1-10  | 43:1-13  | 45:1-5   |
| 41:11-18   | 44:1-19  |          |

### 3. Prophecies to the Gentiles (46:1–51:64)

- a. Prophecies Against Egypt (46:1-28)
- b. Prophecies Against the Philistines (47:1-7)
- c. Prophecies Against Moab (48:1-47)
- d. Prophecies Against Ammon (49:1-6)
- e. Prophecies Against Edom (49:7-22)
- f. Prophecies Against Damascus (49:23-27)
- g. Prophecies Against Arabia (49:28-33)
- h. Prophecies Against Elam (49:34-39)

|  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| i. Prophecies Against Babylon (50:1–51:64) |          |          |
| 50:1-20                                    | 50:41-46 | 51:27-44 |
| 50:21-32                                   | 51:1-10  | 51:45-58 |
| 50:33-40                                   | 51:11-26 | 51:59-64 |

- 4. Historical Supplement (52:1-34)**
- The Fate of Jerusalem (52:1-23)
  - The Fate of Certain People (52:24-34)

## **Lamentations** **(A River of Tears)**

**Author and Name of Book:** The author of Lamentations is unnamed in the book, but two lines of evidence favor Jeremiah as the author.

The title of the book is “How!” which is the first word found in 1:1, 2:1; and 4:1. Because of its subject matter, the book is also referred to in Jewish tradition as “Lamentations.”

**Date of Writing: 586 or 585 B.C.** Since the book was written soon after Jerusalem’s destruction in 586, the earliest possible date for the book is 586 B.C. The graphic clarity of Lamentations indicates the writing to be in 586 or 585 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** The primary theme of the book is a lament or mourning over the pain that had fallen on the sinful Southern Kingdom of Judah. It describes the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. God’s promised judgment for Judah’s sin has come. A second theme which flows out of this is judgment for sin. Thus the prophet appeals to the nation to recognize that God is just and righteous in His dealings with them, and that they should seek His mercy.

The special contribution of the prophet Jeremiah as seen in Jeremiah and Lamentations can be observed by a comparison of these two books.<sup>39</sup>

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Jeremiah</b><br>(warning)<br><b>Looking Forward</b> | <b>Defeat and Desolation of Jerusalem</b> | <b>Lamentations</b><br>(mourning)<br><b>Looking Back</b> |
|--|---|--|

**Key People:** Jeremiah

**Christ as Seen in Lamentations:** Lamentations includes two elements that portray the Savior: (1) It portrays Him as the Man of Sorrows who was acquainted with grief, who was afflicted, despised and scorned by His enemies (1:12; 2:15-16; 3:14, 19, 30); (2) Jeremiah’s weeping over the destruction of Jerusalem is perhaps also a picture of Christ Who wept over Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37-38).

### **For Personal Study: Outline**

- 1. The Destruction of Jerusalem (1:1-22)**
  - The Lament of the Prophet (1:1-11)
  - The Lament of the City of Jerusalem (1:12-22)
- 2. The Lord’s Anger against His People (2:1-22)**
  - The Anger of God (2:1-10)
  - The Author’s Lament (2:11-22)

- 3. **The Troubled Prophet (3:1-66)**
  - a. His Lament (3:1-18)
  - b. His Hope (3:19-42)
  - c. His Suffering (3:43-54)
  - d. His Prayer (3:55-66)
- 4. **The Defeated People of Jerusalem (4:1-22)**
  - a. The Siege of the City (4:1-12)
  - b. The Reasons for the Siege (4:13-20)
  - c. The Hope for the Future (4:21-22)
- 5. **The Prayer for Restoration (5:1-22)**
  - a. Confession (5:1-18)
  - b. Petition (5:19-22)

## **Ezekiel**

### **(They Shall Know That I Am YAHWEH)**

**Author and Name of Book:** The author is Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, who received his call as a prophet while in exile in Babylon (1:1-3). His ministry as a prophet demonstrates a priestly focus with his concern for the Temple, priesthood, sacrifices and the glory of God. What is known of Ezekiel is derived entirely from the book of Ezekiel itself. He was married (24:15-18), lived in a house of his own (3:24; 8:1) and, along with his fellow exiles, had a relatively free existence.

As with Isaiah and Jeremiah, the book of Ezekiel gets its name from its author, Ezekiel, which means “God strengthens” or “strengthened by God.”

**Date of Writing: 593–571 B.C.** The book of Ezekiel contains many dates so that its prophecies can be dated with considerable precision. Twelve of the 13 dates in the book specify the times when Ezekiel received his messages from the Lord. The other date is of the arrival of the messenger who reported the fall of Jerusalem (33:21). Receiving his call as a prophet in July, 593 B.C., Ezekiel was active for 22 years. His last dated oracle was received in about 571 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** Ezekiel’s focus is on condemnation (1–32) for Israel’s sin and consolation (33–48) in view of what God will do in the future.

**Key People:** Ezekiel, son of Buzi, a priest called to be prophet to Israel before and after the Babylonian captivity

**Christ as Seen in Ezekiel:** Christ, the Messiah, is pictured as a tender sprig that will be planted on a high and lofty mountain (17:23-24), a picture similar to that of the Branch in Isaiah (11:1), Jeremiah (23:5; 33:15) and Zechariah (3:8; 6:12). Ezekiel also speaks of Messiah as the King who has the right to rule (21:26-27) and who will minister as the true Shepherd (34:11-31).

### **For Personal Study: Outline**

- 1. **The Commission and Call of Ezekiel (1:1–3:27)**
  - a. Ezekiel Beholds the Glory of God (1:1-28)
    - 1:1-21
    - 1:22-28
  - b. Ezekiel is Commissioned to the Word of God. (2:1–3:27)
    - 2:1-10
    - 3:1-15
    - 3:16-27
- 2. **Present Judgments on Jerusalem and Judah (4:1–24:27)**
  - a. Four Signs of Coming Judgment (4:1–5:17)
    - 4:1-8
    - 4:9-17
    - 5:1-17
  - b. Two Messages of Coming Judgment (6:1–7:27)
    - 6:1-14
    - 7:1-19
    - 7:20-27

- |   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| c. Four Prophecies through Visions (8:1–11:25)              |          |          |
| 8:1-18  | 10:1-22  | 11:14-25 |
| 9:1-11  | 11:1-13  |          |
| d. The Certainty of Judgment with Their Causes (12:1–24:27) |          |          |
| 12:1-28   | 17:1-10  | 21:18-32 |
| 13:1-23   | 17:11-24 | 22:1-31  |
| 14:1-11   | 18:1-32  | 23:1-21  |
| 14:12-23  | 19:1-14  | 23:22-49 |
| 15:1-8  | 20:1-32  | 24:1-14  |
| 16:1-59   | 20:33-49 | 24:15-27 |
| 16:60-63  | 21:1-17  |          |

### 3. Prophecies Against Gentile Nations (25:1–32:32)

- |                                 |          |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------|
| a. Against Ammon (25:1-7)       |          |          |
| b. Against Moab (25:8-11)       |          |          |
| c. Against Edom (25:12-14)      |          |          |
| d. Against Philistia (25:15-17) |          |          |
| e. Against Tyre (26:1–28:19)    |          |          |
| f. Against Sidon (28:20-26)     |          |          |
| g. Against Egypt (29:1–32:32)   |          |          |
| 29:1-21                         | 31:1-9   | 32:17-32 |
| 30:1-19                         | 31:10-18 |          |
| 30:20-26                        | 32:1-16  |          |

### 4. Prophecies of the Restoration of Israel (33:1–48:35)

- |  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| a. The Return of Israel to the Land (33:1–39:29)         |          |          |
| 33:1-20  | 36:1-21  | 37:24-28 |
| 33:21-33   | 36:22-38 | 38:1-23  |
| 34:1-10  | 37:1-10  | 39:1-24  |
| 34:11-31   | 37:11-14 | 39:25-29 |
| 35:1-15  | 37:15-23 |          |
| b. The Restoration of Israel in the Kingdom (40:1–48:35) |          |          |
| 40:1-4   | 44:1-14  | 47:13-23 |
| 40:5-49  | 44:15-31 | 48:1-9   |
| 41:1-26  | 45:1-6   | 48:10-20 |
| 42:1-20  | 45:7-25  | 48:21-22 |
| 43:1-12  | 46:1-18  | 48:23-29 |
| 43:13-17   | 46:19-24 | 48:30-35 |
| 43:18-27   | 47:1-12  |          |

## Daniel (Israel's Ultimate Destiny)

**Author and Name of Book:** As evident by Daniel's own claim (12:4) and by his use of the word, "I" from verse 7:2 onward, Daniel is the author of this prophetic book. While a youth, Daniel was taken as a captive to Babylon in 605 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar. There he became a statesman in the court of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius. Although he did not occupy the office of a prophet, Christ identified him as a prophet (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14).

The book is named after its author, Daniel, which means either "God is Judge" or "God is my Judge."

**Date of Writing: 537 B.C.** Daniel was written during the Babylonian captivity when Daniel and other young men were taken captive to Babylon in 605 B.C. after Nebuchadnezzar subdued Jerusalem.

**Theme and Purpose:** The theme of Daniel is God's sovereign power as the one true God, who judges and destroys the rebellious world powers and will faithfully deliver His people according to their faith in Him. Daniel was written to encourage the exiled Jews through revealing God's sovereign plan for Israel during and after the period of domination by the Gentile world powers.

**Key People:** The key people are Daniel, who was taken to Babylon as a youth and served in government and became God's special spokesman to Gentile and Jewish nations, as well as Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, three more youths who were chosen with Daniel for special training. (Their former and Jewish names were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.) Other important persons are Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon in 605 B.C.; Darius who succeeded Belshazzar as king; Cyrus, the Persian monarch, and the angel sent by Michael, the archangel, who ministered to Daniel in chapter 10.

**Christ as Seen in Daniel:** One of the key portraits of Christ in Daniel is that of the coming Messiah who will be cut off (a reference to the cross; 9:25-26). However, Christ is also portrayed as the Great Stone who will crush the kingdoms of this world (2:34, 45), the Son of Man (7:13), and the Ancient of Days (7:22). The vision as recorded in Daniel 10:5-9, is most likely an appearance of Christ (Revelation 1:12-16).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The Personal History of Daniel (1:1-21)

- a. His Exile to Babylon (1:1-7)
- b. His Faithfulness in Babylon (1:8-16)
- c. His Reputation in Babylon (1:17-21)

### 2. The Prophetic Plan for the Gentile Nations (2:1–7:28)

- a. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Great Image (2:1-49)
 

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 2:1-18  | 2:36-38 | 2:44-45 |
| 2:19-30 | 2:39    | 2:46-49 |
| 2:31-35 | 2:40-43 |         |
- b. The Fiery Furnace: a Lesson in Faith (3:1-30)
 

|       |        |         |
|-------|--------|---------|
| 3:1-7 | 3:8-18 | 3:19-30 |
|-------|--------|---------|
- c. Nebuchadnezzar's Vision of the Great Tree (4:1-37)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 4:1-3  | 4:19-27 |  |
| 4:4-18 | 4:28-37 |  |
- d. Belshazzar's Feast and the Handwriting on the Wall (5:1-31)
 

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 5:1-12 | 5:13-29 | 5:30-31 |
|--------|---------|---------|
- e. Darius' Foolish Decree, or Daniel in the Lion's Den (6:1-28)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 6:1-15 | 6:16-28 |  |
|--------|---------|--|
- f. Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts (7:1-28)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 7:1-8  | 7:13-14 |  |
| 7:9-12 | 7:15-28 |  |

### 3. The Prophetic Plan for Israel (8:1–12:13)

- a. Daniel's Vision of the Ram, the Goat and the Small Horn (8:1-27)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 8:1-8  | 8:15-19 |  |
| 8:9-14 | 8:20-27 |  |
- b. Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks of Years (9:1-27)
 

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 9:1-19 | 9:20-23 | 9:24-27 |
|--------|---------|---------|
- c. Daniel's Prophetic Vision of Israel's Future (10:1–12:13)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 10:1-9   | 11:14-19 | 11:40-45 |
| 10:10-21 | 11:20-28 | 12:1-4   |
| 11:1-4   | 11:29-35 | 12:5-13  |
| 11:5-13  | 11:36-39 |          |

## Section 5

# The Minor Prophets

**The Term “Minor Prophets”:** The common title for these twelve books of the Bible is the “Minor Prophets.” This title originated in the late fourth century A.D. These prophets are minor only in that they are each much shorter than the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel (called “Major Prophets”). In Old and New Testament times, the Old Testament was called “The Law and the Prophets.”

**The Origin of the Prophetic Office:** The prophetic office found its origin in God’s purpose for Israel as a nation through whom all the nations could be blessed. When God gave Israel the Law, He promised them that if they would be obedient, they would become **“My own possession”** (a special treasure of His) for the purpose of becoming a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” among all the nations (Exodus 19:5-6 cf. Deuteronomy 4:6-8). This purpose could not happen, however, if they followed the beliefs and ways of other nations. In preparation for their entrance into the land just before the death of Moses, the unlawful and demonic methods used by the nations to discern the future or the divine will, called divination, was thoroughly condemned by the Lord through Moses (Deuteronomy 18:9-14). So how, then, was God’s will to be known? The true and lawful means by which God’s will would be delivered to His people is given in the very next verses in Deuteronomy 18:15-22 which state:

*The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’ And the Lord said to me, ‘They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ And you may say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?’ When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.*

This revelation forms the Biblical origin and reason for the prophetic office. Furthermore, so that the nation might fulfill God’s purposes as stated in the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3), He gave them specific promises and warnings. These are spelled out in Deuteronomy 28–30 in the blessings and curses of these chapters (sometimes referred to as the Palestinian Covenant). For obedience there would be blessing, but if they disobeyed, there would be cursing. So how did the prophets fit into the picture? They would come along and say, **“Because you broke the covenant, the covenant curses have fallen upon you, or are about to fall upon you.”** In other words, it has happened (or is about to) just as God warned you in Deuteronomy 28–30. The prophets’ messages of sin and judgment must be seen in the light of this background and understanding of the Old Testament.

The prophets did not proclaim only warnings but also a message of salvation and the coming glory of the Lord. Ultimately, God’s purposes would be fulfilled by the sovereign work of God in the lives of His people. Sometimes these salvation messages described a particular event in which they had seen in a vision (Daniel 9:24-27 and the 70th week). Other times they were claiming and proclaiming the promises of God given to men such as Abraham and David.

**Literary Features of the Minor Prophets:** When we study all of the prophets, we find they all have the same basic ingredients: (1) warning of judgment because of the nations’ sinfulness, (2) a description of the sin, (3) a description of the coming judgment, (4) a call for repentance and (5) a promise of future deliverance.

The key to outlining a prophetic book is to recognize where one unit of thought begins and another ends.<sup>40</sup> The prophets used an introductory statement like “This is what the Lord says...” and then ended a section with the same word or phrase.

## Chronology Overview:

### The Order of the Minor Prophets in the English Bible

|          |            |              |               |
|----------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. Hosea | 4. Obadiah | 7. Nahum     | 10. Haggai    |
| 2. Joel  | 5. Jonah   | 8. Habakkuk  | 11. Zechariah |
| 3. Amos  | 6. Micah   | 9. Zephaniah | 12. Malachi   |

### Their Grouping According to the Exile and the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah

| Group   | Book      | Approximate Dates (B.C.) |
|---|-----------|--------------------------|
| <b>PRE-EXILIC:</b><br>Prophets of Israel                | Jonah     | 793–753                  |
|   | Amos      | 760                      |
|   | Hosea     | 755–715                  |
| Prophets of Judah                                       | Obadiah   | 840                      |
|   | Joel      | 835–796                  |
|   | Micah     | 700                      |
|   | Nahum     | 633–612                  |
|   | Zephaniah | 630–625                  |
|   | Habakkuk  | 600                      |
| <b>POST-EXILIC:</b><br>Prophets of the Returned Remnant | Haggai    | 520                      |
|   | Zechariah | 520–518                  |
|   | Malachi   | 450–400                  |

## Hosea (Persevering Love)

**Author and Name of Book:** As declared in verse 1, the author is Hosea, the son of Beeri and the husband of Gomer (1:3). He was apparently a citizen of northern Israel, since his concern was for the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and he called the King of Samaria “our king” (7:5). All we know about Hosea, we learn from the book itself.

The book is named after its author, Hosea, whose name is identical to the last king of the Northern Kingdom, Hoshea. For purposes of distinction, the Bible always gives the name of the minor prophet as Hosea. Interestingly, the names Hosea, Joshua and Jesus are all derived from the same Hebrew word, *HOSHEA*, which means “salvation.” However, both the names Joshua and Jesus include the additional truth that, “YAHWEH is salvation.” As God’s messenger, Hosea offers salvation to the nation if they will turn from their idolatry and return to the Lord.

**Date of Writing: 755–715 B.C.** According to 1:1, Hosea ministered during the days of Uzziah (767–739 B.C.), Jotham (739–731 B.C.), Ahaz (731–715 B.C.) and Hezekiah (715–686 B.C.), who were kings of Judah. He also ministered during the days of Jeroboam II (782–752 B.C.), a king of Israel.

Hosea’s ministry spanned several decades, beginning near the end of the reigns of Uzziah of Judah (790–739 B.C.) and Jeroboam II of Israel (793–753 B.C.) and concluding in the early years of Hezekiah’s reign. The latter’s rule began around 715 B.C. after a period of vice-regency (ruling at the same time) with his father Ahaz. Since Israel was Hosea’s primary audience, it seems strange that four Judean kings, but only one Israelite king, are mentioned in 1:1. The reason for the omission of the six Israelite kings who followed Jeroboam II is uncertain. Perhaps it suggests the legitimacy of the Davidic dynasty (3:5) in contrast with the instability and disintegration (falling apart) of the kingship in the North (7:3-7).<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps also, the six other kings in Israel who followed Jeroboam II were omitted because of their relative insignificance, yet each of these continued in the sin of Jeroboam I, son of Nebat. In essence, there were no good kings in the Northern Kingdom of Israel who instituted reforms as there were in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

**Theme and Purpose:** Hosea was written to demonstrate the steadfast or unflinching love of God for Israel in spite of her continued unfaithfulness. Through Hosea’s marital experience, the book shows us the heart of a loving and

compassionate God who longs to bless His people with the knowledge of Himself and all that knowing God intimately can mean to man. In keeping with this purpose, the theme of Hosea is a strong testimony against the Northern Kingdom because it had been unfaithful to its covenant relationship with the Lord, as demonstrated in its widespread corruption in moral life both publicly and privately. Thus, the prophet seeks to get his countrymen to repent and return to their patient and loving God. This is presented from the standpoint of God's love to Israel as His own dear children and as His covenant wife.

**Key People:** Hosea; Gomer; Jehu, King of Israel

**Christ as Seen in Hosea:** In Hosea, Messiah is presented as the Son of God (11:1 cf. Matthew 2:15), as the only Savior of His people (13:4 cf. John 14:6), as the One who will ransom us from the dead (13:14 cf. 1 Corinthians 15:55), as the One who loves us with great compassion (11:4) and as the One who heals those who will return to Him (6:1).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Introduction (1:1)

### 2. Hosea's Marriage: A Portrait of God's Dealings with Israel (1:2-3:5)

- a. The Prophetic Nature of Hosea's Family (1:2-11)
  - 1) Hosea's Marriage: Israel's Unfaithfulness (1:2-3a)
  - 2) Hosea's Children: Israel's Judgment (1:3b-9)
  - 3) Israel's Future: Restoration (1:10-11)
- b. Restoration through Punishment (2:1-23)
  - 1) The Lord's Punishment of Israel (2:1-13)
  - 2) The Lord's Restoration of Israel (2:14-23)
- c. Restoration of Hosea's Marriage (3:1-5)
  - 1) The Divine Command (3:1)
  - 2) Hosea's Obedient Response (3:2-3)
  - 3) The Illustration Explained (3:4-5)

### 3. Hosea's Message: The Judgment and Restoration of Israel (4:1-14:9)

- a. The Lord's Case Against Israel (4:1-6:3)
  - 1) Israel's Guilt Exposed (4:1-19)
 

|       |         |         |
|-------|---------|---------|
| 4:1-3 | 4:7-10  | 4:15-19 |
| 4:4-6 | 4:11-14 |         |
  - 2) Israel's Judgment Announced (5:1-15)
 

|       |        |  |
|-------|--------|--|
| 5:1-7 | 5:8-15 |  |
|-------|--------|--|
  - 3) Israel's Restoration Propheesied (6:1-3)
- b. The Lord's Case Against Israel Enlarged (6:4-11:11)
  - 1) Israel's Guilt and Punishment (6:4-8:14)
 

|        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 6:4-11 | 7:8-16 | 8:8-14 |
| 7:1-7  | 8:1-7  |        |
  - 2) Israel's Guilt and Punishment Restated (9:1-11:7)
 

|         |         |          |
|---------|---------|----------|
| 9:1-6   | 9:15-17 | 10:11-15 |
| 9:7-9   | 10:1-2  | 11:1-4   |
| 9:10-14 | 10:3-10 | 11:5-7   |
  - 3) The Lord's Compassion Renewed (11:8-11)
- c. The Lord's Case Against Israel Concluded (11:12-14:9)
  - 1) A Concluding Accusation (11:12-13:16)
 

|             |        |          |
|-------------|--------|----------|
| 11:12-12:11 | 13:1-3 | 13:9-11  |
| 12:12-14    | 13:4-8 | 13:12-16 |
  - 2) Concluding Instruction (14:1-9)
 

|        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 14:1-3 | 14:4-7 | 14:8-9 |
|--------|--------|--------|



The name Amos is the Hebrew word which means “burden” or “Burden-bearer.” This is fitting for the burden given to him. Although Amos came from the Southern Kingdom of Judah rather than from the Northern Kingdom of Israel, he was given the burden of carrying a message of warning against the greed, injustice, worldliness, and self-righteousness of the Northern Kingdom. Amos should not be confused with Amoz, the father of Isaiah (Isaiah 1:1).

**Date of Writing: About 760 B.C.** According to verse 1, Amos tells us that he was a contemporary of Uzziah and Jeroboam II and prophesied *“in the days of Uzziah, King of Judah (790–739 B.C.), and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, King of Israel (793–753 B.C.), two years before the earthquake”* (1:1). Amos probably prophesied in the period from 767–753 B.C. We are also told that he prophesied *“two years before the earthquake,”* but the precise date of this event is not known.

**Theme and Purpose:** The divine message given to Amos was primarily one of judgment, although it ends with words of hope. Amos warned that the Lord God, the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, would come as a Warrior to judge the nations that had rebelled against His authority. Israel in particular would be punished for her violations against God’s covenant. Amos sought to bring the prosperous and materialistic northern tribes under Jeroboam to repentance as the only escape from imminent judgment. In the process, the book demonstrates God’s hatred of evil because of His holiness and that His justice must act against Israel’s sin for He cannot allow it to go unpunished.

However, even though the nation would be destroyed, God would still preserve a repentant small group of Israelites (often referred to as the “remnant”). One day this small group would be restored to their covenant blessing and political prominence when the Lord would then also draw all nations to Himself.

**Key People:** Amos; Uzziah, King of Judah; Jeroboam, King of Israel

**Christ as Seen in Amos:** Amos presents Christ as the One who will rebuild David’s dynasty (9:11) and the One who will restore His people (9:11-15).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The Introduction: The Author and Theme (1:1-2)

### 2. The Eight Judgments of Amos (1:3–2:16)

- a. Concerning Damascus (1:3-5)
- b. Concerning Philistia (1:6-8)
- c. Concerning Tyre (1:9-10)
- d. Concerning Edom (1:11-12)
- e. Concerning Ammon (1:13-15)
- f. Concerning Moab (2:1-3)
- g. Concerning Judah (2:4-5)
- h. Concerning Israel (2:6-16)

### 3. The Sermons of Amos (3:1–6:14)

- |   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| a. The Doom of Israel (3:1-15)                    |         |         |
| 3:1-8   | 3:9-10  | 3:11-15 |
| b. The Depravity of Israel (4:1-13 )              |         |         |
| 4:1-3   | 4:4-5   | 4:6-13  |
| c. A Funeral Song Over Israel (5:1–6:14)          |         |         |
| 1) The Ruin of Israel in Coming Judgment (5:1-17) |         |         |
| 5:1-3   | 5:8-9   | 5:14-15 |
| 5:4-7   | 5:10-13 | 5:16-17 |
| 2) The Rebuke of Religious People (5:18-27)       |         |         |
| 5:18-20   | 5:21-24 | 5:25-27 |
| 3) The Reprimand of the Entire Nation (6:1-14)    |         |         |
| 6:1-3   | 6:8-11  |         |
| 6:4-7   | 6:12-14 |         |

4. **The Five Visions of Amos (7:1–9:10)**
  - a. A Vision of Devouring Locusts (7:1-3)
  - b. A Vision of Fire (7:4-6)
  - c. A Vision of a Measuring Line (7:7-9)
  - d. An Historical Interlude: Opposition from the Priest of Bethel (7:10-17)
  - e. A Vision of a Basket of Summer Fruit (8:1-14)
  - f. A Vision of the Lord Judging (9:1-10)
  
5. **The Five Promises of Restoration for Israel (9:11-15)**

## **Obadiah** (Poetic Justice)

**Author and Name of Book:** The author is an unknown prophet of Judah by the name of Obadiah (1:1). His name means “servant or worshiper of YAHWEH.”

A number of Old Testament men were named Obadiah. These include an officer in David's army (1 Chronicles 12:9), Ahab's servant who hid God's prophets (1 Kings 18:3), a Levite in the days of Josiah (2 Chronicles 34:12) and a leader who returned from the Exile with Ezra (Ezra 8:9). Nothing is known of Obadiah's home town or family, and the fact that his father is not named, suggests that he was not out of a kingly or priestly line.

**Date of Writing: 840 B.C.** The shortest book of the Bible, containing only 21 verses, bears the distinction of being the most difficult of the Minor Prophets to date. We date Obadiah around 840 B.C. due to the prophecy against Edom by the Philistines and Arabians which seems to be during the reign of Jehoram, from 848–841 B.C. (2 Chronicles 21:16-17).

**Theme and Purpose:** The theme of Obadiah is a reiteration of the truth that pride goes before a fall. Obadiah declares that Edom stands judged because of her pride in rejoicing over the evil that happened to Jerusalem.

**Key People:** Obadiah

**Christ as Seen in Obadiah:** Christ is seen in Obadiah as the Judge of the nations (15-16), the Savior of Israel (17-20) and the Possessor of the kingdom (21).<sup>42</sup>

### **For Personal Study: Outline**

1. **The Prophecies of Judgment on Edom (1:1-9)**
  - a. The Certainty of Judgment (1:1-4)
  - b. The Completeness of the Judgment (1:5-9)
  
2. **The Basis for the Judgment on Edom (1:10-14)**
  - a. For an Absence of Brotherly Love (1:10)
  - b. For Arrogance (1:11-12)
  - c. For Aggressiveness (1:13-14)
  
3. **The Time of the Judgment (1:15)**
  
4. **The Results of the Judgment (1:16-18)**
  
5. **The Deliverance of Israel (1:19-21)**

# Jonah

## (Fleeing from God's Will)

**Author and Name of Book:** The author of the book is Jonah, the son of Amittai, a prophet from Galilee in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This is evidenced by the book itself (1:1), the historical character of the book which names real places and persons, and by validation from other sources (2 Kings 14:25) including the testimony of Jesus in the New Testament (Matthew 12:40). His name means “dove.”

**Date of Writing: 793–753 B.C.** In 2 Kings 14:27 Jonah is connected with the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel (793–753 B.C.). Jonah ministered after the time of Elisha and just before the time of Amos and Hosea.

**Theme and Purpose:** Jonah demonstrates that unloving attitudes about different races can hinder us from following the will of God and that the God of the Hebrews (1) has concern for the whole world, for salvation is offered to all who repent and turn to Him, and (2) is sovereign over nature and all human affairs.

**Key People:** Jonah

**Christ as Seen in Jonah:** Through Jonah, Christ is portrayed in His resurrection (Matthew 12:40), as a Prophet to the nations (although He was not reluctant like Jonah) and as the Savior of the nations. In Jonah's life, Christ is seen as the Savior and Lord (2:9).

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **The Fleeing of Jonah (1:1-17)**
  - a. The Reason for His Flight (1:1-2)
  - b. The Route of His Flight (1:3)
  - c. The Results of His Flight (1:4-17)
2. **The Praying of Jonah (2:1-10)**
  - a. The Characteristics of His Prayer (2:1-9)
  - b. The Answer to His Prayer (2:10)
3. **The Preaching of Jonah (3:1-10)**
  - a. God's Command to Preach (3:1-3)
  - b. The Content of Jonah's Preaching (3:4)
  - c. The Consequences of Jonah's Preaching (3:5-10)
4. **The Learning of Jonah (4:1-11)**
  - a. Jonah's Complaint to God (4:1-3)
  - b. God's Curriculum for Jonah (4:4-11)

# Micah

## (Who is Like God?)

**Author and Name of Book:** The book takes its name from its author, Micah the prophet. Little is known about the author of this book other than what can be learned from the book itself and from Jeremiah 26:18. The name Micah is a shortened form of Micaiah, which means “Who is like YAHWEH?” Micah suggests this truth in 7:18 when he said, “*Who is a God like You?*” In Jeremiah's day the elders referred to Micah and quoted Micah 3:12 in defense of Jeremiah's message of judgment on the nation (Jeremiah 26:18).

Micah was from Moresheth (Micah 1:1 cf. 1:14), a town in Judea about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem near the Philistine city of Gath. Moresheth was located in Judah's fertile foothills near Lachish, an international trading town.

**Date of Writing: 700 B.C.** Micah tells us in verse 1 that he prophesied during the days of Jotham (750–732 B.C.), Ahaz (736–716 B.C.) and Hezekiah (716–687 B.C.). Micah speaks primarily to Judah, but since he also speaks to the Northern Kingdom of Israel and predicts the fall of Samaria (1:6), a good part of his ministry occurred before the Assyrian captivity in 722 B.C., probably around 700 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** Micah shows how the people had failed to live up to the covenant conditions that God had made with Israel in which there would be blessing for obedience (Deuteronomy 28:1-14), cursing for disobedience and eventual removal from the land of promise (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). In the process, Micah exposed the injustice of Judah and declared the righteousness and justice of YAHWEH showing He was just in disciplining them. He brings charges against Israel and Judah for sins like oppression, bribery among the judges, prophets and priests, and for covetousness, cheating, pride and violence. Of course, this discipline on the nation demonstrated God's love for them and that He would restore them.

The theme of judgment is prominent in each of Micah's three messages, but he also stressed the truth of restoration. Further, Micah referred to the principle of the remnant in each of his messages (Micah 2:12; 4:7; 5:7-8; 7:18). He declared that in the future YAHWEH would restore the people of Israel to a place of prominence in the world under the coming Messiah.

The closing section of Micah describes a court-room scene. God has a controversy against His people, and He calls the mountains and hills together to form the jury as He sets forth His case. The people have replaced heartfelt worship with empty ritual, thinking that this is all God demands. They have divorced God's standards of justice from their daily dealings in order to cover their dishonest practices. They have failed to realize what the Lord requires of man. There can only be one verdict: which must be "guilty."

The book closes on a note of hope. The same God who executes judgment also delights to extend mercy. ***"Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy"*** (7:18). No wonder the prophet exclaims, ***"Therefore I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me"*** (7:7).<sup>43</sup>

**Key People:** Micah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah

**Christ as Seen in Micah:** Micah presents Christ as the God of Jacob (4:2), the Judge of the nations (4:3) and the Ruler who would be born in the city of Bethlehem (5:2 cf. Matthew 2:1-6). The priests and scribes quoted Micah 5:2 in answer to Herod's question about the birthplace of Messiah.

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **The Introduction (1:1)**
2. **First Message: Judgment for Samaria and Judah (1:1–2:13)**
  - a. Prediction of Coming Judgment (1:2-7)
  - b. Lament Over the People (1:8-16)
    - 1) Micah's Lament (1:8-9)
    - 2) Micah's Call for Others to Mourn (1:10-16)
  - c. Sins of Judah (2:1-11)
    - 1) Sins of the People (2:1-5)
    - 2) Sins of the False Prophets (2:6-11)
  - d. Prediction of Future Re-gathering.(2:12-13)
3. **Second Message: Doom Followed by Deliverance (3:1–5:15)**
  - a. Judgment on the Nation's Leaders (3:1-12)
    - 1) Judgment on the Rulers (3:1-4)
    - 2) Judgment on the False Prophets (3:5-8)
    - 3) Judgment on All the Naive Leaders (3:9-12)
  - b. Kingdom Blessings for the Nation (4:1–5:15)
    - 1) Characteristics of the Kingdom (4:1-8)
    - 2) Events Preceding the Kingdom (4:9–5:1)
    - 3) The Ruler of the Kingdom (5:2-15)
4. **Third Message: Condemnation for Sin and a Promise of Blessing (6:1–7:20)**
  - a. An Indictment by the Lord (6:1-5)
  - b. The Response of Micah for the Nation (6:6-8)

- c. The Lord's Judgment Because of Sin (6:9-16)
  - 1) The Sins (6:9-12)
  - 2) The Punishment (6:13-16)
- d. Micah's Pleading with the Lord (7:1-17)
  - 1) Micah's Sorrow Concerning the Nation's Sins (7:1-6)
  - 2) Micah's Confidence in the Lord (7:7-13)
  - 3) Micah's Prayer That God Would Again Shepherd His Flock (7:14)
  - 4) The Lord's Promise to Show Miraculous Things to His People (7:15-17)
- e. Micah's Affirmation That God is Unique (7:18-20)

## **Nahum**

### **(The Doom of Nineveh)**

**Author and Name of Book:** Other than what Nahum tells us in 1:1, that the book is of the vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite and that it is an oracle about Nineveh, we know nothing about this prophet. Nahum means "consolation," but his message was certainly not one of comfort to the wicked Assyrians who occupied Nineveh. It would, however, bring comfort to Judah. He may have been a prophet of Judah in view of 1:15, and although the exact location of Elkosh is uncertain, most conservative scholars believe this city was located somewhere in southern Judah.

As with all the minor prophets, the book gets its name from the prophet who spoke the prophecy.

**Date of Writing: 663–612 B.C.** Nahum speaks of the fall of Thebes (located in Egypt) as already past in 3:8-10. Thebes fell in 663 B.C. In all three chapters, Nahum predicted Nineveh's fall, and this occurred in 612 B.C. Nahum probably gave his oracle near the end of this time because he discusses the fall of Nineveh as imminent (2:1; 3:14, 19). This would place his ministry sometime during the reign of Josiah and makes him a contemporary of Zephaniah and Jeremiah.

**Theme and Purpose:** Nahum's theme is the fall of Nineveh as the vengeance of God against the wicked Assyrians of Nineveh. What Jonah wanted to see, namely God's judgment on the Assyrians, was predicted by Nahum approximately 150 years later.

The conversion of the Ninevites in response to the preaching of Jonah was evidently short-lived, because they soon became ruthless, returning to their former wicked ways. Sargon II of Assyria destroyed Samaria and took the Northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity, scattering the ten tribes in 722 B.C. Later, Sennacherib of the Assyrians almost captured Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah in 701 B.C. Regardless of its power and prominence, Nineveh is clearly judged as doomed by a Holy God through the prophet Nahum. Assyria's cruelty, power and pride would come to an end by the power of God. Although the book focuses on Assyria's fall and judgment, it is written to bring comfort to Judah.

**Key People:** Nahum

**Christ as Seen in Nahum:** While there are no direct Messianic prophecies in Nahum, in keeping with the basic spirit of all prophecy, Christ is pictured as the jealous God and avenger of His adversaries (1:2-13).

## **For Personal Study: Outline**

- 1. The Introduction (1:1)**
- 2. The Prophecy and Certainty of God's Judgment on Nineveh (1:2-15)**
  - a. God's Holy Wrath Against Nineveh (1:2-8)
  - b. Nineveh's Scheming Against YAHWEH Will Come to an End (1:9-11)
  - c. Judah's Affliction Will End Because of Nineveh's Judgment (1:12-15)
- 3. The Description of God's Judgment on Nineveh (2:1-13)**
  - a. The Assault Described (2:1-6)
  - b. The Defeat Declared (2:7-13)

#### 4. The Cause for God's Judgment on Nineveh (3:1-19)

- a. Because of Her Violence and Deceit That Leads to Shame (3:1-7)
- b. Her Treatment of Thebes (No-Amon) Results in Her Own Defeat (3:8-11)
- c. Her Defenses to Be Useless (3:12-19)

## Habakkuk (Solution to Confusion)

**Author and Name of Book:** The author is identified as Habakkuk in 1:1 and 3:1. He clearly identifies himself as a prophet and the fact that his prayer and praise is concluded with the statement, "*For the choir director, on my stringed instruments*" suggests he had a priestly background.

The book gets its title from the name of the author. Habakkuk comes from a Hebrew word which means "embrace." The prophet clings to YAHWEH as the God of his salvation and strength.

**Date of Writing: 600 B.C.** Because the book anticipates the coming Babylonian invasion and shows an awareness of the fame of the Babylonians, Habakkuk probably ministered during the reign of Jehoiakim of Judah. It appears that Babylon had not invaded Judah, although it was imminent (1:6; 2:1), which suggests Habakkuk prophesied shortly before Babylon's invasion in 605 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** The theme of this prophecy flows out of Habakkuk's confusion over the coming invasion of the wicked Babylonians. It concerns the problems of his faith in the face of two apparent difficulties: (1) Why did God permit the increasing evil in Judah to go unpunished (1:2-4)? and (2) How could a Holy God (1:13) use sinful nations like Babylon as His source of judgment (1:12-2:1)? Habakkuk has trouble understanding these difficulties which are solved in the light of God's continuing revelation, and the prophet closes in a psalm of joyous trust. The book is a defense of God's goodness and power in view of the problem of evil.

**Key People:** Habakkuk

**Christ as Seen in Habakkuk:** Again in the light of the nature of prophecy, Christ is portrayed as the Savior. The word "salvation," which appears three times in 3:13 and 18, is the root word from which the name "Jesus" is derived (Matthew 1:21). He is also seen as the Holy One (1:12 cf. 1 John 1:9), the One who justifies the righteous by faith (2:4) and the One who will one day fill the earth "*with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*" (2:14).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Introduction (1:1)

### 2. The Confusion of Habakkuk: Faith is Tested and Taught (1:2-2:20)

- a. The First Problem: Why does God allow wicked practices to continue in Judah? (1:2-4)
- b. God's First Answer (1:5-11)
- c. The Second Problem: Why will God use wicked people to punish Judah? (1:12-2:1)
- d. God's Second Answer (2:2-20)

### 3. The Praise of Habakkuk: Faith is Triumphant (3:1-19)

- a. Praise for God's Person (3:1-3)
- b. Praise for God's Power (3:4-7)
- c. Praise for God's Purpose (3:8-16)
- d. Praise for Faith in God (3:17-19)

# Zephaniah

## (Blessing through Judgment)

**Author and Name of Book:** As seen in 1:1, the book was written by Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah. In tracing the prophet's ancestry through four generations, this heading is unique. Usually only the prophet's father is identified (Isaiah 1:1; Jeremiah 1:1; Ezekiel 1:3; Hosea 1:1; Joel 1:1) when the author provides genealogical information. Such a long genealogy suggests the noble birth of the prophet, his great-great-grandfather being the good King Hezekiah.

The book takes its name from the prophet Zephaniah whose name means "hidden of YAHWEH" (2:3).

**Date of Writing: 630–625 B.C.** According to the introduction (1:10), Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah (640–609 B.C.). His prophecy preceded the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C. and the reforms of Josiah in 622–621 B.C. This seems evident, since the book of Zephaniah notes the existence of pagan idolatry in Judah (1:4-6) which was mostly eliminated by Josiah's reforms. All this suggests a date between 630 and 625 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** The prophet speaks to the people of Judah whose moral and spiritual life had been dulled by the evil influence of the reigns of Manasseh and Amon (3:1-7). Consequently, in keeping with the warnings of cursing for disobedience in Deuteronomy 28, the central theme is that of judgment or the coming of the day of the Lord. In view of YAHWEH's holiness, He must vindicate and demonstrate His holiness against sin by calling the nations of the world into account before Him. But God is also a God of mercy and blessing, so there is also a strong emphasis and call for repentance with the promise of blessing. Thus, Zephaniah clearly divides into three sections: judgment for sin, a call for repentance and a promise of future redemption or blessing.

**Key People:** Zephaniah, Josiah

**Christ as Seen in Zephaniah:** Although not specifically mentioned in this book, Messiah is presented as the Righteous One within the nation of Israel (3:5) who is also their King (3:15).

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Introduction (1:1)**
2. **The Judgment of the Day of YAHWEH (1:2–3:8)**
  - a. Judgment on the Whole Earth (1:2-3)
  - b. Judgment on Judah (1:4–2:3)
    - 1) The Causes of Judgment (1:4-13)
    - 2) The Description of Judgment (1:14-18)
    - 3) A Summons to the Nation: Repent and Seek God (2:1-3)
  - c. Judgment on the Surrounding Nations (2:4-15)
    - 1) On Philistia (2:4-7)
    - 2) On Moab and Ammon (2:8-11)
    - 3) On Ethiopia (2:12)
    - 4) On Assyria (2:13-15)
  - d. Judgment on Jerusalem (3:1-7)
    - 1) The Prophet's Indictment (3:1-5)
    - 2) The Lord's Judgment (3:6-7)
  - e. Judgment on All the Earth (3:8)
3. **The Restoration of the Day of YAHWEH (3:9-20)**
  - a. The Restoration of the Nations (3:9-10)
  - b. The Restoration of Israel (3:11-20)

# Haggai

## (Encouragement)

**Introduction:** With Haggai, we come to the one of the three prophets who wrote after the exile in Babylon. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, all spoke to the Jews who were returned to Israel. Their objective was to encourage the spiritual and moral life of the small group which remained, now back in their homeland, as they sought to rebuild the Temple and the nation.

Haggai and Zechariah dealt mostly with the spiritual needs as they related to the rebuilding of the Temple and Malachi dealt primarily with the moral and social needs involved with the reconstruction of the nation itself.

**Author and Name of Book:** Haggai's name means "festal" or "festive," suggesting to some that he was born on one of the major feast days, although there is nothing in the text to support this. Haggai is known only from this book (mentioned 9 times) and the mention of him in Ezra 5:1-2 and 6:14. Little is known about him. He refers to himself as "the prophet Haggai" (1:1), but nothing is known about his parents or genealogy. He was a contemporary of Zechariah the prophet and Zerubbabel the Governor.

As is normal with the writing prophets, the book is named for the prophet himself.

**Date of Writing: 520 B.C.** Under the policies of Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, almost 50,000 Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem. Among these were Zerubbabel (Ezra 1:2-4 cf. Isaiah 44:28), Joshua the high priest and the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah. The authorization allowing the Jews to return to their land and rebuild their Temple occurred in 538 B.C.

Levitical sacrifices were soon reinstated on a rebuilt altar for burnt offerings (Ezra 3:1-6), and in the second year of the return the foundation of the Temple was laid (Ezra 3:8-13; 5:16). However, Samaritan harassment and eventual Persian pressure brought a halt to the rebuilding of the Temple. Then spiritual apathy set in; and for about 16 more years—until the rule of the Persian king, Darius Hystaspes (521–486 B.C.)—the construction of the Temple was discontinued. In the second year of Darius (520 B.C.), God raised up Haggai the prophet to encourage the Jews in the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra 5:1-2; Haggai 1:1).

As stated by Haggai in 1:1, his first message was given on the first day of Elul (August–September) in the second year of Darius. This was in 520 B.C.

**Theme and Purpose:** The Book of Haggai is the second shortest book in the Old Testament; only Obadiah is shorter. The literary style of Haggai is simple and direct. The content of the book is a report of four messages by a seemingly insignificant prophet whose ministry was apparently of limited duration.

Although Haggai is the second shortest book in the Old Testament, we should not underestimate the power of Haggai's four messages in his role in encouraging the rebuilding of the Temple. Few prophets have succeeded in placing so much spiritual common sense into such a brief writing. One outstanding feature of Haggai's message is his strong awareness that his messages had their origin in God. Some 25 times he affirmed the divine authority of his messages. He consistently introduced his messages with, "***This is what the Lord Almighty says,***" and concluded them with a similar focus "***declares the Lord Almighty.***"

Haggai wrote to encourage and instruct the returned remnant of Israelites to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. In the process of this, he taught (1) God blesses His people when they put Him first, (2) we should not grow weary in the service of the Lord and (3) God's promises for tomorrow become the foundation for our confidence for today.

**Key People:** Haggai, Darius, Zerubbabel, Joshua the High Priest

**Christ as Seen in Haggai:** Here Messiah is portrayed as the Restorer of the Temple's glory (2:7-9) and the One who overthrows the kingdoms of the world (2:22).

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **The First Message: A Call to Rebuild the Temple (1:1-15)**
  - a. The Introduction (1:1)
  - b. The First Rebuke (1:2-6)
  - c. The Remedy (1:7-8)
  - d. The Second Rebuke (1:9-11)
  - e. The Response to the Prophet's Message (1:12-15)
2. **The Second Message: A Call to Find Courage in God's Promises (2:1-9)**
  - a. The Introduction (2:1-2)
  - b. The Promises of Enablement and Future Glory (2:3-9)
3. **The Third Message: A Call to Cleanness of Life (2:10-19)**
  - a. The Introduction (2:10)
  - b. The Problem: The Disobedience of the Remnant (2:11-14)
  - c. The Solution: The Obedience of the Remnant (2:15-19)
4. **The Fourth Message: A Call to Confidence in the Future (2:20-23)**
  - a. The Introduction (2:20-21a)
  - b. Promise of the Future Defeat of the Gentile Kingdoms (2:21b-22)
  - c. Promise of the Restoration of the Davidic Kingdom (2:23)

## Zechariah (The Jealousy of YAHWEH)

**Author and Name of Book:** Zechariah, the prophet, was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo (Zechariah 1:1). He was a contemporary of Haggai (Ezra 6:14).

Zechariah's name means "YAHWEH remembers" or "YAHWEH has remembered." This is a theme that runs through the whole book.

**Date of Writing: 520–518 B.C.** The first verse presents Zechariah as the son of Berechiah and the grandson of Iddo, who was the same priest as the one mentioned in Nehemiah 12:4 as a contemporary of Zerubbabel. In Zechariah 2:4 the prophet is spoken of as a youth. He would probably have been a young man at the time he cooperated with Haggai in the rebuilding campaign of 520 B.C. His last dated prophecy (7:1-14) was given two years later, in 518 B.C. Chapters 9–14 show every appearance of having been composed some decades after that, possibly after 480 B.C. in view of the reference to Greece (9:13).

We have no further information concerning Zechariah's personal career, except the reference in Matthew 23:35, which seems to indicate that he was martyred by mob action in the Temple grounds. A different Zechariah, the son of Jehoida the priest, was also executed about the same time (2 Chronicles 24:20-21).<sup>44</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** Zechariah was written to encourage the returned remnant of Jews to complete their work in rebuilding the Temple. The prophet also showed that God was at work in the world restoring Israel to their spiritual inheritance in preparation for the coming Messiah. Doctrinally, Zechariah demonstrates the prominence of the Temple in God's spiritual restoration of Israel, shows the providence of God in bringing back His people to their land and highlights the superiority of the Messiah in the future spiritual restoration of the Nation.

**Key People:** Zechariah, Joshua the High Priest

**Christ as Seen in Zechariah:** Perhaps no Old Testament book is more Messianic than Zechariah. This book presents Messiah, or Christ, in both of his advents and as both Servant and King, as Man and God, as the Angel of the Lord (3:1), the Righteous Branch (3:8), the Stone with the seven eyes (3:9), the Crucified Savior or the pierced One (12:10), the coming and humble King (9:9-10), the Shepherd who will be abandoned (13:7) and the coming Judge and righteous King (14).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The Call to Repentance (1:1-6)

### 2. The Eight Visions of Zechariah (1:7–6:8)

- a. Horses and Riders (1:7-17)
- b. Four Horns and Four Craftsmen (1:18-21)
- c. The Surveyor (2:1-13)
- d. Joshua the High Priest (3:1-10)
- e. The Golden Lampstand (4:1-14)
- f. The Flying Scroll (5:1-4)
- g. The Woman in the Ephah (5:5-11)
- h. The Four Chariots (6:1-8)

### 3. The Crowning of Joshua (6:9-15)

### 4. The Questions Concerning the Fasts (7:1–8:23)

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 7:1-7  | 8:9-13  | 8:20-23 |
| 7:8-14 | 8:14-17 |         |
| 8:1-8  | 8:18-19 |         |

### 5. Two Oracles Concerning the Future (9:1–14:21)

- a. The Rejection of Messiah (9:1–11:17)

|         |         |  |
|---------|---------|--|
| 9:1-10  | 10:1-12 |  |
| 9:11-17 | 11:1-17 |  |
- b. The Reign of Messiah (12:1–14:21)

|         |        |         |
|---------|--------|---------|
| 12:1-5  | 13:1-6 | 14:1-8  |
| 12:6-14 | 13:7-9 | 14:9-21 |

## Malachi (Repent and Return)

**Author and Name of Book:** Malachi is only mentioned in Malachi 1:1 as the author of this prophecy. His name means “My Messenger.” This is fitting for the book anticipates the coming of the “messenger of the covenant” (cf. 3:1), a prophecy of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:10).

**Date of Writing:** 450–400 B.C. Concerning the date of Malachi, Gleason Archer writes:

Judging from internal evidence, it seems clear that his prophecies were given in the second half of the fifth century, probably around 435 B.C. We come to this conclusion from the following indications: (1) The Temple had already been rebuilt and Mosaic sacrifice reinstated (1:7, 10; 3:1); (2) A Persian governor was in authority at that time; hence it could not have been during either of Nehemiah’s governorships (in 445 and 433 B.C.); (3) The sins which Malachi denounces are the same as those Nehemiah had to correct during his second term, namely, (a) priestly laxity (1:6; Nehemiah 13:4-9), (b) neglect of tithes, to the impoverishment of the Levites (3:7-12 cf. Nehemiah 13:10-13), (c) much intermarriage with foreign women (2:10-16 cf. Nehemiah 13:23-28). It is reasonable to assume that Malachi had already protested against these abuses in the years just preceding Nehemiah’s return; hence a fair estimate would be about 435 B.C.<sup>45</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** Under the leadership of Nehemiah, there had been a period of revival (Nehemiah 10:28-39), but the priests and the people had grown cold in their walk with God and had become external and mechanical in their observance of the law. Although they were guilty of the sins Malachi denounced (priestly laziness, neglect of the tithes, and intermarriage with foreign women), the people acted confused over why God was dissatisfied with them. Malachi wrote to answer the questions of the priests and people, to reveal and rebuke them for their sins, their backsliding and poor attitudes. He also ended with a word of encouragement about the coming of the Lord’s messenger who would clear the way for Messiah.

Thus, Malachi rebuked the people for their neglect of the true worship of the Lord and called them to repentance (1:6; 3:7). Gleason Archer summarizes the theme as follows:

The theme of Malachi is that sincerity toward God and a holy manner of life are absolutely essential in the Lord's eyes, if His favor is to be bestowed upon the crops and the nation's economic welfare. Israel must live up to her high calling as a holy nation and wait for the coming of the Messiah, who by a ministry of healing as well as judgment will lead the nation to a realization of all her fondest hopes.<sup>46</sup>

**Key People:** Malachi

**Christ as Seen in Malachi:** Regarding the Messianic focus of Malachi, Wilkinson and Boa have an excellent summary:

The Book of Malachi is the prelude to four hundred years of prophetic silence, broken finally by the words of the next prophet, John the Baptist: **'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'** (John 1:29). Malachi predicts the coming of the messenger who will clear the way before the Lord (3:1 cf. Isaiah 40:30). John the Baptist later fulfills this prophecy, but in the next few verses (3:2-5), he jumps ahead to Christ in His second advent.<sup>47</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **The Privileged Place of Israel (1:1-5)**
  - a. God's Love Declared (1:1-2a)
  - b. God's Love Doubted (1:2b)
  - c. God's Love Demonstrated (1:3-5)
  
2. **The Pollution of Israel (1:6–3:15)**
  - a. Cheating (1:6-14)
  - b. Unfaithfulness (2:1-9)
  - c. Spiritually Mixed Marriages (2:10-12)
  - d. Divorce (2:13-16)
  - e. Flagrant Sin (2:17)
  - f. The Coming Messenger (3:1-6)
  - g. Robbery (3:7-12)
  - h. Arrogance (3:13-15)
  
3. **The Promises to the People (3:16–4:6)**
  - a. The Promise of the Book of Remembrance (3:16-18)
  - b. The Promise of the Coming Christ (4:1-3)
  - c. The Promise of the Coming of Elijah (4:4-6)



## **Chapter 3**

# **New Testament Survey**

# Introduction

The New Testament is a record of historical events, the ‘good news’ events of the saving life of our Lord Jesus Christ—His life, death, resurrection, ascension and the continuation of His work in the world—which is explained and applied by the apostles whom He chose and sent into the world. It is also the fulfillment of those events long anticipated by the Old Testament. Further, it is sacred history, which, unlike secular history, was written under the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit. This means, like the Old Testament, it is protected from human error and possesses divine authority for the church today and throughout human history until the Lord Himself returns.

**Origin and Meaning of the Term “New Testament”:** Our Bible is divided into two sections we call the Old Testament and the New Testament, but exactly what does that mean? The Greek word for “testament” means “will, testament or covenant.” The Old Testament or Covenant is primarily a record of God’s dealings with the Israelites on the basis of the Mosaic Covenant given at Mount Sinai. On the other hand, the New Testament or Covenant (anticipated in Jeremiah 31:31 and instituted by the Lord Jesus in 1 Corinthians 11:25), describes the new arrangement of God with men from every tribe and language and people and nation who will accept salvation on the basis of faith in Christ.

The Old Covenant revealed the holiness of God in the righteous standard of the law and promised a coming Redeemer. The New Covenant shows the holiness of God in His righteous Son, the Redeemer who came to man. The New Testament, then, contains those writings that reveal the content of this New Covenant.

The message of the New Testament centers on (1) the Person who gave Himself for the remission of sins (Matthew 26:28) and (2) the people (the church) who have received His salvation. Thus the central theme of the New Testament is salvation.<sup>48</sup>

The names Old and New Covenants were thus applied first to the two relationships into which God entered with men and then to the books that contained the record of these two relationships. “The New Testament is the divine treaty by the terms of which God has received us into peace with himself.”<sup>49</sup>

**Divine Preparation for the New Testament:** In the time of the New Testament, Rome was the dominant world power and ruled over most of the ancient world. Yet in a small town in Palestine, Bethlehem of Judea, was born the One who would change the world. Concerning this Person, the apostle Paul wrote, **“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law”** (i.e., the Old Covenant). In several special and wonderful ways, God had prepared the world for the coming of the Messiah. Several factors contributed to this preparation.

**Preparation through the Jewish Nation:** The preparation for the coming of Christ is the story of the Old Testament. The Jews were chosen of God from all the nations to be a treasured possession as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 1:5-6). In that regard, beginning with the promises which God gave to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 12:1-3; Romans 9:4), they were to be the custodians of God’s Word (the Old Testament [Romans 3:2]) and contain the line of the Redeemer (Genesis 12:3; Galatians 3:8; Romans 9:5). The Old Testament, therefore, was full of information about Christ and anticipated His coming as a suffering and glorified Savior. Furthermore, not only were there many prophecies, but there were many precise details concerning the Messiah’s lineage, place of birth, conditions around the time of His birth, life, death and even His resurrection.

Although Israel was disobedient and taken into captivity as God’s judgment on her hardness of heart, God nevertheless brought a remnant back to their homeland after seventy years, as He had promised in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Four hundred years had passed after the writing of the last Old Testament book. The religious climate was one of Pharisaic ritualism and hypocrisy, but there was a spirit of Messianic anticipation in the air, and a remnant was looking for the Messiah.

**Preparation through the Greek Language:** It is highly significant that when Christ sent His disciples out to the ends of the earth to proclaim the gospel (Matthew 28:19-20), there was “a world speech.” This was the result of the conquests and aspirations of Alexander the Great, the son of King Philip of Macedon, who more than 300 years before the birth of Christ, swept across the ancient world conquering one nation after another. Alexander’s desire was one world and one language. In the aftermath of his victories, he established the Greek language as

the common tongue and the Greek culture as the pattern of thought and life. Alexander's empire was short lived, but the result of spreading the Greek language endured.

The point is that God was at work preparing the world with a common language that was the clearest and most precise language known to man. This language was used to proclaim the message of the Savior. As a result, the books of the New Testament were written in the common language of the day, Koine Greek. It was not written in Hebrew or Aramaic, even though all the writers of the New Testament were Jews except for Luke, a Gentile. Koine Greek had become the second language of nearly everyone in the known world of that time.

**Preparation through the Romans:** God was not finished preparing the world for the coming Savior of the world. When Christ was born in Palestine, Rome ruled the world. Palestine was under Roman rule. Above all else, Rome was noted for her insistence upon law and order. The longest, bloodiest civil war in Rome's history had finally ended with the reign of Augustus Caesar. As a result, over 100 years of civil war had been brought to rest, and Rome had vastly extended her boundaries. The Romans had also built a system of roads, which, with the protection provided by her army that often patrolled the roads, contributed greatly to the measure of ease and safety by which travelers could make their way back and forth across the Roman empire. Augustus was the first Roman to wear the imperial purple and crown as the sole ruler of the empire. He was wise and considerate of his people, and he brought in a great time of peace and prosperity, making Rome a safe place to live and travel. This introduced a period called "Pax Romana," the peace of Rome (27 B.C.–A.D. 180). Now, because of all that Augustus accomplished, many said that when he was born, a god was born. It was into these conditions that One was born who truly was and is the source of personal peace and lasting world peace. It was not the temporary and false peace which men can give—no matter how wise or good or outstanding they may be. Also, Jesus was truly God, the God-Man, instead of a man called a god. The presence of Roman rule and law helped to prepare the world for His life and ministry so the gospel could be preached.

**The Religious World at the Time of the New Testament:** Before surveying the New Testament, it will help to have a general idea of the religious world when the Savior came and later sent the church out into the world. As you read the following quote from Merrill C. Tenney, note the great similarity to our world today:

The Christian church was born into a world filled with competing religions which may have differed widely among themselves but all of which possessed one common characteristic—the struggle to reach a god or gods who remained essentially inaccessible. Apart from Judaism, which taught that God had voluntarily disclosed Himself to the patriarchs, to Moses, and to the prophets, there was no faith (religion) that could speak with certainty of divine revelation nor of any true concept of sin and salvation. The current ethical standards had neither the remedy for the one (sin) nor the dynamic to produce the other (salvation).

Even in Judaism revealed truth had been obscured either by traditions or by neglect. Paganism and all religions apart from knowledge and faith in God's Word always produce a perversion of God's original revelation to man. It retains many basic elements of truth but twists them into practical falsehood. Divine sovereignty becomes fatalism; grace becomes indulgence; righteousness becomes conformity to arbitrary rules; worship becomes empty ritual; prayer becomes selfish begging; the supernatural degenerates into superstition. The light of God is clouded by legend and by falsehood. The resultant confusion of beliefs and of values left men wandering in a maze of uncertainties. To some, expediency (doing what one desires) became the dominating philosophy of life; for if there can be no ultimate certainty, there can be no permanent principles by which to guide conduct; and if there are no permanent principles, one must live as well as he can by the advantage of the moment. Skepticism prevailed, for the old gods had lost their power and no new gods had appeared. Numerous novel cults invaded the empire from every quarter and became the fads of the dilettante rich or the refuge of the desperate poor. Men had largely lost the sense of joy and of destiny that made human life worthwhile.<sup>50</sup>

**Composition and Arrangement of the New Testament:** The New Testament is composed of twenty-seven books written by nine different authors. Based on their literary characteristics, they are often classified into three major groups:

1. **Five Historical:** The Gospels and Acts
2. **Twenty-one Epistles:** Romans through Jude
3. **One Prophetic:** Revelation

The following two charts illustrate the division and focus of this threefold classification of the New Testament books.<sup>51</sup>

| New Testament Books                     |                                       |                                      |                |                            |                            |            |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| History                                 | Epistles (Letters)                    |                                      |                |                            |                            | Prophecy   |
| Matthew<br>Mark<br>Luke<br>John<br>Acts | Paul's                                |                                      |                |                            | General                    | Revelation |
|   | Early<br>(during missionary journeys) | Later<br>(after arrest at Jerusalem) |                |                            | James                      |            |
|   | Galatians                             | <i>First Imprisonment</i>            | <i>Release</i> | <i>Second Imprisonment</i> | Jude                       |            |
|   | 1 Thessalonians<br>2 Thessalonians    | Colossians                           | 1 Timothy      | 2 Timothy                  | 1 Peter<br>2 Peter         |            |
|   | 1 Corinthians<br>2 Corinthians        | Ephesians                            | Titus          |                            | 1 John<br>2 John<br>3 John |            |
| Romans                                  | Philippians                           |                                      |                |                            |                            |            |

| An Overview of the Focus of the New Testament Books |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Historical</b>                                   | <b>The Gospels:</b><br>Matthew, Mark, Luke, John                                | <b>Manifestation:</b><br>The arrival of the Savior and His person and work   |
| <b>Books</b>  | <b>Acts:</b><br>The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles                | <b>Transmission:</b><br>Proclaiming the message of the Savior who has come   |
| <b>Epistles</b>                                     | <b>Epistles:</b><br>Letters to churches and individuals.<br>Romans through Jude | <b>Explanation:</b><br>Developing the full significance of the person and work of Christ and how this should affect the walk of the Christian in the world |
| <b>Prophecy</b>                                     | <b>Revelation:</b><br>The apocalypse of the Lord Jesus Christ                   | <b>Completion:</b><br>Anticipating the end time events and the return of the Lord, His end time reign and the eternal state                                |

**The Order of the Books of the New Testament:** The order of the New Testament books is logical rather than chronological. As Ryrie explains,

First come the Gospels, which record the life of Christ; then Acts, which gives the history of the spread of Christianity; then the letters, which show the development of the doctrines of the church along with its problems; and finally the vision of the second coming of Christ in Revelation.<sup>52</sup>

Although Bible scholars differ on the exact dates when the books of the New Testament were written, there is widespread agreement to the following order:

| Book                  | Date (A.D.) | Book         | Date (A.D.) |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| James                 | 45–46       | Acts         | 61          |
| Galatians             | 49          | 1 Peter      | 63–64       |
| Mark                  | 50s or 60s  | 1 Timothy    | 63          |
| Matthew               | 50s or 60s  | Titus        | 65          |
| 1 & 2 Thessalonians   | 51–52       | Hebrews      | 64–68       |
| 1 Corinthians         | 55          | 2 Peter      | 67–68       |
| 2 Corinthians         | 56          | 2 Timothy    | 66          |
| Romans                | 57–58       | Jude         | 70–80       |
| Luke                  | 60          | John         | 85–90       |
| Colossians, Ephesians | 60–61       | 1, 2, 3 John | 85–90       |
| Philippians, Philemon | 60–61       | Revelation   | 96          |

**The Collection of the Books of the New Testament:** Originally, the books of the New Testament were separately circulated and only gradually collected together to form what we now know as the New Testament part of the canon of Scripture. By preservation of God, our 27 New Testament books were set apart from many other writings during the early church. They were preserved as a part of the New Testament canon because of their inspiration and apostolic authority. Ryrie has an excellent summary of this process:

After they were written, the individual books were not immediately gathered together into the canon, or collection of twenty-seven that comprise the New Testament. Groups of books like Paul's letters and the Gospels were preserved at first by the churches or people to whom they were sent, and gradually all twenty-seven books were collected and formally acknowledged by the church as a whole.

This process took about 350 years. In the second century the circulation of books that promoted false doctrine emphasized the need for distinguishing valid Scripture from other Christian literature. Certain tests were developed to determine which books should be included.

1. Was the book written or approved by an apostle?
2. Were its contents of a spiritual nature?
3. Did it give evidence of being inspired by God?
4. Was it widely received by the churches?

Not all of the twenty-seven books that were eventually recognized as canonical were accepted by all the churches in the early centuries, but this does not mean that those that were not immediately or universally accepted were spurious (false). Letters addressed to individuals (Philemon, 2 and 3 John) would not have been circulated as widely as those sent to churches. The books most disputed were James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Philemon, but ultimately these were included, and the canon was certified at the Council of Carthage in A.D. 397.

Although no original copy of any of the writings that comprise the New Testament has survived, there exist more than 4,500 Greek manuscripts of all or part of the text, plus some 8,000 Latin manuscripts and at least 1,000 other versions into which the original books were translated. Careful study and comparison of these many copies has given us an accurate and trustworthy New Testament.<sup>53</sup>

# **Section 1**

## **The Historical Books**

**Introduction:** As previously mentioned, the New Testament falls into three categories based on their literary makeup—the historical, the epistolary (letters) and the prophetic. The four Gospels make up about 46 percent of the New Testament. The book of Acts raises this total to 60 percent which means that 60 percent of the New Testament traces historical development of Christianity. Christianity is based on historical facts which is inherent in the very nature of the gospel. The gospel is the good news which has been derived from the witness of others. It is history, a testimony of historical facts.

While the four gospels speak of the history of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection, Acts provides the historical outline of the apostles' ministry in the life of the early church. Acts thus becomes crucial to our understanding of much of what we have in the epistles. These epistles were actual letters written to living people in known places. The New Testament, then, is a historical book of the Good News of the living God at work in human history, not just in the past, but in the present and future in light of the promises of God.

**The Synoptic Gospels:** Before beginning a survey of each of the Gospels, let us examine the term, "Synoptic Gospels." Although each Gospel has its distinct emphasis and purpose, Matthew, Mark and Luke are referred to as the Synoptic Gospels because they "see together," that is, they have the same point of view with regard to the life of Christ, agreeing in subject matter and order. Further, they also present the life of Christ in a way that complements the picture given in the Gospel of John. The following show a number of areas that are common to each of the first three Gospels:

- Announcement of the Messiah by John the Baptist (Matthew 3, Mark 1, Luke 3)
- Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3, Mark 1, Luke 3)
- Temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4, Mark 1, Luke 4)
- Teaching and miracles of Jesus (the major portion of each Gospel)
- Transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17, Mark 9, Luke 9)
- Trial, death and burial of Jesus (Matthew 26-27, Mark 14-15, Luke 22-23)
- Resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24)

**The Purpose and Distinctive Focus of the Four Gospels:** The purpose of the four gospels is to reveal the person of Jesus Christ. Matthew 16:13-16 says,

***When Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' They answered, 'Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'and who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'***

Matthew 16:14 gives the four viewpoints of a large number of people in Jesus' day. Only a few at first recognized Jesus for who He really was, the Son of God. Thus, under the inspiration of the Spirit, the Gospel writers set about to reveal just who Jesus really was concerning His person and work. In a four-fold way, each with their own distinctive focus, but in accounts that are complementary, the four Gospels answer the questions posed by the Lord to the disciples. They declare just exactly who Jesus is. They show Him to be the Messiah of Old Testament expectation, the Servant of the Lord, the Son of Man, the Son of God and the One who is the Savior of the World. The Gospels give us God's portrait of the person and work of Christ with four distinct pictures.

**Matthew** addresses his Gospel primarily to the Jews to convince them that Jesus of Nazareth is their Messiah, the King of the Jews. With the genealogy (earthly line) of Jesus, Matthew also uses ten fulfillment quotations by which he seeks to show that this Jesus, although rejected and crucified, is the long-awaited Messiah of the Old Testament (Matthew 1:23; 2:15; 2:18; 2:23; 4:15; 8:15; 12:18-21; 13:35; 21:5; 27:9-10). Although Jesus was rejected by the nation as a whole and crucified, the King left an empty tomb.

**Mark** seems to be addressed to the Romans, a people of action but of few words and presents Jesus as the Servant of the Lord who came ***"to give His life a ransom for many."*** In keeping with this, Mark, the shortest of the Gospels, is vivid, active or lively and presents a very clear eyewitness account, especially of the last week of Jesus' life on earth. "Over one-third of this Gospel is devoted to the events of His last and most important week."<sup>54</sup>

**Luke**, the doctor and historian, presents Jesus as the perfect Son of Man who came **“to seek and to save that which was lost”** (Luke 19:10). Luke stresses the true humanity of Christ while also declaring His deity. Some believe that Luke particularly had the Greeks in mind because of their keen interest in human philosophy.

**John** focuses the reader on the deity of Christ by presenting Jesus as the eternal Son of God who gives eternal and abundant life to all who would receive Him by believing in Him (John 1:1-2, 12; 3:16-18, 36; 10:10). Although written to all mankind, John’s Gospel is especially written to the church. Five chapters record the farewell messages of Jesus to His disciples to comfort them just a few hours before His death. In addition, seven miraculous signs of Jesus are set forth to demonstrate that Jesus is the Savior and to encourage people everywhere to believe in Him that they might have life (John 20:30-31).

## **Matthew** (The King of the Jews)

**Author and Name of Book:** Each of the Gospels receives its name from the human author who wrote it. Although this first Gospel, as with each of the Gospels, never names its author, the universal testimony of the early church is that the apostle Matthew wrote it, and our earliest textual witnesses attribute it to him by giving it the title, “According to Matthew.” Matthew, who was one of the original disciples of Jesus, was a Jew writing to Jews about the One who was their Messiah. His original name was Levi, the son of Alphaeus. Matthew worked as a tax collector in Palestine for the Romans until he was called by the Lord to follow Him (Matthew 9:9, 10; Mark 2:14-15). His quick response may suggest his heart had already been stirred by the ministry of Jesus.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 50s or 60s** Suggestions for the dating of Matthew range from A.D. 40 to A.D. 140, but “the fact that the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 is viewed as an event yet future (24:2) requires an earlier date. Some feel that this was the first of the Gospels to be written (about A.D. 50), while others think it was not the first and that it was written in the 60’s.”<sup>55</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** As evident in the questions Jesus asked His disciples in 16:13-15, Matthew wrote to Jews to answer their questions about Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus had plainly declared that He was their Messiah. Was He really the Old Testament Messiah predicted by the prophets? If so, why did the religious leaders fail to receive Him, and why didn’t He establish the promised kingdom? Will it ever be established, and if so, when? Thus, Matthew is addressed primarily to a Jewish audience to show them that this Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah. This is seen in Jesus’ genealogy (1:1-17), the visit of the Magi (2:1-12), His entry into Jerusalem (21:5), the judgment of the nations (25:31-46) and the often mentioning of the “kingdom of heaven” that is common with the other Gospels and in the Old Testament fulfillment of prophecy.

**Christ as Seen in Matthew:** As previously emphasized, Matthew’s goal is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah of Old Testament expectation. He is the son of Abraham and David. Thus, He is the King who comes offering the Kingdom. The phrase “the king of heaven” occurs some thirty-two times in this Gospel. In order to show that this Jesus fulfills expectations of the Old Testament, ten times Matthew specifically emphasizes that what happened in the life of Jesus fulfills the Old Testament. Matthew also uses more Old Testament quotations and references than any other book of the New Testament, some 130 times.

### **For Personal Study: Outline**

#### **1. The Person and Presentation of the King (1:1–4:25)**

- |                                  |         |         |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| a. His Birth (1:1-25)            |         |         |
| 1:1-17                           | 1:18-25 |         |
| b. His Recognition (2:1-12)      |         |         |
| c. His Flight (2:13-23)          |         |         |
| 2:13-15                          | 2:16-23 |         |
| d. His Forerunner (3:1-17)       |         |         |
| 3:1-12                           | 3:13-17 |         |
| e. His Temptations (4:1-11)      |         |         |
| f. His First Disciples (4:12-25) |         |         |
| 4:12-17                          | 4:18-22 | 4:23-25 |





In addition, Mark was also a close associate of Paul. Charles Ryrie writes:

He had the rare privilege of accompanying Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey but failed to stay with them through the entire trip. Because of this, Paul refused to take him on the second journey, so he went with Barnabas to Cyprus (Acts 15:38-40). About a dozen years later he was again with Paul (Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24), and just before Paul's execution, he was sent for by the apostle (2 Timothy 4:11). His biography proves that one failure in life does not mean the end of usefulness.<sup>58</sup>

**Date of Writing: A.D. 50s or 60s** The dating of Mark is somewhat difficult, although many scholars believe this was the first of the four Gospels, since virtually all of the verses found in Mark are quoted in the other three. Mark was written before A.D. 70 and the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (13:2).

**Theme and Purpose:** The theme of Mark is "Christ the Servant." The emphasis on service and sacrifice is clearly taught in 10:45, "**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give His life a ransom for many.**" A careful reading of Mark shows how the two themes of this verse, service and sacrifice, are unfolded by Mark.

Mark is addressed primarily to the Roman or Gentile reader. As a result, the genealogy of Jesus is omitted along with the Sermon on the Mount. The condemnations by the religious leaders also receive less attention, since they would have been more culturally relevant to a Jewish audience. Since Mark presents Jesus as the Worker, the Servant of the Lord, the book focuses on the activity of Christ as a faithful Servant effectively going about His work.

**Christ as Seen in Mark:** Of course, Mark's contribution especially centers on presenting the Savior as the Sacrificing Servant who gives His life obediently for the ransom of many. The focus is clearly on His ministry to the physical and spiritual needs of others, always putting them before His own needs. This emphasis on the Savior's servant activity is seen in the following:

Only eighteen out of Christ's seventy parables are found in Mark—some of these are only one sentence in length—but he lists over half of Christ's thirty-five miracles, the highest proportion in the Gospels.<sup>59</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The Preparation of the Servant for Service (1:1-13)

- a. His Forerunner (1:1-8)
- b. His Baptism (1:9-11)
- c. His Temptations (1:12-13)

### 2. The Preaching of the Servant in Galilee (1:14–9:32)

- a. His Mission (1:14–2:12)
  - 1:14-28
  - 1:29-45
  - 2:1-12
- b. Initial Opposition (2:13–3:35)
  - 2:13-22
  - 3:1-12
  - 2:23-28
  - 3:13-35
- c. Parables (4:1-34)
  - 4:1-12
  - 4:26-29
  - 4:13-25
  - 4:30-34
- d. Miracles (4:35–5:43)
  - 4:35-41
  - 5:1-20
  - 5:21-43
- e. Growing Opposition (6:1–8:26)
  - 6:1-6
  - 6:33-52
  - 6:7-13
  - 6:53-56
  - 6:14-32
  - 7:1-13
  - 7:14-23
  - 7:24-37
  - 8:1-26
- f. Peter's Confession of Christ (8:27-33)
- g. Cost of Discipleship (8:34–9:1)
- h. The Transfiguration (9:2-13)
- i. Demon-Possessed Son is Delivered (9:14-29)
- j. Jesus Foretells His Death (9:30-32)

### 3. The Preaching of the Servant in Perea (9:33–10:52)

- a. Jesus Teaches to Prepare the Disciples (9:33–10:45)
  - 9:33-37 10:1-12 10:17-31
  - 9:38-50 10:13-16 10:32-45
- b. Blind Bartimaeus is Healed (10:46-52)

### 4. The Passion of the Servant in Jerusalem (11:1–15:47)

- a. His Formal Presentation (11:1-19)
  - 11:1-14 11:15-19
- b. His Instruction on Prayer (11:20-26)
- c. His Opposition by the Leaders (11:27–12:44)
  - 11:27-33 12:13-27 12:41-44
  - 12:1-12 12:28-40
- d. His Instruction on the Future (13:1-37)
  - 13:1-2 13:14-23 13:33-37
  - 13:3-8 13:24-27
  - 13:9-13 13:28-32
- e. His Passion (14:1–15:47)
  - 14:1-11 14:43-52 15:16-21
  - 14:12-21 14:53-65 15:22-41
  - 14:22-31 14:66-72 15:42-47
  - 14:32-42 15:1-15

### 5. The Prosperity of the Servant in Resurrection (16:1-20)

- a. His Resurrection (16:1-8)
- b. His Appearances (16:9-18) *Questionable Text*
- c. His Ascension (16:19-20) *Questionable Text*

## Luke (The Son of Man)

**Author and Name of Book:** Both Luke and Acts, which are addressed to Theophilus as a two-volume work, are attributed to Luke, and while Luke is nowhere named as the author of either, a great deal of evidence points to Luke, “the beloved physician” (Colossians 4:14) as the author of both books.

Significantly, these two books make up over one-fourth of the Greek New Testament. The only places where we find his name in the New Testament are Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; and Philemon 24. It is also believed that Luke referred to himself in the “we” sections of Acts (16:10-17; 20:5–21:18; 27:1–28:16). These “we” sections of Acts show that the author was a close associate and traveling companion of Paul. Since all but two of Paul’s associates are named in the third person, the list can be narrowed to Titus and Luke. By process of elimination, Paul’s “dear friend Luke, the doctor” (Colossians 4:14), and “fellow worker” (Philemon 24) becomes the most likely candidate.

It seems evident from Colossians 4:10-14 that Luke was a Gentile because Paul makes a distinction between him and the Jews. Here the apostle states that, of his fellow-workers, Aristarchus, Mark and John were the only ones who were Jews. This suggests that Epaphras, Luke, and Demas, also mentioned in these verses, were Gentiles, not Jews. “Luke’s obvious skill with the Greek language and his phrase ‘their own language’ in Acts 1:19 also imply that he was not Jewish.”<sup>60</sup>

We know nothing about his early life or conversion except that he was not an eyewitness of the life of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:2). Although a physician by profession, he was primarily an evangelist, writing this gospel and the book of Acts and accompanying Paul in missionary work. Luke was with Paul at the time of the apostle’s martyrdom (2 Timothy 4:11), but of his later life, we have no certain facts.<sup>61</sup>

**Date of Writing: A.D. 60** Two commonly suggested periods for dating the Gospel of Luke are: (1) A.D. 59–63, and (2) the 70s or the 80s, but the conclusion of Acts shows us that Paul was in Rome, and since Luke is the former work, written before Acts (Acts 1:1), the Gospel of Luke must have been written in the earlier period, around A.D. 60.

**Theme and Purpose:** The purpose of Luke is clearly stated in the first four verses of his Gospel.

*Now many have undertaken to compile an account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, like the accounts passed on to us by those who were eyewitnesses and servants of the word from the beginning. So it seemed good to me as well, because I have followed all things carefully from the beginning, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may have certainty regarding the things you were taught (Luke 1:1-4).*

Several things need to be noticed regarding his approach to presenting the gospel:

Luke states that his own work was stimulated by the work of others (1:1), that he consulted eyewitnesses (1:2) and that he sifted (examined) and arranged the information (1:3) under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to instruct Theophilus in the historical reliability of the faith (1:4). This is a carefully researched and documented writing.<sup>62</sup>

As a Gentile, Luke must have felt responsible to write his two-volume account of the life of Christ so it would be available to Gentile readers. This seems evident from the fact that Luke “translates Aramaic terms with Greek words and explains Jewish customs and geography to make his Gospel more intelligible to his original Greek readership.”<sup>63</sup>

Luke, written by the “beloved physician,” is the most comprehensive and longest of the Gospels. It presents the Savior as the Son of Man, the Perfect Man who came to seek and save the lost (19:10). In Matthew we see Jesus as Son of David, Israel’s King; in Mark we see Him as the Lord’s Servant, serving others; in Luke we see Him as the Son of Man, meeting man’s needs, a perfect man among men, chosen from men, tested among men and supremely qualified to be the Savior and High Priest. In Matthew we see groupings of significant events, in Mark we see the shortened versions of significant events, but in Luke we see more details of these events by the physician/historian.

His perfect human nature as the Son of Man, yet also Son of God, is brought out by the fact that His physical birth with his genealogy is traced all the way back to Adam (3:38; note that Matthew goes back only to Abraham). His mental development is recorded in 2:40-52, and His moral and spiritual perfection is also evidenced at His baptism by the voice of the Father from heaven and by the anointing of the Holy Spirit (3:21-22). So, in Jesus, we have One who is perfect physical, mental and spiritual manhood.

**Christ as Seen in Luke:** The humanity and compassion of Jesus are repeatedly emphasized in Luke’s Gospel. Luke gives the most complete account of Christ’s ancestry, birth, and development. He is the ideal Son of Man who identified with the sorrow of sinful man in order to carry our sorrows and offer us the priceless gift of salvation. Jesus alone fulfills the Greek ideal of human perfection.<sup>64</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **The Introduction: The Method and Purpose of Writing (1:1-4)**
2. **The Identification of the Son of Man with Men (1:5–4:13)**
  - a. The Events Preceding Christ’s Birth (1:5-56)

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| 1:5-25  | 1:39-45 |
| 1:26-38 | 1:46-56 |
  - b. The Events Accompanying Christ’s Birth (1:57–2:38)

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| 1:57-66 | 2:1-20  |
| 1:67-80 | 2:21-38 |
  - c. The Events During Christ’s Childhood (2:39-52)

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| 2:39-40 | 2:41-52 |
|---------|---------|
  - d. The Events Preceding Christ’s Presentation (3:1–4:13)

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| 3:1-20  | 3:23-38 |
| 3:21-22 | 4:1-13  |



Strictly speaking, the fourth Gospel is anonymous. No name of its author is given in the text. This is not surprising, because a gospel differs in literary form from an epistle (letter). The letters of Paul each begin with his name, which was the normal custom of letter writers in the ancient world. None of the human authors of the four Gospels identified himself by name, but the authors indirectly revealed themselves within the writing, and were well known by tradition.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 85–90** This Gospel has been known in the church as the “Fourth” one, and the early church believed that it was written when John was an old man. Therefore a date between 85 and 95 is probable. John 21:18, 23 require the passing of some time, with Peter becoming old and John outliving him.<sup>65</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** Probably more than any other book of the Bible, John clearly states the theme and purpose of his Gospel. Significantly, this statement of purpose follows Thomas’ encounter with the resurrected Savior. Thomas had doubted the reality of the resurrection (John 20:24-25) and immediately after this profession of doubt the Lord appeared to the disciples and addressed Thomas with these words,

***Put your finger here, and examine my hands. Extend your hand and put it into my side. Do not continue in your unbelief, but believe. Thomas then declared, ‘My Lord and my God!’ The Lord then said to Thomas, ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are the people who have not seen and yet have believed’*** (John 20:27-29).

It is following this exchange and the focus on the need of believing in Jesus that John states the theme and purpose of his book,

***Now Jesus performed many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples that are not recorded in this book. But these are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name*** (John 20:30-31).

In keeping with this statement of purpose, John selected seven sign-miracles to reveal the person and mission of Christ that it might bring people to believe in Jesus as Savior. These signs revealed Jesus’ glory (John 1:14; Isaiah 35:1-2; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13). The seven signs consisted of the following:

1. Turning water into wine (2:1-11)
2. Healing the nobleman’s son (4:46-54)
3. Healing the crippled person (5:1-18)
4. Feeding the multitude (6:6-13)
5. Walking on water (6:16-21)
6. Giving sight to the blind (9:1-7)
7. Raising Lazarus (11:1-45)

John’s special theme and purpose is also easily discerned by the distinctive nature of his Gospel when compared to Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

When one compares the Gospel of John with the other three Gospels, he is struck by the distinctiveness of John’s presentation. John does not include Jesus’ genealogy, birth, baptism, temptation, casting out of demons, parables, transfiguration, instituting of the Lord’s Supper, His agony in Gethsemane or His Ascension. John’s presentation of Jesus emphasizes His ministry in Jerusalem, the feasts of the Jewish nation, Jesus’ contacts with individuals in private conversations (3:1–4:38; 18:28–19:16) and His ministry to His disciples (13:1–17:26). The major body of the Gospel is contained in a “Book of Signs” (2:1–12:50) which embraces seven miracles or “signs” which proclaim Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. This “Book of Signs” also contains great discourses of Jesus which explain and proclaim the significance of the signs. For example, following the feeding of the 5,000 (6:1-15), Jesus revealed Himself as the Bread of Life which the heavenly Father gives for the life of the world (6:25-35). Another notable and exclusive feature of the Fourth Gospel is the series of “I AM” statements that were made by Jesus (6:35; 8:12; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5).

The distinctiveness of this Gospel must be kept in perspective. The Gospels were not intended as biographies. Each Gospel writer selected from a much larger pool of information the material which would serve his purpose. It has been estimated that if all the words from the lips of Jesus cited in Matthew, Mark, and Luke were read aloud, the amount of time taken would be only about three hours.<sup>66</sup>

**Christ as Seen in John:** While the deity of Christ is a prominent theme in the Bible in many places, there is no other book that presents a more powerful case for the deity of Jesus as the incarnate Son of God. The fact is that one who is identified as “The man called Jesus” (9:11) is also called “God, the One and Only” (1:18), “Christ, the Son of the Living God” (6:69) or “the Holy One of God” (6:69).

This declaration of the deity of Jesus Christ is further developed by seven “I AM” statements made by Jesus and recorded in John’s Gospel. These seven statements are:

1. I am the “Bread of Life” (6:35)
2. I am the “Light of the World” (8:12)
3. I am the “Gate” (10:7, 9)
4. I am the “Good Shepherd” (10:11, 14)
5. I am the “Resurrection and the Life” (11:25)
6. I am the “Way, the Truth, and the Life” (14:6)
7. I am the “True Vine” (15:1, 5)

Another distinctive feature of John’s Gospel, again focusing on the person of Christ, are the five witnesses that testify to Jesus as the Son of God. In John 5:31-47, Jesus responds to the arguments of His opponents. They had charged that His claims lacked sufficient witnesses to confirm His testimony, so Jesus shows them that their charges are not true by presenting other witnesses to the validity of His claims. Other witnesses include His Father (5:32, 37), John the Baptist (5:33), His miracles (5:36), the Scriptures (5:39) and Moses (5:46). Later, in 8:14, He declares that His witness is indeed true. On certain occasions, Jesus equates Himself with the Old Testament “I AM,” or YAHWEH (4:25-26; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5-6, 8). Some of the most crucial affirmations of His deity are found in 1:1; 8:58; 10:30; 14:9; 20:28.<sup>67</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

- 1. The Introduction: The Incarnation of the Son of God (1:1-18)**
  - a. The Deity of Christ (1:1-2)
  - b. The Preincarnate Work of Christ (1:3-5)
  - c. The Forerunner of Christ (1:6-8)
  - d. The Rejection of Christ (1:9-11)
  - e. The Acceptance of Christ (1:12-13)
  - f. The Incarnation of Christ (1:14-18)
  
- 2. The Presentation of the Son of God (1:19–4:54)**
  - a. By John the Baptist (1:19-34)
  - b. To John’s Disciples (1:35-51)
  - c. At the Wedding in Cana (2:1-11)
  - d. At the Temple in Jerusalem (2:12-35)
  - e. To Nicodemus (3:1-21)
  - f. By John the Baptist (3:22-36)
  - g. To the Samaritan Woman (4:1-42)
  - h. To an Official of Capernaum (4:43-54)
  
- 3. The Opposition to the Son of God (5:1–12:50)**
  - a. At the Feast in Jerusalem (5:1-47)

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 5:1-17  | 5:33-35 | 5:39-47 |
| 5:18-24 | 5:36    |         |
| 5:25-32 | 5:37-38 |         |
  - b. During the Time of the Passover in Galilee (6:1-71)

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 6:1-14  | 6:26-40 | 6:59-65 |
| 6:15-25 | 6:41-58 | 6:66-71 |
  - c. At the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem (7:1–10:21)

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 7:1-24  | 8:12-30 | 9:13-34 |
| 7:25-39 | 8:31-47 | 9:35-41 |
| 7:40-53 | 8:48-59 | 10:1-21 |
| 8:1-11  | 9:1-12  |         |
  - d. At the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem (10:22-42)

|          |          |  |
|----------|----------|--|
| 10:22-30 | 10:31-42 |  |
|----------|----------|--|

- e. At Bethany (11:1–12:11)
 

|          |          |         |
|----------|----------|---------|
| 11:1-16  | 11:38-46 | 12:1-11 |
| 11:17-29 | 11:47-53 |         |
| 11:30-37 | 11:54-57 |         |
- f. At Jerusalem (12:12-50)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 12:12-19 | 12:27-36 | 12:44-50 |
| 12:20-26 | 12:37-43 |          |

**4. The Instruction by the Son of God (13:1–16:33)**

- a. Concerning Forgiveness (13:1-20)
 

|        |         |
|--------|---------|
| 13:1-4 | 13:5-20 |
|--------|---------|
- b. Concerning His Betrayal (13:21-30)
- c. Concerning His Departure (13:31-38)
- d. Concerning Heaven (14:1-15)
 

|        |         |
|--------|---------|
| 14:1-6 | 14:7-15 |
|--------|---------|
- e. Concerning the Holy Spirit (14:16-26)
- f. Concerning Peace (14:27-31)
- g. Concerning Fruitfulness (15:1-17)
 

|         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 15:1-11 | 15:12-17 |
|---------|----------|
- h. Concerning the World (15:18–16:4)
 

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| 15:18-27 | 16:1-4 |
|----------|--------|
- i. Concerning the Holy Spirit (16:5-15)
- j. Concerning His Return (16:16-33)
 

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 16:16-22 | 16:23-33 |
|----------|----------|

**5. The Intercession of the Son of God (17:1-26)**

- |         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 17:1-12 | 17:13-21 | 17:22-26 |
|---------|----------|----------|

**6. The Crucifixion of the Son of God (18:1–19:42)**

- |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 18:1-11  | 19:1-15  | 19:31-37 |
| 18:12-24 | 19:16-22 | 19:38-42 |
| 18:25-27 | 19:23-27 |          |
| 18:28-40 | 19:28-30 |          |

**7. The Resurrection of the Son of God (20:1-31)**

- a. The Empty Tomb (20:1-10)
- b. The Appearances of the Risen Lord (20:11-31)
 

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 20:11-18 | 20:24-29 |
| 20:19-23 | 20:30-31 |

**8. The Conclusion: The Appearance by the Lake (21:1-25)**

- a. The Appearance to the Seven Disciples (21:1-14)
 

|         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 21:1-11 | 21:12-14 |
|---------|----------|
- b. The Words to Peter (21:15-23)
 

|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 21:15-17 | 21:18-23 |
|----------|----------|
- c. The Conclusion of the Gospel (21:24-25)

## **Acts**

### **(Spreading the Gospel)**

**Author and Name of Book:** Although the author is unnamed in Acts, the evidence leads to the conclusion that the author was Luke. Acts is the second volume of a two-part discourse written by Luke, the physician, to Theophilus about “all that Jesus began to do and teach.”

Regarding the title, all available Greek manuscripts designate it by the title, “Acts,” or by the title, “The Acts of the Apostles.” Just how or why it received this title is uncertain. Actually, “The Acts of the Apostles” is perhaps not the most accurate title since it does not contain the Acts of all the apostles. Only Peter and Paul are really emphasized, although the promise of the coming of the Spirit was made to all the apostles (1:2-8) who were then to go into all the world preaching the gospel in the power of the Spirit. Many have felt that the book

would be more accurately titled, “The Acts of the Holy Spirit,” since it describes the spread of Christianity from the time of the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2. The main people of Acts include: Peter, John, Stephen, Philip, James, Barnabas, Silas and Paul.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 61** The issues regarding the dating of the book are summarized by Stanley Toussaint as follows:

The writing of Acts must have taken place before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Certainly an event of such magnitude would not have been ignored. This is especially true in light of one of the basic themes of the book: God’s turning to the Gentiles from the Jews because of the Jews’ rejection of Jesus Christ.

Luke scarcely would have omitted an account of Paul’s death, traditionally dated from A.D. 66–68, if it had occurred before he wrote Acts.

Nor did Luke mention the Neronian (belonging to the emperor Nero) persecutions which began after the great fire of Rome in A.D. 64.

Furthermore, a defense of Christianity before Nero by using the Book of Acts to appeal to what lower officials had ruled regarding Paul would have had little point at the time of the Neronian antagonism (persecutions). At that time Nero was so intent on destroying the church, the defense set forth in Acts would have had little effect in dissuading him (changing his mind).

The date usually accepted by conservative scholars for the writing of Acts is around A.D. 60–62. Accordingly, the place of writing would be Rome or possibly both Caesarea and Rome. At the time of writing, Paul’s release was either imminent (near) or had just taken place.<sup>68</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** The book of Acts is unique among the New Testament books for it alone provides a link for the other books of the New Testament. As Luke’s second book, Acts continues what Jesus **“began to do and to teach”** (1:1) as recorded in the Gospels. It begins with Christ’s Ascension and continues to the period of the New Testament Epistles. In it we have the continuation of the ministry of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit at work in the apostles who went forth preaching and establishing the church, the Body of Christ. Acts is the historical link between the Gospels and the Epistles.

Not only does it make this link for us, but it provides an account of the life of Paul and gives us the historical occasion for his letters. In the process, Acts recounts the first 30 years of the life of the church.

After summarizing various views on the purpose of Acts, Stanley Toussaint writes:

The purpose of the Book of Acts may be stated as follows: To explain with the Gospel of Luke the orderly and sovereignly directed progress of the kingdom message from Jews to Gentiles, and from Jerusalem to Rome. In Luke’s Gospel the question is answered, “If Christianity has its roots in the Old Testament and in Judaism, how did it become a worldwide religion?” The Book of Acts continues in the vein of the Gospel of Luke to answer the same problem.<sup>69</sup>

Acts 1:8 expresses the theme of Acts—the indwelling Holy Spirit empowering God’s people to be the Savior’s witnesses both in Jerusalem (home base) and in all Judea and Samaria (the immediate and surrounding areas), and even to the remotest part of the earth (the world).

**Christ as Seen in Acts:** The resurrected Savior is the central theme of the sermons in Acts. The Old Testament Scriptures, the historical resurrection, the apostolic testimony and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit all bear witness that Jesus is both Lord and Christ (2:22-36; 10:34-43). **“To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins”** (10:43). **“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”** (4:12).<sup>70</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The Witness in Jerusalem (1:1–6:7)

- |   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| a. The Expectation of the Chosen (1:1–2:47) Progress Report 1           |         |         |
| 1:1-8   | 1:12-26 | 2:14-36 |
| 1:9-11  | 2:1-13  | 2:37-47 |
| b. The Expansion of the Church in Jerusalem (3:1–6:7) Progress Report 2 |         |         |
| 3:1-10  | 4:13-31 | 5:17-32 |
| 3:11-26   | 4:32-37 | 5:33-42 |
| 4:1-12  | 5:1-16  | 6:1-7   |

### 2. The Witness in All Judea and Samaria (6:8–9:31)

- |   |         |         |
|---|---------|---------|
| a. The Martyrdom of Stephen (6:8–8:1a)                |         |         |
| 1) The Arrest of Stephen (6:8–7:1)                    |         |         |
| 2) The Address of Stephen (7:2-53)                    |         |         |
| 7:2-8   | 7:17-29 | 7:44-53 |
| 7:9-10  | 7:30-34 |         |
| 7:11-16   | 7:35-43 |         |
| 3) The Attack on Stephen (7:54–8:1a)                  |         |         |
| b. The Ministry of Philip (8:1b-40)                   |         |         |
| 8:1b-3  | 8:4-24  | 8:25-40 |
| c. The Message of Saul (9:1-19a)                      |         |         |
| d. The Conflicts of Saul (9:19b-31) Progress Report 3 |         |         |

### 3. The Witness to the Extremity of the Earth (9:32–28:31)

- |  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| a. The Extension of the Church to Antioch (9:32–12:24) Progress Report 4         |          |          |
| 9:32-43  | 10:34-48 | 12:1-19  |
| 10:1-23  | 11:1-18  | 12:20-24 |
| 10:24-33   | 11:19-30 |          |
| b. The Extension of the Church in Asia Minor (12:25–16:5) Progress Report 5      |          |          |
| 12:25–13:25  | 14:8-18  | 15:30-35 |
| 13:26-43   | 14:19-28 | 15:36-41 |
| 13:44-52   | 15:1-11  | 16:1-5   |
| 14:1-7   | 15:12-29 |          |
| c. The Extension of the Church in the Aegean Area (16:6–19:20) Progress Report 6 |          |          |
| 16:6-13  | 17:1-9   | 18:1-21  |
| 16:14-21   | 17:10-15 | 18:22-28 |
| 16:22-34   | 17:16-21 | 19:1-10  |
| 16:35-40   | 17:22-34 | 19:11-20 |
| d. The Extension of the Church to Rome (19:21–28:31) Progress Report 7           |          |          |
| 19:21-41   | 22:1-30  | 26:1-32  |
| 20:1-12  | 23:1-11  | 27:1-13  |
| 20:13-16   | 23:12-22 | 27:14-44 |
| 20:17-38   | 23:23-35 | 28:1-10  |
| 21:1-14  | 24:1-27  | 28:11-29 |
| 21:15-26   | 25:1-22  | 28:30-31 |
| 21:27-40   | 25:23-27 |          |

## **Section 2**

### **The Pauline Epistles**

**Introduction:** Having finished the survey of the historical books (the Gospels and Acts), we now come to the 21 epistles of the New Testament, 22 if one includes Revelation as an epistle (which in reality it is [see Revelation 1:4]). Because of its unique apocalyptic nature, however, in this survey we are distinguishing it as The Prophetic Book of the New Testament. The Epistles are generally divided into the Pauline Epistles and the Non-Pauline (General) Epistles. Paul's epistles fall into two categories: nine epistles written to churches and four pastoral epistles. This is then followed by eight Hebrew Christian epistles. Naturally, many questions would arise as to the meaning and application of the gospel for Christians. Thus, the Epistles answer these questions, give the interpretation of the person and work of Christ, and apply the truth of the gospel to Believers.

**Background of Paul:** Paul was known for many years as Saul of Tarsus. He was born of Jewish parents in the city of Tarsus of Cilicia. He was not only a Jew, but by his own testimony, he was a Pharisee, a son of a Pharisee (Acts 23:6), a Hebrew of Hebrews (spoke Hebrew or Aramaic), of the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:4-5) and had evidently been taught the trade of tent-making as a youth (Acts 18:3). At a young age, he must have gone to Jerusalem, and according to his testimony, studied under the well known Gamaliel I, a noted teacher in the School of Hillel (Acts 22:3). In his studies, he had advanced in the religion of the Jews beyond many of his fellows as one extremely zealous for his ancestral traditions (Galatians 1:14).

His zeal as a religious Jew was carried over into the way he zealously sought to persecute the church. As a young Pharisee, he was present and gave approval when Stephen was stoned and murdered (Acts 7:58–8:3). In his campaign against Christians, both men and women, he traveled with letters of arrest from the high priest and went to other cities to destroy the church of Jesus Christ (Acts 26:10-11; Galatians 1:13). It was on one of these missions that Paul was converted while on the road to Damascus (Acts 9).

Paul was also quite familiar with Greek culture having received a Greek education (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12). This made him familiar with Greek thought. As such a student, he was familiar with many of the sayings of writers who had lived before him and those who were alive at the same time. In addition, Paul was a Roman citizen (Acts 22:28). Because of this, he could appeal to Caesar as a citizen of Rome while imprisoned in Philippi (Acts 16:37-39).

Consequently, Paul was uniquely qualified to be the one chosen to carry the message of the gospel to the Gentiles. Paul could easily say, ***“I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some”*** (1 Corinthians 9:22).

**Conversion of Paul:** Having actively and consistently persecuted the church of Jesus Christ, while on the road to Damascus Paul had an encounter with the glorified resurrected Christ, which had revolutionary effects on his life (Acts 9:3-30).

He had denied the Christian claim that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. Further, he did not believe that He had risen from the dead as Stephen had proclaimed when he cried, ***“Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God”*** (Acts 7:56). “Liar!” they cried and stoned him. Saul stood by ***“consenting unto his death.”*** But when the Lord Jesus spoke to Saul on the day of the great experience outside Damascus, he knew that Stephen had been right and he had been wrong. Jesus was alive after all! He also must be the Son of God. Thus, in the synagogues of Damascus, Saul (now Paul) proclaimed Christ as Savior. While the experience was sudden and dramatic, the effects were lasting. The impact must have caused great psychological and intellectual readjustments. This may well account for the period spent in Arabia and Damascus before his first visit to Jerusalem (Galatians 1:16-19). Then he went back to his home territory and for a period of eight to ten years little is known of his activities.<sup>71</sup>

**Distinctive Emphases of Paul's Epistles:** Before the overview of each of Paul's epistles, let us notice some of the distinctive features of each of Paul's epistles.<sup>72</sup>

### **The Prison Epistles**

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon are sometimes referred to as the “Prison Epistles” because they were each written while Paul was confined or in chains. Each of these letters contain references to this situation (Ephesians 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; Philippians 1:7, 13; Colossians 4:10, 18; Philemon 1, 9, 10).

The fact that these great epistles were written while Paul was imprisoned, either in a Roman barracks or chained daily to a Roman soldier in his own rented house (Acts 28:30), is a marvelous illustration of how God takes our apparent sufferings and uses them for His glory and the increase of our opportunities for ministry (Philippians 1:12-13). It shows how we may be chained and hindered, but that the Word of God is not imprisoned (2 Timothy 2:9).

### **The Pastoral Epistles**

The other major group of Paul’s epistles have generally been called the “Pastoral Epistles,” a term used to designate the three letters addressed to Timothy and Titus (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus). Originally, they were regarded as mere personal letters and were classified with Philemon, but because of their strong bearing on the life of the Church, they began to be called the “Pastoral Epistles.” Addressed to individuals, these books include personal and private communications but information that is more official in character. Paul addressed them to Timothy and Titus to guide them in matters concerning the pastoral care of the church, which is the household of God (1 Timothy 3:14-15; 4:6-15 cf. 2 Timothy 2:2).

These epistles deal with church government, policies and practice, all of which are concerns vital to the pastoral health of the church. In summary, these books were designed by God to aid us in our pastoral responsibilities and in development and guidance of local churches.

In this regard, there is an important observation to be made. Of Paul’s 13 letters, these were the very last books he wrote. What is so significant about that? Since these books deal with church order, ministry and organization, why were they not first? If you or I were doing this (especially today) we would probably first try to get the administrative organization in order, the structure, and then worry about the doctrine.

So here are some suggestions to think about regarding administrative order:

Suggestion 1: Of course, organization and order is important. The Church is a spiritual body and each Believer is a member with special functions and tasks to carry out. The primary need that is essential to functioning is right theology (teaching) and understanding of the Word, along with its personal application for Christ-like living. This provides the Church with the spiritual and moral foundation on which we base our methods, strategy, and administration. So, while our methods will often vary, they must never contradict the moral or spiritual principles of the Word of God.

For example, giving to support the Church is both a corporate and individual responsibility, but the giving and collection of money must be done so that it does not violate certain Biblical principles. The Believer should give voluntarily and not be manipulated by methods that violate the principle (2 Corinthians 9:6-10).

Suggestion 2: Organization must be based on right teaching, which is grounded in rightly handling the Word (2 Timothy 2:15). God’s objective truth, along with application by spiritually qualified people (1 Timothy 3:1-10), is essential to the health of the Church. When Believers try to run a church based solely on tradition or background, they end up with an organization that is not Biblical and lacks the spiritual passion and capacity to function as God intends.

These books, then, deal with matters of church order not previously addressed. Before God gave the Church specific directions for church order, He gave us Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. Is this because organization is unimportant? No! It is because organization and administration are not primary, but are secondary to the growth of a church. It is also because sound teaching and spirituality are what ultimately produce ministries that are effective according to God’s standards and that manifest the spirit and character of Christ in ministry and outreach.

Each of Paul's epistles contain a similar, yet distinct, emphasis on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Gospel message and the Believer's union with Him. The following charts show the differences:

| <b>The Emphasis on the Lord Jesus</b> |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Romans                                | Christ the Power of God to us         |
| 1 Corinthians                         | Christ the Wisdom of God to us        |
| 2 Corinthians                         | Christ the Comfort of God to us       |
| Galatians                             | Christ the Righteousness of God to us |
| Ephesians                             | Christ the Riches of God to us        |
| Philippians                           | Christ the Sufficiency of God to us   |
| Colossians                            | Christ the Fullness of God to us      |
| 1 Thessalonians                       | Christ the Promise of God to us       |
| 2 Thessalonians                       | Christ the Reward of God to us        |
| 1 Timothy                             | Christ the Mediator of God to us      |
| 2 Timothy                             | Christ the Judge of God to us         |
| Titus                                 | Christ the Kindness of God to us      |
| Philemon                              | Christ the Confidence of God to us    |

| <b>The Emphasis on the Gospel Message</b> |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Romans                                    | The Gospel and its Message         |
| 1 Corinthians                             | The Gospel and its Ministry        |
| 2 Corinthians                             | The Gospel and its Ministers       |
| Galatians                                 | The Gospel and its Mutilators      |
| Ephesians                                 | The Gospel and its Heavenlies      |
| Philippians                               | The Gospel and its Earthlies       |
| Colossians                                | The Gospel and its Philosophies    |
| 1 Thessalonians                           | The Gospel and the Church's future |
| 2 Thessalonians                           | The Gospel and the Antichrist      |
| 1 Timothy                                 | The Gospel and its Pastors         |
| 2 Timothy                                 | The Gospel and its Opposition      |
| Titus                                     | The Gospel and its Applications    |
| Philemon                                  | The Gospel and its Relevance       |

| <b>The Emphasis of the Gospel on the Believer's Union</b> |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Romans  | In Christ is Justification  |
| 1 Corinthians   | In Christ is Sanctification |
| 2 Corinthians   | In Christ is Consolation    |
| Galatians   | In Christ is Liberation     |
| Ephesians   | In Christ is Exaltation     |
| Philippians   | In Christ is Exultation     |
| Colossians  | In Christ is Completion     |
| 1 Thessalonians   | In Christ is Translation    |
| 2 Thessalonians   | In Christ is Compensation   |
| 1 Timothy   | In Christ is Aspiration     |
| 2 Timothy   | In Christ is Determination  |
| Titus   | In Christ is Activation     |
| Philemon  | In Christ is Motivation     |

# Romans

## (Christ: The Power of God to Us)

**Author and Name of Book:** As the letter states, Paul is the author (1:1). Almost without exception, from the early Church this epistle has been credited to Paul. The letter contains a number of historical references that agree with known facts of Paul's life. The doctrinal content of the book is also consistent with the other writings of the apostle, a fact quickly evident by a comparison with his other letters.

Romans, which has been called Paul's "greatest work," gets its title from the fact that it was written to the church in Rome (1:7, 15). Paul did not establish the church in Rome, but as the apostle to the Gentiles, he had longed for many years to visit the Believers in Rome (15:22-23), that he might further establish them in the faith and preach the gospel there as well (1:13-15).

Desiring to minister in Rome, he wrote Romans to prepare the way for his visit (15:14-17). It was written from Corinth, while completing the collection for the poor in Palestine. From there he went to Jerusalem to deliver the money, intending to continue on to Rome and Spain (15:24). Paul did eventually get to Rome, but as a prisoner. It appears that Phoebe, a woman who belonged to the church at Cenchrea near Corinth (16:1), carried the letter to Rome.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 57–58** Romans was written around A.D. 57–58 most likely near the end of his third missionary journey (Acts 18:23–21:14; Romans 15:19). In view of Paul's statement in Romans 15:26, it appears Paul had already received contributions from the churches of Macedonia and Achaia (where Corinth was located). This means he had already been at Corinth, and since he had not yet been at Corinth when he wrote to that church (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8–9), the writing of Romans must follow that of 1 and 2 Corinthians which is dated about A.D. 55.

**Theme and Purpose:** Romans was not written to address specific problems as were some of his other epistles. Three clear purposes unfold for the writing of Romans. The **first** was simply to announce Paul's plan to visit Rome after his return to Jerusalem and to prepare the church for his coming (15:24, 28-29 cf. Acts 19:21). Paul wanted to inform them of his plans and to have them anticipate and pray for their fulfillment (15:30-32). A **second** purpose was to present a complete and detailed statement of the gospel message God had called him to proclaim. The apostle was not only ready "**to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome**" (1:15), but he wanted them to have a clear understanding of its meaning and extensions into all of life, including: past (justification which means to declare one righteous), present (sanctification which means to set apart) and future (glorification which means to share Christ's glory). A **third** purpose is related to the questions that naturally arose among the Jewish and the Gentile Christians at Rome like: *What does the gospel do to the Law and such Old Testament rites as circumcision? What about the Jew? Has God set the Jew aside? Has He forgotten His promises to the Jews?* Paul answers these questions and explains God's plan of salvation for Jews and Gentiles.

Paul's theme in Romans is clearly stated in 1:16-17. In this the apostle shows how God saves the sinner. In these verses, the great themes of the epistle are gathered together: the gospel, the power of God, salvation, everyone who believes, righteousness from God, Jew and Gentile. Charles Ryrie has an excellent summary of the theme and contents:

More formal than Paul's other letters, Romans sets forth the doctrine of justification by faith in a systematic way. The theme of the epistle is the righteousness of God (1:16-17). A number of basic Christian doctrines are discussed: natural revelation (Romans 1:19-20), universality of sin (Romans 3:9-20), justification (Romans 3:24), propitiation (Romans 3:25), faith (Romans 4:1), original sin (Romans 5:12), union with Christ (Romans 6:1), the election and rejection of Israel (Romans 9–11), spiritual gifts (Romans 12:3-8), and respect for government (Romans 13:1-7).<sup>73</sup>

Apart from the introduction (1:1-17) and Paul's closing comments (15:14–16:27), Romans easily divides into three sections:

1. The first eight chapters are **doctrinal** and outline the basic doctrines of the gospel of righteousness (justification and sanctification) from God through faith.
2. The next three chapters (9–11) are **national** and describe God's dealings with Jews and Gentiles and the relationship of each to the gospel.
3. The remaining chapters (12–16) provide **practical applications** of the gospel in a Believer's daily life.

**Christ as Seen in Romans:** Paul presents Jesus Christ as the Second Adam whose righteousness and substitutionary death have provided justification for all who place their faith in Him. He offers His righteousness as a gracious gift to sinful men, having borne God's condemnation and wrath for their sinfulness. His death and resurrection are the basis for the Believer's redemption, justification, reconciliation, salvation and glorification.<sup>74</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

- 1. Introduction (1:1-17)**

|       |        |         |
|-------|--------|---------|
| 1:1-7 | 1:8-15 | 1:16-17 |
|-------|--------|---------|
  
- 2. Condemnation: The Need of Righteousness Because of Sin in All (1:18–3:20)**
  - a. The Condemnation of the Immoral Man (the Gentile) (1:18-32)

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1:18-23 | 1:24-27 | 1:28-32 |
|---------|---------|---------|
  - b. The Condemnation of the Moral Man (2:1-16)

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 2:1-11 | 2:12-16 |  |
|--------|---------|--|
  - c. The Condemnation of the Religious Man (the Jew) (2:17–3:8)

|         |         |       |
|---------|---------|-------|
| 2:17-24 | 2:25-29 | 3:1-8 |
|---------|---------|-------|
  - d. The Condemnation of All Men (3:9-20)

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 3:9-18 | 3:19-20 |  |
|--------|---------|--|
  
- 3. Justification: The Imputation of God's Righteousness through Christ (3:21–5:21)**
  - a. The Description of Righteousness (3:21-31)

|         |         |  |
|---------|---------|--|
| 3:21-26 | 3:27-31 |  |
|---------|---------|--|
  - b. The Illustration of Righteousness (4:1-25)

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 4:1-8  | 4:13-15 |  |
| 4:9-12 | 4:16-25 |  |
  - c. The Blessings of Righteousness (5:1-11)
  - d. The Contrast of Righteousness and Condemnation (5:12-21)

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 5:12-14 | 5:15-17 | 5:18-21 |
|---------|---------|---------|
  
- 4. Sanctification: Righteousness Imparted and Demonstrated (6:1–8:39)**
  - a. Sanctification and Sin (6:1-23)

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 6:1-7  | 6:12-14 | 6:20-23 |
| 6:8-11 | 6:15-19 |         |
  - b. Sanctification and the Law (7:1-25)

|       |         |         |
|-------|---------|---------|
| 7:1-3 | 7:7-13  | 7:21-25 |
| 7:4-6 | 7:14-20 |         |
  - c. Sanctification and the Holy Spirit (8:1-39)

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 8:1-8  | 8:18-25 | 8:28-30 |
| 8:9-17 | 8:26-27 | 8:31-39 |
  
- 5. Vindication: Jew and Gentile, the Scope of God's Righteousness (9:1–11:36)**
  - a. Israel's Past: Election by God (9:1-29)

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 9:1-5  | 9:14-18 | 9:27-29 |
| 9:6-13 | 9:19-26 |         |
  - b. Israel's Present: Rejection of God (9:30–10:21)

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 9:30-33 | 10:5-13  | 10:16-17 |
| 10:1-4  | 10:14-15 | 10:18-21 |
  - c. Israel's Future: Restoration by God (11:1-36)

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 11:1-6  | 11:11-16 | 11:25-32 |
| 11:7-10 | 11:17-24 | 11:33-36 |
  
- 6. Application: The Practice of Righteousness in Service (12:1–15:13)**
  - a. In Relation to God (12:1-2)
  - b. In Relation to Self (12:3)
  - c. In Relation to the Church (12:4-8)
  - d. In Relation to Society (12:9-21)

|         |          |  |
|---------|----------|--|
| 12:9-13 | 12:14-21 |  |
|---------|----------|--|



11:21-34); some had even been steeped in pagan immoralities (6:9-11). Yet as Greeks they prided themselves on their intellectualism, although in their case it had degenerated (1:17; 2:1-5).<sup>75</sup>

One can certainly see, then, how the immoral and religious conditions of Corinth had negatively impacted the life of the church spiritually and morally. The basic theme of the letter is how the Christian's new life, sanctified in Christ and saints by calling, is to be applied to every situation of life. This new life in Christ calls for a new way of living through the Holy Spirit (3:16, 17; 6:11, 19-20). God's wisdom manifested to us in Christ is to change Believers on both the individual and social level.

Thus, 1 Corinthians was written as a pastoral corrective to the news he had received concerning the many problems and disorders in the church there. The problems included divisions in the church (1:11), trust in man's wisdom or that of the world rather than God's (1:21-30), immorality (5:1-13; 6:9-20), and a number of questions regarding marriage and divorce, food, worship, spiritual gifts and the resurrection. Undoubtedly, because of their religious and immoral background, false beliefs and practices characterized this church.

**Christ as Seen in 1 Corinthians:** The importance of Christ as the essence, source and means of the Christian life is stated in 1:30, *"But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption."*

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Introduction (1:1-9)**
  - a. The Salutation (1:1-3)
  - b. The Prayer of Thanks (1:4-9)
  
2. **Divisions in the Church (1:10–4:21)**
  - a. The Report of Divisions (1:10-17)
  - b. The Reasons for Divisions (1:18–2:16)
 

|         |        |  |
|---------|--------|--|
| 1:18-25 | 2:1-5  |  |
| 1:26-31 | 2:6-16 |  |
  - c. The Result of Divisions (3:1–4:5)
 

|       |         |         |
|-------|---------|---------|
| 3:1-4 | 3:10-15 | 3:18-23 |
| 3:5-9 | 3:16-17 | 4:1-5   |
  - d. The Design and Example of Paul (4:6-21)
 

|       |        |         |
|-------|--------|---------|
| 4:6-7 | 4:8-13 | 4:14-21 |
|-------|--------|---------|
  
3. **Moral Disorders in the Church (5:1–6:20)**
  - a. The Case of Incest (5:1-13)
 

|       |       |        |
|-------|-------|--------|
| 5:1-5 | 5:6-8 | 5:9-13 |
|-------|-------|--------|
  - b. The Problem of Litigation in Heathen Courts (6:1-8)
  - c. The Warning Against Moral Laxity (6:9-20)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 6:9-11 | 6:12-20 |  |
|--------|---------|--|
  
4. **Instructions Concerning Marriage (7:1-40)**
  - a. Marriage and Celibacy (7:1-9)
  - b. Marriage and Divorce (7:10-24)
 

|         |         |  |
|---------|---------|--|
| 7:10-11 | 7:17-20 |  |
| 7:12-16 | 7:21-24 |  |
  - c. Marriage and Christian Service (7:25-38)
 

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 7:25-31 | 7:32-35 | 7:36-38 |
|---------|---------|---------|
  - d. Marriage and Remarriage (7:39-40)
  
5. **Instructions Concerning Food Offered to Idols (8:1–11:1)**
  - a. Question: May a Christian Eat Food Consecrated to a Pagan God? (8:1-13)
 

|       |       |        |
|-------|-------|--------|
| 8:1-3 | 8:4-6 | 8:7-13 |
|-------|-------|--------|
  - b. Example of Paul (9:1-27)
 

|       |         |         |
|-------|---------|---------|
| 9:1-2 | 9:8-14  | 9:19-23 |
| 9:3-7 | 9:15-18 | 9:24-27 |

|           |  |          |          |
|-----------|--|----------|----------|
| c.        | Instructions (10:1–11:1)                                   |          |          |
|           | 10:1-5   | 10:14-22 | 10:31-33 |
|           | 10:6-13  | 10:23-30 | 11:1     |
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Instructions Concerning Public Worship (11:2–14:40)</b> |          |          |
| a.        | The Covering of Women (11:2-16)                            |          |          |
| b.        | The Lord’s Supper (11:17-34)                               |          |          |
|           | 11:17-22   | 11:27-32 |          |
|           | 11:23-26   | 11:33-34 |          |
| c.        | The Use of Spiritual Gifts (12:1–14:40)                    |          |          |
|           | 12:1-3   | 13:1-3   | 14:13-19 |
|           | 12:4-11  | 13:4-7   | 14:20-25 |
|           | 12:12-13   | 13:8-13  | 14:26-33 |
|           | 12:14-26   | 14:1-5   | 14:34-36 |
|           | 12:27-31   | 14:6-12  | 14:37-40 |
| <b>7.</b> | <b>The Doctrine of the Resurrection (15:1-58)</b>          |          |          |
| a.        | The Importance of the Resurrection (15:1-11)               |          |          |
|           | 15:1-2   | 15:3-11  |          |
| b.        | The Consequences of Denying the Resurrection (15:12-19)    |          |          |
| c.        | The Christian Hope (15:20-34)                              |          |          |
|           | 15:20-28   | 15:29-34 |          |
| d.        | The Resurrection Body (15:35-50)                           |          |          |
|           | 15:35-41   | 15:42-50 |          |
| e.        | The Christian’s Victory through Christ (15:51-58)          |          |          |
|           | 15:51-57   | 15:58    |          |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>The Collection for Jerusalem (16:1-4)</b>               |          |          |
| <b>9.</b> | <b>Conclusion (16:5-24)</b>                                |          |          |
|           | 16:5-9   | 16:13-14 | 16:21-24 |
|           | 16:10-12   | 16:15-20 |          |

## **Second Corinthians**

### **(Christ: The Comfort of God to Us)**

**Author and Name of Book:** Again as indicated in the opening salutation, Paul is the author of this letter. Both external and internal evidence is very strong in support of Pauline authorship. In fact, “it is stamped with his style, and it contains more autobiographical material than any of his other writings.”<sup>76</sup>

**Date of Writing: A.D. 56** Because of the riot caused by silversmiths (Acts 19:23-41), Paul departed from Ephesus for Macedonia (Acts 20:1) in the spring of A.D. 56. In the process, he made a stop at Troas, hoping to meet Titus (2 Corinthians 2:13) and receive news about conditions in Corinth. Not finding Titus there, he pushed on to Macedonia, with obvious concern about Titus’ safety (7:5-6). There he met Titus, who brought good news about the general well-being of the Corinthian church but bad news about a group who were standing in opposition to Paul and his apostleship. From Macedonia Paul wrote a fourth letter, 2 Corinthians. Paul then made his third visit to Corinth during the winter of A.D. 56–57 (Acts 20:2-3).

**Theme and Purpose:** Of all Paul’s letters, 2 Corinthians is the most personal and intimate. In it he opened his heart and declared his steadfast love for the Corinthians even though some had been extremely critical and very changeable in their affection for him. The major theme is summoned by James K. Lowery in the Bible Knowledge Commentary:

What mainly concerned Paul was the presence of false teachers, claiming to be apostles, who had entered the church. They promoted their own ideas and at the same time sought to discredit (harm the reputation of) both the person and message of the apostle. Second Corinthians was written to defend the authenticity of both his apostleship and his message. This was not carried out in a self-protecting spirit, but because Paul knew that acceptance of his ministry and message were intimately bound with the Corinthian church’s own spiritual well-being.<sup>77</sup>



# Galatians

## (Christ: The Righteousness of God to Us)

**Author and Name of Book:** Paul identifies himself as the author of this epistle with the words, "Paul an apostle."

**Date of Writing: A.D. 49** The letter was written to Christians in South Galatia. These churches were founded on Paul's first missionary journey. Galatians was written after the end of the journey (probably from Antioch around A.D. 49, making it the earliest of Paul's epistles) just prior to the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15).

**Theme and Purpose:** The Epistle to the Galatians has been called by many theologians "The Charter of Christian Liberty (Freedom)." Galatians stands as a powerful challenge to the Judaizers and their teachings of legalism (living under law instead of grace). They taught, among other things, that a number of the ceremonial practices of the Old Testament were still binding on the church. Thus, the apostle writes to refute their false gospel of works and demonstrates the superiority of justification by faith and sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

In addition, these Judaizers not only proclaimed a false gospel, but also sought to discredit Paul's apostleship. In the first two chapters, Paul defended his apostleship and message which came by revelation from the risen Christ. Then, in Chapters 3 and 4, he argued for the true doctrine of grace, the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Some, however, would immediately claim such a doctrine leads to a license (to sin), so the apostle demonstrates that Christian liberty (freedom) does not mean a license to sin. Thus, Chapters 5 and 6 show that Christians must learn to live by the power of the Spirit, and that the Spirit-controlled walk will manifest not the works of the flesh but rather the fruit of the Spirit.

**Christ as Seen in Galatians:** Through His death by which Believers have died to the Law, and through the life conformed to Christ (2:20), Believers have been freed from bondage (5:1f.) and brought into a position of liberty. The power of the cross provides deliverance from the curse of the law, from the power of sin and from self (1:4; 2:20; 3:13; 4:5; 5:16, 24; 6:14).

## For Personal Study: Outline

- 1. Personal: The Gospel of Grace, Justification by Faith Defended (1:1–2:21)**
  - a. Introduction (1:1-10)

|       |       |        |
|-------|-------|--------|
| 1:1-2 | 1:3-5 | 1:6-10 |
|-------|-------|--------|
  - b. The Gospel of Grace Came by Revelation (1:11-24)

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1:11-12 | 1:13-17 | 1:18-24 |
|---------|---------|---------|
  - c. The Gospel of Grace was Approved by the Church in Jerusalem (2:1-10)
  - d. The Gospel of Grace was Vindicated in the Rebuke of Peter (2:11-21)

|         |         |  |
|---------|---------|--|
| 2:11-14 | 2:15-21 |  |
|---------|---------|--|
  
- 2. Doctrinal: The Gospel of Grace, Justification by Faith Explained (3:1–4:31)**
  - a. The Experience of the Galatians: The Spirit is Given by Faith (3:1-5)
  - b. The Example of Abraham: He was Justified by Faith, Not by Works (3:6-9)
  - c. Justification is by Faith, Not by the Law (3:10–4:11)

|         |         |        |
|---------|---------|--------|
| 3:10-14 | 3:19-22 | 4:1-7  |
| 3:15-18 | 3:23-29 | 4:8-11 |
  - d. The Galatians Received Their Blessings by Faith, Not by Law (4:12-20)
  - e. Law and Grace are Mutually Exclusive (4:21-31)
  
- 3. Practical: The Gospel of Grace, Justification by Faith Applied (5:1–6:18)**
  - a. The Position of Liberty: Stand Fast (5:1-12)

|     |       |        |
|-----|-------|--------|
| 5:1 | 5:2-6 | 5:7-12 |
|-----|-------|--------|
  - b. The Practice of Liberty: Serve and Love One Another (5:13-15)
  - c. The Power of Liberty: Walk by the Spirit (5:16-26)

|         |         |  |
|---------|---------|--|
| 5:16-24 | 5:25-26 |  |
|---------|---------|--|
  - d. The Performance of Liberty: Do Good to All Men (6:1-10)

|       |        |  |
|-------|--------|--|
| 6:1-5 | 6:6-10 |  |
|-------|--------|--|
  - e. The Conclusion (6:11-18)





# Colossians

## (Christ: The Fullness of God to Us)

**Author and Name of Book:** Because of Paul's greetings in 1:2, Colossians became known as "To the Colossians."

**Date of Writing: A.D. 60–61** Paul wrote all four prison epistles during his first Roman imprisonment. This means he wrote it in A.D. 60–61 (see the discussion on the date of Ephesians and Philippians).

**Theme and Purpose:** The theme is the fruitful power of the gospel message which heralds (proclaims) the supremacy, headship and the utter (total) sufficiency of Christ to the church which is His body. In this little epistle, we see Paul's "full portrait of Christ."<sup>80</sup> Colossians demonstrates that because of all Jesus Christ is in His person and has accomplished in His work, He, as the object of the Believer's faith, is all we need, for in Him we are complete (2:10). In scope, Colossians presents the all supremacy, all sufficiency, uniqueness and the fullness of the person and work of Jesus Christ as the God-man Savior, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and the total solution for man's needs, both for time and eternity. It presents Christ as the Creator/Sustainer and Redeemer/Reconciler of man and all the universe.

**Christ as Seen in Colossians:** Wilkinson and Boa point out:

This singularly Christological book is centered on Christ, "the head of all principality and power" (2:10), the Lord of creation (1:16-17), the Author of reconciliation (1:20-22; 2:13-15). He is the basis for the Believer's hope (1:5, 23, 27), the source of the Believer's power for a new life (1:11, 29), the Believer's Redeemer and Reconciler (1:14, 20-22; 2:11-15), the embodiment of full Deity (1:15, 19; 2:9), the Creator and Sustainer of all things (1:16-17), the Head of the church (1:18), the resurrected God-Man (1:18; 3:1), and the all-sufficient Savior (1:28; 2:3, 20; 3:1-4).<sup>81</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline<sup>82</sup>

- 1. Doctrinal: The Person and Work of Christ (1:1–2:5)**

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 1:1-2  | 1:13-14 | 1:24-29 |
| 1:3-8  | 1:15-20 | 2:1-5   |
| 1:9-12 | 1:21-23 |         |
- 2. Polemical (Analysis): The Heretical Problems in Light of Union with Christ (2:6–3:4)**

|        |         |       |
|--------|---------|-------|
| 2:6-7  | 2:16-19 | 3:1-4 |
| 2:8-15 | 2:20-23 |       |
- 3. Practical: The Practice of the Believer in Christ (3:5–4:6)**

|         |         |       |
|---------|---------|-------|
| 3:5-11  | 3:22-25 | 4:5-6 |
| 3:12-17 | 4:1     |       |
| 3:18-21 | 4:2-4   |       |
- 4. Personal: The Private Plans and Affairs of the Apostle (4:7-18)**

|       |         |      |
|-------|---------|------|
| 4:7-9 | 4:10-17 | 4:18 |
|-------|---------|------|

# First Thessalonians

## (Christ: The Promise of God to Us)

**Author and Name of Book:** As declared in 1:1 and 2:18, Paul is the author of 1 Thessalonians.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 51–52** The two letters to the Thessalonians were written from Corinth during the apostle's 18-month stay in that city (Acts 18:1-11). The first epistle was written during the earlier part of that period just after Timothy had returned from Thessalonica with news of the progress of the church. The second letter was sent just a few weeks (or at the most a few months) later. Any date assigned will have to be approximate, although probably A.D. 51–52.

**Theme and Purpose:** Paul was only in Thessalonica for three weeks (Acts 17:2), so he was not able to give adequate instruction to the new church. Therefore, the purpose of this epistle to the Thessalonians can be summarized as follows: to express his thankfulness for what God was doing in the lives of the Thessalonians (1:2-3); to defend himself against a campaign to slander his ministry (2:1-12); to encourage them to stand fast against persecution and pressure to return to their former pagan lifestyles (3:2-3; 4:1-12); to answer a doctrinal question pertaining to the fate of Christians who had died (4:1-13); to answer questions regarding the “Day of the Lord” (5:1-11); and to deal with certain problems that had developed in their life as a church (5:12-13; 19-20).

**Christ as Seen in 1 Thessalonians:** With the coming of the Lord mentioned in every chapter, Christ is presented as the Believer’s hope of salvation, both now and at His coming. When He comes, He will deliver us from wrath (undoubtedly a reference to the Tribulation) (1:10; 5:4-11), give rewards (2:19), perfect us (3:13), resurrect us (4:13-18) and sanctify (set apart) all those who have trusted in Him (5:23).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. The Past: The Work of Faith (1:1–3:13)

|        |         |         |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 1:1-5  | 2:9-12  | 3:1-5   |
| 1:6-10 | 2:13-16 | 3:6-10  |
| 2:1-8  | 2:17-20 | 3:11-13 |

### 2. The Present: The Labor of Love (4:1-12)

|       |        |
|-------|--------|
| 4:1-8 | 4:9-12 |
|-------|--------|

### 3. The Prospective: The Endurance of Hope (4:13–5:28)

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 4:13-18 | 5:12-13 | 5:23-24 |
| 5:1-11  | 5:14-22 | 5:25-28 |

## Second Thessalonians (Christ: The Reward of God to Us)

**Author and Name of Book:** As with 1 Thessalonians, this letter was also written by Paul (2 Thessalonians 1:1; 3:17).

**Date of Writing: A.D. 51–52** Because the historical circumstances are very similar to those of 1 Thessalonians, most believe it was written not long after the first letter, perhaps about six months. While conditions in the church were similar, the persecution seems to have grown (1:4-5), and this, with other factors, led Paul to write this letter from Corinth sometime in A.D. 51 or 52 after Silas and Timothy, the bearers of the first letter, had returned with the news of the new developments.

**Theme and Purpose:** Second Thessalonians was evidently prompted by three main developments that Paul heard about: (1) the news of increasing persecution which they were facing (1:4-5); (2) reports of a false-Pauline letter and other distortions of his teaching regarding the “Day of the Lord” (2:1f.); and (3) the way some were responding to belief in the return of the Lord. This belief was being used as a basis for not doing their daily work, so the apostle wrote to admonish them for their idleness (laziness) and the disorderliness (no order in their life) which had increased (3:5-15).

To meet the needs that occasioned this epistle, Paul wrote this epistle to comfort and correct. In doing so, he pursued three broad purposes. He wrote: (1) to inspire the Thessalonians to endure by describing the reward and punishment that will occur in the future judgment of God (1:3-10); (2) to clarify the main events belonging to the day of the Lord in order to prove the falseness of the claims that the day had already arrived (2:1-2); and (3) to give detailed instructions covering the steps the church should take in correcting those who refuse to work (3:6-15).

**Christ as Seen in 2 Thessalonians:** A major theme of this book, especially Chapters 1–2, is the return of Christ in judgment when He will put down all rebellion and bring punishment. Second Thessalonians anticipates Christ, the coming Judge.







The theme is to show how the grace of God that appeared to us in the saving life and death of Christ instructs us to deny ungodliness and to live righteously and soberly as a people full of good works that are in keeping with the doctrine of God (2:10–3:9).

Several important issues are discussed in the letter, including qualifications for elders (1:5-9), instructions to various age groups (2:1-8), relationship to government (3:1-2), the relation of regeneration to human works and to the Spirit (3:5) and the role of grace in promoting good works among God's people (2:11–3:8).

**Christ as Seen in Titus:** Consistent with the other teachings of Paul, we see how the conduct of the Christian is connected with the person and work of Christ—past, present and future. In this book, we see the deity (2:13) and redemptive work of the Savior (2:12). Here Christ Jesus is described as *“our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds”* (2:13-14).

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Salutation and Opening Greetings (1:1-4)

### 2. Qualifications of Elders in the Church (1:5-9)

### 3. Offenders of the Church (1:10-16)

### 4. Operation in the Church (2:1–3:11)

|       |         |        |
|-------|---------|--------|
| 2:1-2 | 2:9-10  | 3:1-11 |
| 2:3-5 | 2:11-14 |        |
| 2:6-8 | 2:15    |        |

### 5. Final Instructions and Greetings (3:12-15)

## Philemon

### (Christ: The Confidence of God to Us)

**Author and Name of Book:** As with the other prison epistles (Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians), Philemon was written by Paul during his first confinement in Rome. The letter is written to Philemon, the owner of Onesimus, one of the millions of slaves in the Roman Empire, who had stolen from his master and run away. Onesimus had made his way to Rome where he came in contact with the apostle Paul, who led him to trust in Christ (1:10). So now both Onesimus and Philemon were faced with doing their Christian duty toward one another. Onesimus was to return to his master and Philemon was to receive him with forgiveness as a Christian brother. Death was the normal punishment for a runaway slave, but Paul intercedes on behalf of Onesimus.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 60–61** Since it was written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, it was written around A.D. 60-61.

**Theme and Purpose:** The primary purpose of this letter, the most personal of all Paul's letters, was to ask Philemon to forgive Onesimus and accept him back as a beloved brother and fellow servant in the gospel (1:10-17). Paul asks Philemon to charge any debts that Onesimus may have made to his own account. As such, this epistle is a fitting illustration of Christ who took our place as our substitute (1:18). A secondary purpose is to teach the practicality of Christian love as we seek to express the life-changing effects of Christ's life in ours. It changes our relationships with others, whether in the home or in master/slave or employer/employee relationships. In the other prison epistles, Paul spoke of this new relationship (Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22; 4:1). In this letter we have a wonderful example. A final purpose was to express Paul's thanksgiving for Philemon and to request preparation for lodging for him when he was released from prison (1:4-7, 22). The theme, then, is the life-changing power of the gospel to reach into the varied social conditions of society and change our relationships from bondage to brotherhood.

Philemon was not the only slave owner in the Colossian church (Colossians 4:1), so this letter gave guidelines for other Christian masters in their relationships to their slave-brothers. Paul did not deny the rights of Philemon over

his slave, but he asked Philemon to relate the principle of Christian brotherhood to the situation with Onesimus (1:16). At the same time, Paul offered to pay personally whatever Onesimus owed. This letter is not an attack against slavery as such, but a suggestion as to how Christian masters and slaves could live their faith within that system. It is possible that Philemon did free Onesimus and send him back to Paul (1:14). It has also been suggested that Onesimus became a minister and later bishop of the church at Ephesus.<sup>84</sup>

**Christ as Seen in Philemon:** The forgiveness that the Believer finds in Christ is beautifully portrayed by analogy (an illustration) in Philemon. Onesimus, guilty of a great offense (1:11, 18), is motivated by Paul's love to intercede on his behalf (1:10-17). Paul lays aside his rights (1:8) and becomes Onesimus' substitute by assuming his debt (1:19). By Philemon's gracious act, Onesimus is restored and placed in a new relationship (1:15-16). In this analogy, we are as Onesimus. Paul's advocacy before Philemon is parallel to Christ's work of mediation before the Father. Onesimus was condemned by law but saved by grace.<sup>85</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline

### 1. Prayer of Thanksgiving for Philemon (1:1-7)

1:1-3

1:4-7

### 2. Petition of Paul for Onesimus (1:8-18)

1:8-9

1:10-16

1:17-18

### 3. Promise of Paul to Philemon (1:19-21)

### 4. Personal Matters (1:22-25)

## **Section 3**

### **The General Epistles**

**Introduction:** We now come to the final eight epistles of the New Testament Canon, seven of which have often been called the General or Catholic Epistles, although Hebrews has been excluded from this description. The term Catholic was used in the sense of general or universal to distinguish them from the Pauline Epistles which were addressed to churches or persons.<sup>86</sup> In their addresses (with the exception of 2 and 3 John), they were not limited to a single locality. As an illustration, James is addressed **“to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad,”** which is a designation for Believers everywhere (likely all Jewish Christians at that early date). Then 1 Peter is addressed “to those who reside as aliens (non-citizens), scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,” a designation to Believers in these various areas. The Epistles of 2 and 3 John have also been included in this group, even though they were addressed to specific individuals. Because of these differences, in this study these eight books are simply being called “The General Epistles.” It should be noted that the Pauline Epistles are not titled according to their addressees, but, with the exception of Hebrews, all these epistles are titled according to the names of their authors.

In general, we may say that James and 1 Peter are ethical (in accordance with divine principles of right and wrong), calling Believers to a holy walk with the Savior. Second Peter and Jude are eschatological (prophetical), warning Believers against the presence of false teachers and calling them to contend for the faith. Hebrews and the Epistles of John are primarily Christological and ethical, calling Christians to abide in Christ as God’s final revelation and fulfillment of the Old Testament covenant, to experience His life and not go beyond the truth of the gospel.

These eight epistles exert an influence out of proportion to their length (less than ten percent of the New Testament). They supplement the 13 Pauline Epistles by offering different perspectives on the richness of Christian truth. Each of the five authors (James, Peter, John, Jude and the author of Hebrews) has a distinctive contribution to make from his own point of view. Great as Paul’s epistles are, the New Testament revelation after Acts would be severely limited by one apostolic perspective if the writings of these five men were not included.<sup>87</sup>

### **Hebrews** **(Christ: The One Above All)**

**Author and Name of Book:** For about 1,200 years (A.D. 400 to 1,600), this book was commonly entitled, “The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews,” but there was no agreement in the earliest centuries regarding its authorship. The oldest and most reliable title of this book is, “to Hebrews.”

Many suggestions have been made and very detailed arguments put forth by scholars, but the fact is the author is nowhere named in the book and is, in essence, like its place of writing, date, and even its readership, unknown.

This book was not anonymous to the original readers; they evidently knew the author (13:18-24). For some reason, however, early church tradition is divided over the identity of the author. Part of the church attributed it to Paul; others preferred Barnabas, Luke, or Clement; and some chose anonymity (to stay unknown). The spiritual depth and quality of Hebrews bore witness to its inspiration, despite its anonymity.

Since the recipients are not mentioned as in the Pauline Epistles, we might say a word about them. The very nature of the book, with its many Old Testament quotations and the emphasis on the sacrificial system, strongly suggests they were Hebrews. Zane C. Hodges says:

The identity of the first readers of Hebrews, like the author, is unknown. Nevertheless they were evidently part of a particular community. This appears from several considerations. The readers had a definite history and the writer referred to their “earlier days” (Hebrews 10:32-34); he knew about their past and present generosity to other Christians (6:10); and he was able to be specific about their current spiritual condition (5:11-14). Moreover, the author had definite links with them and expressed his intention to visit them, perhaps with Timothy (13:19, 23). He also requested their prayers (13:18).

In all probability the readers were chiefly of Jewish background. Although this has sometimes been questioned, the contents of the epistle argue for it. Of course the ancient title “To the Hebrews” might be only a conjecture, but it is a natural one. When everything is said for a Gentile audience that can be said, the fact remains that the author’s heavy stress (emphasis) on Jewish prototypes and his earnest polemic (argument) against the permanence of the Levitical system are best explained if the audience was largely Jewish and inclined to be swayed back to their old faith. The heavy and extensive appeal to the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures also was most suitable to readers who had been brought up on them.<sup>88</sup>

**Date of Writing: A.D. 64–68** Several facts suggest a date sometime between A.D. 64–68. First, the book was quoted by Clement of Rome (a pastor in the early church) in A.D. 95, so it had to have been written before that time. Second, it seems quite apparent that the book was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 for the following reasons: (1) The author would have mentioned the Temple’s destruction along with the end of the Jewish sacrificial system if such an event of this importance had occurred, especially in view of the argument of this book; (2) the author speaks of the Temple and the priestly activities in a manner which indicates that they were still going on (5:1-3; 7:23, 27; 8:3-5; 9:6-9, 13, 25; 10:1, 3-4, 8, 11; 13:10-11); and (3) the author refers to Timothy’s recent release in 13:23, which, if in connection with his ministry to Paul in Rome, requires a date in the late 60s.

**Theme and Purpose:** Clearly, the theme of Hebrews is the surpassing greatness of Christ or His superiority and, thus, also that of Christianity to all of the Old Testament systems. Several words—better, perfect and heavenly—are prominently used to demonstrate this. As his primary purpose, the author seeks to demonstrate five significant ways Christ is superior or better. He is superior: (1) to the Old Testament prophets (1:1-3), (2) to angels (1:4–2:18), (3) to Moses (3:1-6), (4) to Joshua (3:7–4:16) and (5) to Aaron’s priesthood (5:1–10:18). The goal of this theme is to warn his readers against the dangers of giving up the substance of what they have in Christ for the temporary shadows of the Old Testament system (10:1). Thus, the readers are encouraged to go on to maturity and their reward as faithful Believers, fulfilling their heavenly calling. To do this, there are five warning passages inserted to challenge them to progress in their Christian faith (2:1-4; 3:1–4:13; 5:11–6:20; 10:26-39; 12:14-29).

**Christ as Seen in Hebrews:** In accomplishing the purpose of showing the superiority of Christ, Hebrews becomes the most Christological single book of the New Testament. Here He is declared as Son, as the very outshining and representation of the essence of God (1:3, 13), as the One who sat at God’s right hand (1:3), as the One declared by God the Father as God (1:8-9), as the eternal Creator (1:10-12) and as the eternal Priest according to the order of Melchizedek (ch. 7). Here Christ is presented as the divine-human Prophet, Priest and King. He is seen as our Redeemer who, having been made like His brethren, has once and for all dealt with our sin and done that which the temporary sacrifices could never do. As such, He has now passed into the heavens as our Great High Priest as one who sympathizes with our weaknesses.

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **The Superiority of Christ to Old Covenant Leaders (1:1–7:28)**
  - a. Christ is Superior to Old Testament Prophets (1:1-3)
  - b. Christ is Superior to the Angels (1:4–2:18)
 

|        |        |         |
|--------|--------|---------|
| 1:4-14 | 2:5-8  | 2:14-18 |
| 2:1-4  | 2:9-13 |         |
  - c. Christ is Superior to Moses (3:1-6)
  - d. Christ is Superior to Joshua (3:7–4:13)
 

|         |        |  |
|---------|--------|--|
| 3:7-11  | 4:1-5  |  |
| 3:12-19 | 4:6-13 |  |
  - e. Christ is Superior to the Aaronic Priesthood (4:14–7:28)
    - 1) Instruction to Hold Fast (4:14-16)
    - 2) Qualifications of a Priest (5:1-10)
 

|       |        |  |
|-------|--------|--|
| 5:1-4 | 5:5-10 |  |
|-------|--------|--|
    - 3) Instruction to Abandon Spiritual Laziness (5:11–6:12)
 

|         |       |        |
|---------|-------|--------|
| 5:11-14 | 6:1-8 | 6:9-12 |
|---------|-------|--------|
    - 4) Certainty of God’s Promise (6:13-20)
    - 5) Christ’s Superior Priestly Order (7:1-28)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 7:1-3  | 7:11-22 |  |
| 7:4-10 | 7:23-28 |  |

- 2. The Superior Sacrificial Work as Our High Priest (8:1–10:39)**
- a. A Better Covenant (8:1-13)
 

|       |        |  |
|-------|--------|--|
| 8:1-6 | 8:7-13 |  |
|-------|--------|--|
  - b. A Better Sanctuary (9:1-10)
 

|       |        |  |
|-------|--------|--|
| 9:1-5 | 9:6-10 |  |
|-------|--------|--|
  - c. A Better Sacrifice (9:11–10:18)
 

|         |         |          |
|---------|---------|----------|
| 9:11-14 | 9:23-28 | 10:11-18 |
| 9:15-22 | 10:1-10 |          |
  - d. Instructions (10:19-39)
 

|          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 10:19-25 | 10:26-31 | 10:32-39 |
|----------|----------|----------|
- 3. Final Plea for Persevering Faith (11:1–12:29)**
- a. Examples of Past Heroes of the Faith (11:1-40)
 

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 11:1-2  | 11:13-16 | 11:30-31 |
| 11:3-7  | 11:17-22 | 11:32-38 |
| 11:8-12 | 11:23-29 | 11:39-40 |
  - b. Encouragement for Persevering Faith (12:1-11)
 

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| 12:1-2 | 12:3-11 |  |
|--------|---------|--|
  - c. Instructions for Persevering Faith (12:12-17)
 

|          |          |  |
|----------|----------|--|
| 12:12-13 | 12:14-17 |  |
|----------|----------|--|
  - d. Motivation for Persevering Faith (12:18-29)
 

|          |          |  |
|----------|----------|--|
| 12:18-24 | 12:25-29 |  |
|----------|----------|--|
- 4. The Conclusion (13:1-25)**
- a. Practical Principles for the Christian Life (13:1-17)
 

|        |         |          |
|--------|---------|----------|
| 13:1-6 | 13:7-14 | 13:15-17 |
|--------|---------|----------|
  - b. Request for Prayer (13:18-19)
  - c. Benediction (13:20-21)
  - d. Personal Remarks (13:22-23)
  - e. Greetings and Final Benediction (13:24-25)

## James (Christ: The Example)

**Author and Name of Book:** This epistle begins with “*James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad*” (1:1). There were four men with the name James in the New Testament. These were: (1) the son of Zebedee and brother of John (Mark 1:19), (2) the son of Alphaeus (Mark 3:18), (3) the father of Judas (not Iscariot; Luke 6:16) and (4) the half brother of the Lord (Galatians 1:19). Regarding this, Ryrie writes:

Of the four men bearing the name James in the New Testament, only two have been proposed as the author of this letter—James the son of Zebedee (and brother of John) and James the half brother of Jesus. It is unlikely that the son of Zebedee was the author, for he was martyred in A.D. 44 (Acts 12:2). The authoritative tone of the letter not only rules out the two lesser known Jameses of the New Testament (“James the Less” and the James of Luke 6:16) but points to the half brother of Jesus who became the recognized leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18). This conclusion is supported by the resemblances in the Greek between this epistle and the speech of James at the Council of Jerusalem (James 1:1 and Acts 15:23; James 1:27 and Acts 15:14; James 2:5 and Acts 15:13).<sup>89</sup>

The way James addresses the recipients needs to be explained. James is addressed “*to the twelve tribes who are dispersed (scattered) abroad*” (1:1). As is suggested from “my brethren” in 1:19 and 2:1, 7, this is a reference, not to the dispersion that occurred between A.D. 66–70, but to the Christian Jews dispersed from their homeland through the past dispersions (Matthew 1:11, 12, 17). In the early chapters of Acts, Jews were in Jerusalem from all parts of the world for Pentecost (Acts 1:5). Many of these saw and heard the miracles of Pentecost and came to believe in Jesus Christ. Eventually, many returned to their respective homes in various parts of the world. It is to these that James was writing.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 45 or 46** James was probably the first epistle written, and most scholars date the book about A.D. 45. The reasons are as follows: (1) There is a very distinctive Jewish character to the book which suggests it was written when the church was still predominantly Jewish; (2) there is no reference made to the controversy over Gentile circumcision; (3) the term “synagogue” is used to designate the meeting or meeting place rather than the word “church” (2:2); (4) the lack of reference to issues involved in the Jerusalem Council, like the relationship of Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians (Acts 15:1f.; A.D. 49), also suggests a very early date and (5) “The references to the teachings of Christ have such little verbal agreement with the Gospels that they probably preceded them.”<sup>90</sup>

**Theme and Purpose:** Clearly, James is concerned about possessing an active faith that is vital, powerful and functional. James is writing to warn Believers about the consequences of a dead, inactive faith, both personally and corporately, and to stir them to growth and true spiritual maturity.

**Christ as Seen in James:** In 1:1 and 2:1, James specifically refers to the “Lord Jesus Christ” and then anticipates His coming (5:7-8). In the 108 verses of this epistle, there are references or inferences from 22 books of the Old Testament and at least 15 allusions to the teachings of Christ from the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>91</sup>

## For Personal Study: Outline<sup>92</sup>

### 1. Stand with Confidence (1:1-27)

- |  |         |        |
|--|---------|--------|
| a. Salutation and Greeting (1:1)         |         |        |
| b. Rejoice in Diverse Trials (1:2-12)    |         |        |
| 1:2-4                                    | 1:5-8   | 1:9-12 |
| c. Resist in Deadly Temptation (1:13-18) |         |        |
| d. Rest in Divine Truth (1:19-27)        |         |        |
| 1:19-25                                  | 1:26-27 |        |

### 2. Serve with Compassion (2:1-26)

- |                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| a. Accept Others (2:1-13)  |         |
| 2:1-7                      | 2:8-13  |
| b. Assist Others (2:14-26) |         |
| 2:14-17                    | 2:18-26 |

### 3. Speak with Care (3:1-18)

- |                                |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| a. Control Talk (3:1-12)       |        |
| 3:1-5                          | 3:6-12 |
| b. Cultivate Thought (3:13-18) |        |

### 4. Submit with Repentance (4:1-17)

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| a. Turn Hatred Into Humility (4:1-6)   |         |
| b. Turn Judgment Into Justice (4:7-12) |         |
| 4:7-10                                 | 4:11-12 |
| c. Turn Boasting Into Belief (4:13-17) |         |

### 5. Share with Concern (5:1-20)

- |                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| a. Share in Possessions (5:1-6) |         |
| b. Share in Patience (5:7-12)   |         |
| c. Share in Prayer (5:13-20)    |         |
| 5:13-18                         | 5:19-20 |

# **First Peter**

## **(Christ: The Example of Suffering)**

**Author and Name of Book:** The opening verse clearly states that the apostle Peter is the author (1:1). First Peter was universally recognized as a work of the apostle Peter by the early church.

The epistle is addressed to those who reside as aliens (in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia) who are chosen (Believers) (1:1). This refers primarily to both Jewish and Gentile Believers who are temporary residents of earth and Jews who have been affected by the dispersion. “The scattered” normally refers to Jews not living in Palestine but dispersed throughout the Mediterranean world. Here it is probably used of Gentile Christians spread out as God’s people in the midst of a godless world.<sup>93</sup> Peter had both Jew and Gentile Believers in mind.

First Peter is addressed to Christians scattered throughout five Roman provinces of the peninsula of Asia Minor. That area today is northern Turkey. The churches in those provinces were made up of both Jews and Gentiles. This epistle is rich in references and quotations from the Old Testament. Jewish Christians would have found special significance in the term DIASPORA, translated “scattered,” used in the salutation (1:1). Jews who lived outside of Jerusalem were referred to as living in the DIASPORA.

Gentile readers would have noted Peter’s instruction to holy living in light of their background of complete ignorance of God’s Word (1:14). Gentile Christians also would have been greatly encouraged by the fact that, although they were in ignorance, they were now considered “the people of God” (2:10). Clearly Peter carefully included both Jewish and Gentile Christians in his letter of encouragement to the churches of Asia Minor.<sup>94</sup>

**Date of Writing: A.D. 63–64** Church tradition connects Peter in his later years with the city of Rome. If the reference to Babylon in 5:13 is a coded reference to Rome, this letter was written while Peter was in Rome during the last decade of his life, about A.D. 63, just before the outbreak of Nero’s persecution in A.D. 64. Peter does not yet regard Rome as an enemy of Christianity (1 Peter 2:13-17). It would have been more difficult to make this statement after the outbreak of Nero’s persecution.

**Theme and Purpose:** While 1 Peter addresses various doctrines and has much to say about Christian life and Christian responsibilities, the theme and purpose of 1 Peter centers around the problem of suffering, particularly suffering in the form of persecution for one’s faith. This book has been described as a manual or handbook to show Christians how they should live as temporary residents and ambassadors of Christ in a hostile world (1:1, 13-21; 2:11-12; 3:14, 17; 4:1, 13, 15, 16, 19).

There are several specific purposes in this book. It is designed to provide direction for Believers under persecution: (1) by focusing on the coming revelation of Christ and its deliverance (1:3-12), (2) by following Christ as their perfect example in suffering (2:21-24) and (3) by living in the world in accordance with their calling as a special people of God by maintaining a good report with the Gentile world (2:4-12; 4:1-19). Other purposes include demonstrating the essential link between doctrine and practice (5:12) and encouraging godly leadership and shepherding the flock of God (5:1-4), which is a necessary element in the church’s ability to function effectively in a hostile world.

**Christ as Seen in 1 Peter:** The book is loaded with the person and work of Christ. Through the resurrection of Christ, Christians have “a living hope” and “an imperishable (not open to destruction) inheritance” (1:3-4). In several places, Peter speaks of the coming glory and revelation of Christ (1:7, 13; 4:13; 5:1). He also speaks of the person and work of Christ as God’s Lamb who redeemed us by bearing our sins on the cross (1:18-19; 2:24), of Christ as our perfect example in suffering (2:21-24) and of Christ as the Chief Shepherd and Guardian of Believers (2:25; 5:4).

## **For Personal Study: Outline**

- 1. The Salvation of Believers (1:1-12)**
  - a. Salutation (1:1-2)
  - b. Future (Living) Hope and Present Trial (1:3-9)
  - c. Present Salvation and Past Revelation (1:10-12)



As a further foundation for handling false teachers, Peter described the nature of God's Word as their sure foundation (1:12-21) and then warned against the certain coming dangers of false teachers whom he also carefully described along with their sure judgment (2:1-22). Finally, he encouraged his readers with the certainty of Christ's return (3:1-16). With this final emphasis on the return of the Lord, Peter gave a final challenge,

***Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,... You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.***

**Christ as Seen in 2 Peter:** Peter speaks of Christ as the source of life and godliness, and, in keeping with the focus, he speaks of Christ as "Lord and Savior" four times and speaks of Him as "Lord" fourteen times. In addition, he refers to the glorious transfiguration on the holy mountain and looks forward to the Savior's second coming. At this time, the whole world will see what Peter and the other two disciples were privileged to see on that holy mountain.

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Greetings (1:1-2)**
2. **The Development or Cultivation of Christian Character (1:3-21)**
  - a. The Growth of Faith (1:3-11)
 

|       |       |        |
|-------|-------|--------|
| 1:3-4 | 1:5-8 | 1:9-11 |
|-------|-------|--------|
  - b. The Grounds of Faith (1:12-21)
 

|         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 1:12-15 | 1:16-18 | 1:19-21 |
|---------|---------|---------|
3. **The Denouncement or Condemnation of False Teachers (2:1-22)**
  - a. Their Danger and Conduct (2:1-3)
  - b. Their Destruction or Condemnation (2:4-9)
  - c. Their Description and Characteristics (2:10-22)
4. **The Design and Confidence for the Future (3:1-18)**
  - a. The Derision of the False Teachers (3:1-7)
 

|       |       |  |
|-------|-------|--|
| 3:1-2 | 3:3-7 |  |
|-------|-------|--|
  - b. The Delay of the Day of the Lord (3:8-9)
  - c. The Dissolution Following the Day of the Lord (3:10-13)
  - d. The Diligence Needed in View of the Dangers (3:14-18)

## First John (Christ: The Love of God)

**Author and Name of Book:** While the author's name is not found in the letter, it has traditionally been credited to John the apostle. The writer was one of the original witnesses of the Savior who knew Him intimately (1:1-5).

All the way through the epistle, there are verses that indicate John was writing to Believers (2:1, 12-14, 19; 3:1; 5:13), but John nowhere indicates who they were or where they lived. This fact may suggest it was a letter written to be circulated among several churches. Perhaps they were churches around the city of Ephesus, since early Christian writers placed John at Ephesus in his later years.

The earliest confirmed use of 1 John was in the province of Asia (in modern Turkey) where Ephesus was located. Clement of Alexandria (a first century pastor) indicates that John ministered in the various churches scattered throughout that province. It may be assumed, therefore, that 1 John was sent to the churches of the province of Asia.<sup>95</sup>

**Date of Writing: A.D. 85–90** It is difficult to date this and the other epistles of John, but since many of the themes and words are so similar to the gospel of John, it is reasonable to assume it was written after the gospel but before the persecutions of Domitian in A.D. 95. Therefore, a reasonable date is somewhere between A.D. 85–90.



## **Second John** (Christ: The Incarnate God)

**Author and Name of Book:** Although not stated, the author is John the apostle. He simply refers to himself as “the elder,” which is in keeping with the silence of the author of both the Gospel of John and 1 John. This is the same introduction used by the author of 3 John. Since he identifies himself simply as “the elder,” it suggests that he was well known and established with the recipients of the letter. This was an official title for the office of an elder, but it is perhaps more likely that he was using it as a personal designation by which he was well known to his readers.

Since the book has been traditionally tied to the apostle John as the author, it has been titled “Second of John.”

The letter is addressed “*to the elect lady and her children*” (1:1, 4-5). The precise identity of these recipients cannot be established.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 85–90** It is difficult to date the letter, but the circumstances and subjects in the letter suggest it was probably written about the same time as 1 John (A.D. 85–90). The above similarities indicate this as well (see the date as discussed in 1 John).

**Theme and Purpose:** The theme of 2 John is the apostle’s concern that his readers continue to walk in the truth of apostolic doctrine and in accordance with the commandments (1:4-6). Because “*many deceivers have gone out into the world, people who do not confess Jesus as Christ coming in the flesh*” (1:7), John was writing to protect them from the evil deception of those who refused to remain in the teaching of Christ and were departing from the truth (1:9). In keeping with this, two purposes are seen: (1) he wrote to keep his readers from losing their full reward (1:9) and (2) to give them clear instructions about receiving these false teachers into their homes or house churches and giving them a Christian greeting. John did not want them allowed into their home churches and recognized as teachers of the truth. John was not telling them to be offensive or refuse to witness to them.

**Christ as Seen in 2 John:** As in 1 John, 2 John is concerned with protecting the Biblical doctrine of the incarnation. He wrote to prove false those who deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.

### **For Personal Study: Outline**

1. Prologue and Greeting (1:1-3)
2. Commendation for Walking in the Truth (1:4)
3. Commandment to Continue to Love One Another (1:5-6)
4. Cautions and Instructions Against False Teachers (1:7-11)
5. Concluding Remarks and Final Greetings (1:12-13)

## **Third John** (Christ: The Name)

**Author and Name of Book:** The apostle John is also the author of this epistle. In both 2 and 3 John, the author identifies himself as “the elder.” Also, note the similar phrases found in both epistles: “love in the truth” (1:1 of both letters) and “walking in the truth” (1:4 of both letters).

This is clearly the most personal letter of John. It is addressed to “the beloved Gaius” (1:1) regarding church problems Gaius had encountered. The recipient is simply identified no further than by the above description, which suggests he was well known by those of the churches of Asia Minor where John served for the last years of his life. Gaius is a familiar name in the New Testament. The name appears in Romans 16:23 (a Gaius of Corinth),

Acts 19:29 (a Gaius of Macedonia) and Acts 20:4 (a Gaius of Derbe), but no connection can be established between any of these men and John.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 85–90** Again, the similarities between 1 and 2 John suggest a similar date of somewhere between A.D. 85–90.

**Theme and Purpose:** John writes Gaius regarding the issue of hospitality and physical support to traveling Christian workers (missionaries), especially when they were strangers. The theme centers around the contrast between the ministry of Gaius and his generous demonstration of Christian love as one walking in the truth to the selfish behavior of Diotrephes who, rather than walking in the truth, rejected what John had said and was seeking personal superiority (1:9).

Several distinct purposes emerge in this epistle: (1) to commend Gaius (1:1-6a), (2) to instruct and encourage the continuation of his support for the Christian workers John had evidently sent (1:6b-8), (3) to rebuke Diotrephes for his self-centered behavior (1:9-11), (4) to give instruction for Demetrius (1:12) and (5) to inform Gaius of John's desire and intention to visit and deal with the difficulties (1:10a, 13-14).

**Christ as Seen in 3 John:** While the name of Jesus Christ is not mentioned directly, He is referred to in the statement, **“For they have gone forth on behalf of *The Name*.”** This is undoubtedly a reference to ministry on behalf of the Lord Jesus (Acts 5:40-41 where we have the identical Greek grammatical construction in 5:41). Paul uses a similar phrase in Romans 1:5. In 1 John 2:12, John wrote, **“your sins are forgiven on account of His (Christ's) name.”** John's Gospel also makes reference to believing **“in the name of Jesus”** (John 1:12, 3:18).

## For Personal Study: Outline

1. **Greeting or Introduction (1:1)**
2. **Commendation of Gaius (1:2-8)**
  - a. His Godliness (1:2-4)
  - b. His Generosity (1:5-8)
3. **Condemnation of Diotrephes (1:9-11)**
  - a. His Selfish Ambition (1:9)
  - b. His Selfish Activities (1:10-11)
4. **Commendation of Demetrius (1:12)**
5. **Concluding Remarks (1:13-14)**

## Jude

### (Christ: The Security for Mankind)

**Author and Name of Book:** The author identifies himself as Jude (1:1). The Greek is literally, Judas. Traditionally, English versions have used Jude to distinguish him from the Judas who betrayed Jesus. The writer also identifies himself as the brother of James and bond-servant of Jesus Christ. Jude is listed as the half-brother of Jesus in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3.

It is helpful to notice that:

Although Jude was half-brother of Jesus, he humbly associates himself with James, his full brother. By first calling himself a slave of Jesus Christ, it is evident that he wants no one to place stock in his physical connections. At the same time, he must identify himself further. Since Jude was a common name in the first century (two of Jesus' disciples were so named, including his betrayer), more information was needed, that is to say, brother of James.<sup>96</sup>

Jude seems to be addressed to all Christians, not just a specific group of people. Rather, the letter is simply addressed **“to those who are called, wrapped in the love of God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ”** (1:1). He later addresses them as “beloved” or “dear friends” (1:3).

**Date of Writing: A.D. 70–80** Although the subject matter is very similar to 2 Peter, one of the chief differences between Jude and 2 Peter is that, while Peter warned that “there shall be false teachers” (2 Peter 2:1), Jude states that “there are certain men who have secretly slipped in among you” (1:4). Since 2 Peter anticipates the problem and Jude speaks of it as present, apparently Jude was written some time later than 2 Peter. If 2 Peter is dated around A.D. 67–68, then Jude might be placed around A.D. 70–80.

**Theme and Purpose:** Jude intended to write about our common salvation, but because of the progress of various heresies and the danger threatening the church, he was compelled instead to encourage Believers to defend the faith against false teachings that were secretly being introduced into the churches by the Gnostics. The Gnostics viewed everything material as evil and everything spiritual as good. Therefore, they cultivated their “spiritual” lives and allowed their flesh to do anything it liked, with the result that they were guilty of all kinds of lawlessness.<sup>97</sup>

From this, two major purposes can be seen in Jude: (1) to condemn the practices of immoral people who were infesting the churches and corrupting Believers and (2) to counsel Believers to stand fast, continue to grow in faith while contending for the apostolic truth that had been handed down to the church.

**Christ as Seen in Jude:** Jude focuses our attention on the Believer’s security in Christ (1:24), on the eternal life He gives (1:21) and on His sure coming again (1:21). It is Jesus Christ our Lord who gives us access into God’s presence (1:25).

## **For Personal Study: Outline**

- 1. Greetings and Purpose (1:1-4)**
- 2. Description and Exposure of False Teachers (1:5-16)**
  - a. Their Past Judgment (1:5-7)
  - b. Their Present Characteristics (1:8-13)
  - c. Their Future Judgment (1:14-16)
- 3. Defense and Instruction to Believers (1:17-23)**
- 4. Benediction (1:24-25)**

## Section 4

# The Prophetic Book

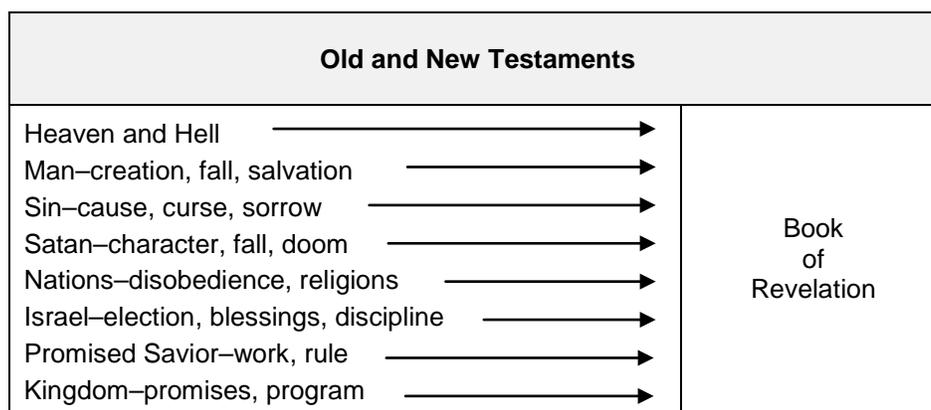
## Revelation

(Christ: The Returning One)

**Introduction:** With the book of Revelation, we have the conclusion and completion of the Bible as God's revelation to man. As Genesis is the book of beginnings, Revelation is the book of completion. It describes the end-time events, the return of the Lord, His end-time reign and the eternal state. As one moves through the Bible, a number of great themes are introduced and developed, such as: heaven and earth; sin, its curse and sorrow; man and his salvation; Satan, his fall and doom; Israel, her election, blessing and discipline; the nations; Babylon and Babylonianism and the kingdoms and the Kingdom. Ultimately, all of these find their fulfillment and resolution in the Book of Revelation. The Gospels and Epistles begin to draw these together, but it is not until we come to Revelation that they all converge.

We may chart this as follows:

### Revelation: The Fulfillment of the Bible



**Author and Name of Book:** According to the book itself, the author's name was John (1:4, 9; 22:8). He was a prophet (22:9) and a leader who was known in the churches of Asia Minor to whom he writes the book of Revelation (1:4).

Traditionally, this John has been identified as John the Apostle, one of the disciples of our Lord. The writing style is different from that of the Gospel of John which stems from the prophetic nature of this book.

**Date of Writing: A.D. 96** This book was written during the reign of Domitian, and since this is confirmed by other early church writers, such as Clement of Alexander and Eusebius, most scholars believe the book was written between A.D. 81–96. This would make it the last book of the New Testament, just shortly after John's gospel and his epistles (1, 2, and 3 John).

**Theme and Purpose:** In Revelation, the main theme of the book concerns the conflict between evil in the form of human personalities, energized by Satan through his world-wide system, and the Lord's triumphant victory over these enemies to establish His kingdom both in the Millennium (the 1,000 years of Revelation 20) and in eternity.

This is accomplished by taking the reader and hearers (1:3) behind the scenes through the visions given to John to demonstrate the demonic nature and source of the evil in the world. Revelation also demonstrates the conquering power which rests in the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. This Lion is also the Lamb standing as if slain but very much alive, angry and bringing the judgment of God's awesome holiness against a sinful and rebellious world.



|  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| 10) The Beast and the False Prophet (13:1-18)                                |          |          |
| 13:1-6   | 13:7-10  | 13:11-18 |
| 11) Special Announcements (14:1-20)  |          |          |
| 14:1-5   | 14:9-12  | 14:17-20 |
| 14:6-7   | 14:13    |          |
| 14:8   | 14:14-16 |          |
| 12) Prelude to the Seven Last Plagues (15:1-8)                               |          |          |
| 15:1   | 15:2-4   | 15:5-8   |
| 13) The Bowl Judgments (16:1-21)   |          |          |
| 16:1   | 16:4-7   | 16:12    |
| 16:2   | 16:8-9   | 16:13-16 |
| 16:3   | 16:10-11 | 16:17-21 |
| 14) The Judgment of Religious Babylon (17:1-18)                              |          |          |
| 17:1-7   | 17:8-14  | 17:15-18 |
| 15) The Judgment of Commercial Babylon (18:1-24)                             |          |          |
| 18:1-3   | 18:9-10  | 18:21-24 |
| 18:4-8   | 18:11-20 |          |
| 16) The Second Coming of Christ (19:1-21)                                    |          |          |
| 19:1-4   | 19:9-10  | 19:19-21 |
| 19:5-6   | 19:11-16 |          |
| 19:7-8   | 19:17-18 |          |
| b. The Reign of Christ (the Millennium) and the Great White Throne (20:1-15) |          |          |
| 1) Satan Bound (20:1-3)  |          |          |
| 2) Saints Resurrected (20:4-6)   |          |          |
| 3) Sinners in Rebellion (20:7-9)   |          |          |
| 4) Satan Doomed (20:10)  |          |          |
| 5) Sinners Judged (20:11-15)   |          |          |
| c. The Eternal State (21:1–22:5)   |          |          |
| 1) The Descent of the New Jerusalem (21:1-8)                                 |          |          |
| 21:1-4   | 21:5-8   |          |
| 2) The Description of the New Jerusalem (21:9-27)                            |          |          |
| 21:9-14  | 21:15-21 | 21:22-27 |
| 3) The Delights of the New Jerusalem (22:1-5)                                |          |          |
| d. The Epilogue (22:6-21)  |          |          |
| 22:6   | 22:12-13 | 22:18-19 |
| 22:7   | 22:14-15 | 22:20    |
| 22:8-9   | 22:16    | 22:21    |
| 22:10-11   | 22:17    |          |



## **Chapter 4**

# **Basic Principles of Interpretation**

# Introduction

Chapter Four is designed to introduce the student to four basic rules and fifteen basic principles of interpretation. In this chapter, a rule means a fixed guideline that needs to be observed at all times in our study of God's Word. A principle is an ingredient of the rule that is important to its use but may not need to be applied at all times. As we progress through this portion of our study, the student will come to understand how and when to use the various principles introduced in this chapter.

The correct interpretation of God's Word is a lifelong pursuit. There is no formula where one would be able to open the Bible and in a few minutes be able to understand what each and every passage means. The student should not become so frustrated that he quits searching for the truth! God placed some difficult things in His Word on purpose, so that we would have to rely on the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10-16). While some passages may be easy to understand, others will not be understood this side of eternity (1 Corinthians 13:12).

If the interpretation of God's Word could be done by a formula, then an unbeliever could interpret all of God's Word. God desires His followers to seek Him and study His Word as part of our process of spiritual growth (2 Timothy 2:15). Please use these rules and principles as important guidelines but rely on the Holy Spirit who is the One who will lead you into all truth (John 16:13).

The following list is a summary of the rules and principles we are about to study:

## **Rule One: Seek to Acquire Facts About God and Christ Jesus by Searching All of Scripture**

- A. Principle One: Study the Essence of God
- B. Principle Two: Seek the Way Christ is Revealed

## **Rule Two: Seek to Understand the Facts by Using the Clear Passage as Your Guide**

- A. Principle Three: Realize that Revelation is Progressive
- B. Principle Four: Interpret Literally
- C. Principle Five: Consider the Specifics
- D. Principle Six: Study the Primary Passages
- E. Principle Seven: Recognize Human Volition
- F. Principle Eight: Remember the Covenants

## **Rule Three: Seek to be Wise by Comparing Scripture with Scripture**

- A. Principle Nine: Look for the Differences
- B. Principle Ten: Consider the Context
- C. Principle Eleven: Interpret Comparatively
- D. Principle Twelve: Seek the Harmony
- E. Principle Thirteen: Consider the Dispensation
- F. Principle Fourteen: Be Careful with Prophecy

## **Rule Four: Seek to Live the Christian Life by Properly Applying God's Word**

- A. Principle Fifteen: Proper Application is Built on Proper Interpretation
- B. Five Steps to a Proper Application
- C. Six Hindrances to Proper Interpretation
- D. Eight Ways to Fail the Application

# **Section 1**

## **Rule One**

### **Seek to Acquire Facts About God and Christ Jesus by Searching All of Scripture**

This rule recognizes the basic characteristics of God's essence, also known as His attributes, as vitally important to correct interpretation. His essence is never compromised nor inconsistent with itself. This rule is based on the fact that the more we know and fully appreciate the awesome nature of God (Philippians 3:10), the more skilled we will be in understanding what He has to say.

The fact that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit all possess the same essence is Biblical proof of the Trinity. The term "Trinity" refers to the fact that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three manifestations of one God. They have basically three roles. The Father is the Planner (Acts 2:23), the Son is the Agent (John 5:36) and the Holy Spirit is the Revealer (John 16:13). While we may study their different roles, we must not seek to divide the Trinity. There is only One God (Deuteronomy 6:4); since the Father, Son and Holy Spirit all share the characteristics that only God can possess, they are all God and are One.

We will analyze the Trinity in much more detail in later sections.

#### **A. Principle One: Study the Essence of God**

There are ten key characteristics that God possesses. They should be memorized and consistently reviewed.

##### **1. Sovereignty**

God is SOVEREIGN, meaning that He is King and acts accordingly. Sovereignty is the exercise of supreme authority within a limited sphere. God, free from external control, is the supreme authority over all creation. He is the Creator, not the created (Romans 1:20, 25). Therefore, He has the authority to establish His own plan, His own laws and His own judgments. In short, He has the authority to act as He chooses to act, although His purposes may be hard to understand.

##### **2. Righteousness**

God is absolute RIGHTEOUSNESS, meaning that He is perfect in every way. He is the standard of righteousness in every regard. He is morally complete, setting the standard we are to imitate (Ephesians 5:1).

##### **3. Justice**

God is JUST, meaning that He is totally and completely fair. God's justice is a response to the demands of His righteousness. God is not a "respector of persons" (Romans 2:11); He shows no partiality. Where sin (a violation of His law) occurs (Romans 5:13), His Justice must be satisfied.

##### **4. Love**

God is LOVE, meaning that perfect and unconditional love is found in Him. Love means doing what is right and best for others, even if doing so is accompanied with unpleasant feelings. Christians are to partake of God's love and spread it to others so that all might come to know Him (John 13:34-35).

##### **5. Eternal Life**

God is ETERNAL LIFE. He always has been and always will be. Eternal life has no beginning or end. We as Christians actually possess everlasting life, which has a beginning point, but no end. God's Eternal Life teaches that He is not ever subject to death.

##### **6. Omnipotent–All Powerful**

God is OMNIPOTENT, meaning that He has the power to do anything. An example of His Omnipotence is found in the creation of the heavens and earth (Genesis 1:1). We are told that the "word of His mouth," created the heavens and His "breath," all their hosts (Psalm 33:6).

### 7. Omnipresent—At All Places

God is OMNIPRESENT, meaning that He is everywhere at the same time with the same intensity. This does not mean that God is everything (Pantheism), but that He is everywhere. This concept shows us the personal nature of God.

### 8. Omniscient—All Knowing

God is OMNISCIENT. He knows everything—past, present and future. God knows the outcome of all things, not only the actualities but also all the possibilities. He knows all of the effects, throughout all of time, which each decision will bring. His eternal plan has considered all of these factors (Romans 8:28-30).

### 9. Immutable—Unchanging

God is IMMUTABLE, meaning that the aspects of His Essence never change.

### 10. Truthful

God is absolute TRUTH. This characteristic tells us that everything God says is totally believable (Numbers 23:19). It is in fact impossible for God to lie (Titus 1:2).

## For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 1A

1. Memorize the ten key characteristics of God that are given.
2. Read Psalm 11 and identify as many of the characteristics as you can.

### B. Principle Two: Seek the Way Christ is Revealed

The second principle realizes that all of history is focused around Jesus Christ. It recognizes that Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things (John 1:1, 3, 14; Colossians 1:16-17), the Alpha and Omega, “the beginning and end” (Revelation 1:8), the one and only God who became man (Philippians 2:6-8).

As we seek to understand God’s Word, we must determine how our interpretation of a given passage conforms to the Truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. One way to do this is to determine what each person, place, thing or event in Scripture teaches us about our Lord. We are encouraged to study and look for “the good things” (the real truth, our Lord Jesus Christ), not just to look to the old Law, which was merely a “shadow” of these good things (Hebrews 10:1; John 14:6). All of the people, places and events in the Old Testament were placed there by God as examples to help us understand and learn about Him (1 Corinthians 10:1-6).

An example of a **person** teaching us about the Lord would be found in the prophet, Jonah. As you may remember, Jonah did not want to go to the Assyrians as he had been commanded by God. Instead, he got on a ship and went in another direction. A storm occurred and Jonah was thrown overboard. He was swallowed by a great fish and, three days later, vomited up on an Assyrian beach where he then decided to comply with God’s commands. The three days and nights came to be called the “sign of the prophet Jonah” (Matthew 12:39-40), which revealed the time that Jesus would be in the tomb.

A **place** can also teach us about the Lord. Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) which means “house of bread.” Jesus was indeed bread which came down out of heaven and the Person who would sustain spiritual life (John 6:35).

There are many **things** that are directly designed to teach us about the Lord. The Tabernacle and Temple fall into this category. If we just consider the Holy Place where the Table of Showbread, the Golden Lampstand and the golden Altar of Incense were located, we can easily determine that they represent Jesus. Again, He is the Bread (John 6:35). He is also the “Light of the world” (John 8:12) and the One who hears our prayers. (Incense represents the prayers of the saints [Revelation 8:3-4], and prayer is a “sacrifice” [Hebrews 13:15-16].)

**Events**, like the offerings made by the Levitical priests, also teach us about the Lord. All of the offerings (described in Leviticus 1–7) were designed to point us to Jesus as the “one offering for all time” (Hebrews 10:10-12). He indeed was the “**lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world**” (John 1:29).

The student can also look at the themes of each book in the Bible and see that Jesus Christ is the main subject.<sup>98</sup>

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Genesis:          | Creator and Seed of the Woman (1:1; 3:15)   |
| Exodus:           | Lamb of God Slain for Sinners (12:1-13)   |
| Leviticus:        | High Priest (entire book)   |
| Numbers:          | Star out of Jacob (24:17)   |
| Deuteronomy:      | Prophet like unto Moses (18:15)   |
| Joshua:           | Captain of the Lord's Hosts (5:13-15)   |
| Judges:           | The Judge (11:27)   |
| Ruth:             | Kinsman Redeemer (3)  |
| Samuel:           | Lord of Kings (2 Samuel 7:18-20)  |
| Kings/Chronicles: | Lord of Heaven and Earth (entire books)   |
| Ezra:             | The Restorer (1:1)  |
| Nehemiah:         | Faithful (9:32)   |
| Esther:           | Worthy (10)   |
| Job:              | Risen and Returning Redeemer (19:25)  |
| Psalms:           | Blessed Man (1)<br>Son of God (2)<br>Crucified One (22)<br>Risen One (23)<br>Coming One (24)<br>Reigning One (72)<br>Leader of Praise (150) |
| Proverbs:         | Wisdom (4)  |
| Ecclesiastes:     | Forgotten Wise Man (9:14-15)  |
| Song of Solomon:  | My Beloved (2:16)   |
| Isaiah:           | Suffering Substitute (53)   |
| Jeremiah:         | Lord our Righteousness (23:6)   |
| Lamentations:     | Man of Sorrows (1:12-18)  |
| Ezekiel:          | Throne Sitter (1:26)  |
| Daniel:           | Smiting Stone (2:34)  |
| Hosea:            | David's Greater King (3:5)  |
| Joel:             | Lord of Bounty (2:18-19)  |
| Amos:             | Rescuer of Israel (3:12)  |
| Obadiah:          | Deliverer upon Mount Zion (v. 17)   |
| Jonah:            | Buried and Risen Savior (entire book)   |
| Micah:            | Everlasting God (5:2)   |
| Nahum:            | Stronghold in the Day of Wrath (1:7)  |
| Habakkuk:         | Anchor of our Faith (2:4)   |
| Zephaniah:        | In the Midst for Judgment and Cleansing (3:5, 15)   |
| Haggai:           | Smiting Shepherd (2:17)   |
| Zechariah:        | Branch (3:8)  |
| Malachi:          | Sun of Righteousness (4:2)  |
| Matthew:          | King of the Jews (2:1)  |
| Mark:             | Servant of Jehovah (entire book)  |
| Luke:             | Perfect Son of Man (3:38; 4:1-13)   |
| John:             | Son of God (1:1)  |
| Acts:             | Ascended Lord (1:8-9)   |
| Romans:           | Righteousness (3:22)  |
| 1 Corinthians:    | First-Fruits from the Dead (15:20)  |
| 2 Corinthians:    | Made Sin for Us (5:21)  |
| Galatians:        | End of the Law (3:10, 13)   |
| Ephesians:        | Our Armor (6:11-18)   |
| Philippians:      | Supplier of Every Need (4:19)   |
| Colossians:       | Pre-Eminent One (1:18)  |
| 1 Thessalonians:  | Returning Lord (4:15-18)  |
| 2 Thessalonians:  | World's Returning Judge (1:7-9)   |

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1 Timothy:  | Mediator (2:5)                              |
| 2 Timothy:  | Bestower of Crowns (4:8)                    |
| Titus:      | Great God and Savior (2:13)                 |
| Philemon:   | Prisoner's Partner (1:9)                    |
| Hebrews:    | Rest of Faith and Fulfiller of Types (9-11) |
| James:      | Lord of Sabaoth (5:4)                       |
| 1 Peter:    | Theme of Old Testament Prophecy (1:10-11)   |
| 2 Peter:    | Long Suffering Savior (3:9)                 |
| 1 John:     | Word of Life (1:1)                          |
| 2 John:     | Target of the Antichrist (1:7)              |
| 3 John:     | Personification of Truth (1:3-4)            |
| Jude:       | Believer's Security (1:24-25)               |
| Revelation: | King of Kings and Lord of Lords (19:11-16)  |

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 1B**

1. **Read John 1:1, 3 and 14; Colossians 1:16-17; and Philippians 2:6-8. Who is Jesus Christ?**
2. **Read Hebrews 10:1-18 and John 14:6. What cannot take away sins? Who can take away sins? Identify the Reality and the Shadow.**
3. **Read Matthew 12:39-40 and Jonah. Write down the similarities between Jonah and Jesus Christ.**
4. **Read Micah 5:2 and John 6:32-51. What do these passages reveal about Jesus Christ?**
5. **Read Exodus 25:23-40, John 6:35 and 8:12. What do the furnishings of the Tabernacle describe about Jesus Christ?**
6. **Read Leviticus 3, Hebrews 10:10-12 and John 1:29. What do the Peace Offering and Jesus Christ have in common?**
7. **Look up the verses cited in the descriptions of Jesus Christ and see the picture of Christ for yourself.**

## **Section 2**

### **Rule Two**

#### **Seek to Understand the Facts by Using the Clear Passage as Your Guide**

This rule teaches us to look for the scriptures that are easiest to understand and let those passages guide our understanding of Scriptures that are not as clear.

We will study six principles that relate to this rule. These principles will help the student locate and evaluate the clear passages that establish and define the various topics found in Scripture.

In this section, we will also consider the fact of progressive revelation, or how God expands the disclosure of His plan throughout history. To see how His plan unfolds, we must interpret literally, considering the specifics or details, and study the primary passages on a given topic. We will recognize that human volition exists and how to factor that into our interpretation as well as seeing the role that covenants play in interpretation.

#### **A. Principle Three: Realize that Revelation is Progressive**

This principle teaches us that God reveals information over a period of time. For example, the first prophecy of the Messiah found in Genesis 3:15 is the promised seed of the woman. The Old Testament continues throughout its entirety to give more information about this “seed.” We are told that the Messiah would be of the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:3), of the seed of Isaac (Genesis 21:12), of the seed of Jacob (Genesis 35:10-12), of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:8-11), of the line of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1) and of the house of David (2 Samuel 7:12-16). He would be born at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). He would be both God and man (Psalm 110:1). He would be called Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14). He would be a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:18), a priest (Psalm 110:4), a judge (Isaiah 33:22) and a king (Jeremiah 23:5). He would have a special anointing of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2) and a zeal for the house of God (Psalm 69:9).

Revelations that are expanded over a period of time (like the one above) form what is called “Progressive Revelation.” The general prophecy is made, then significant details concerning that prophecy are revealed over time.

Therefore, it makes sense to look at the first mention made of a given subject, letting it guide our understanding of subsequent occurrences of that same subject. For example, the business and subtlety of Satan are first seen in Genesis 3:1. As we learn more about this “serpent,” we are guided by the fact that he is a deceiver who is the direct adversary of God. Satan does not change for the better throughout all of human history (Revelation 12:9; 20:2-3, 10). He has changed his methods over the course of time but has never changed his attitude (Isaiah 14:12-14; Revelation 12:9; 20:7-8) or his approach—arguing perpetually that becoming a god is within reach. This is made clear again when the “man of lawlessness” takes his seat in the Temple during the Tribulation and proclaims himself to be a god (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

Many times we find that the universal truth about a given subject is taught in conjunction with its first mention. Moreover, several topics found throughout the Bible are first introduced in the Book of Genesis. Accordingly, a serious and detailed study of the Book of Genesis is important for the one who wants to interpret God’s Word.

### **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 2A**

1. **Read Matthew 1:1-25; 2:1; 3:16; John 1:1, 14; 2:17; 5:22; 7:40; Hebrews 5:9-10; and Revelation 19:16. Match the prophetic verses with the verses that show Jesus fulfilling the prophecies.**
  - a. Seed of the woman—Genesis 3:15
  - b. Seed of Abraham—Genesis 12:3
  - c. Seed of Isaac—Genesis 21:12
  - d. Seed of Jacob—Genesis 35:10-12
  - e. Tribe of Judah—Genesis 49:8-11
  - f. Line of Jesse—Isaiah 11:1
  - g. House of David—2 Samuel 7:12-16
  - h. Born at Bethlehem—Micah 5:2

- i. God and man—Psalm 110:1
- j. Called Immanuel—Isaiah 7:14
- k. A prophet—Deuteronomy 18:18
- l. A priest—Psalm 110:4
- m. A judge—Isaiah 33:22
- n. A king—Jeremiah 23:5
- o. Special anointing of the Holy Spirit—Isaiah 11:2
- p. Zeal for the house of God—Psalm 69:9

## 2. What do these verses prove?

### B. Principle Four: Interpret Literally

This principle teaches that God says what He means and means what He says. It is an extremely important principle because it guides us in our understanding of the Word. When we instruct our own children, we try to communicate as clearly as possible the things we want them to remember. Often we'll discuss something in many different ways so that their little minds will grasp it and not lose hold (Hebrews 1:1). We will often repeat the same information several times. Are we not God's children (1 John 3:1)? Is He not our "Daddy" ("ABBA" in Romans 8:15)? Literal interpretation means that we (as God's children) literally accept what God clearly says is the truth.

It makes sense to look first in the Word for simple, clear, direct and universal statements. Obviously the clearer verses will shed light on passages that are unclear.

One example of a simple, clear, direct and universal statement is found in John 3:16, which says, ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."*** There are no words of uncertainty about God's love, such as "maybe," "might," or "if." It clearly presents His love for the world and also clearly says that "whoever believes" has eternal life. What God does not qualify with further information, we should not qualify either.

We find the same type of statement in Romans 3:23 which says, ***"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*** The condition of sin, according to the Bible, is universal to mankind—with the exception of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:22). The Bible alone establishes the rule, thus, the Bible alone can offer the exception to the rule. We as students are not at liberty to make exceptions to the universal statements that God makes in His Word. Therefore, except for Jesus Christ, we are all sinners.

Automatically assuming "hidden" or "deeper" meanings of Scripture is irresponsible. As we have already discussed, an allegorical approach to Scripture tries to add to God's Word. A "mythological" approach tries to take away from God's Word. God has been careful to warn us against either (Revelation 22:18-19), since they negate the importance of the literal meaning of God's Word.

The Bible is grounded in literal history and is, thus, significant to all of history (cf. 1 Corinthians 15). Failure to consider it literally has led to many theological distortions throughout the history of Israel and the Church.

Some other examples of universal statements that we should interpret literally are: Romans 8:35-39; John 3:16, 18, 36; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 John 2:1-2; and Titus 3:5.

## For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 2B

### 1. Write out in your own words the clear statements from the following passages:

- a. Romans 8:35-39
- b. John 3:16
- c. John 3:18
- d. John 3:36
- e. Ephesians 2:8-10
- f. 1 John 2:1-2
- g. Titus 3:5

### 2. Consider what these verses mean to you and your loved ones. Do you believe them?

### **C. Principle Five: Consider the Specifics**

This principle recognizes that there are some specific questions that must be answered when interpreting the Bible. For example, we must ask: “Who said this?” “To whom was this said?” “Under what circumstances was it said?” and “Whom does this concern?”

The principle also recognizes that God has dealt with three classes of people in history, namely, the Jews, the Gentiles and the Church (1 Corinthians 10:32). Therefore, we must seek to determine who the recipients were of a given portion of Scripture so that we may know whether a promise, covenant or warning applies to us.

We will see in our upcoming study of covenants that to whom a covenant applies is very important. A Gentile nation (non-Jewish races) for example, may be removed or dispersed because of evil and disobedience to the Lord. The Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Persian Empires are examples of nations (peoples) to whom this has happened.

God not only promised that He would disperse Israel but also that He would re-gather them. No other nation has these promises. If we were to apply promises to other nations that were given specifically to Israel, we would be in error.

A second example would be the promise of a nation, land and citizenship in Canaan for Israel (Genesis 12:1-3, 13:15), but a citizenship in heaven for the Church (Philippians 3:20). National status and land is not promised to the Church.

A final example would contrast blessings for Israel based on their relationship to God (Deuteronomy 8:7-10) and blessings for Gentiles for blessing Israel (Genesis 12:3). There are no blessings promised for those who bless the Church or Gentile nations.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 2C**

- 1. Read Genesis 12:1-3. Who does God promise to bless?**
- 2. In Genesis 12:1, what were the conditions for blessing given to Abram?**
- 3. Read Genesis 26:5. Why did God bless Isaac?**
- 4. Read Hebrews 11:8. Why did Abraham obey God?**
- 5. Are the conditions given to Abraham (#2) required of the Church?**
- 6. Are the blessings promised to Abraham also promised to the church?**
- 7. Read Galatians 3:28-29. May we share in the blessings of Abraham?**

### **D. Principle Six: Study the Primary Passages**

This principle recognizes that certain passages are to be read as the primary declaration of God's attitude on a subject that is vital to our spiritual life. Many times in the Bible, God gathers together several scattered fragments that have to do with a particular truth and places them in one of these primary passages. Some examples include:

- The Resurrection of Jesus Christ—1 Corinthians 15
- The Human Tongue—James 3
- The Restoration of Israel—Romans 11
- Triumphs of the Faith—Hebrews 11
- God's Discipline of His Children—Hebrews 12:1-11
- The Church—Ephesians 1-3
- Righteousness by Faith—Romans 3:10-21
- Law—Exodus 20
- Full Armor of God—Ephesians 6:10-17
- Love—1 Corinthians 13

This principle requires us to study the primary passage of Scripture to determine major points and then go to related passages for additional information.

For example, the most extensive discourse in the Bible on the qualities of love is found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, where there are sixteen qualities so full of meaning that we could easily spend a week in classroom instruction on these verses alone. Consider that:

***Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.***

When we read Mark 12:29-31, we find that Jesus responded to a question concerning the greatest commandments:

***The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.***

Since the Two Greatest Commandments involve the quality of love, seeking to know what love involves—so we can make correct evaluations of ourselves before God and others—is good common sense. The importance of love is found in Mark 12. Its manifestation is found in 1 Corinthians 13.

If you would like to test your application of “love” defined in the verses of 1 Corinthians 13, ask yourself these questions: “Am I patient?” “Am I kind?” “Am I jealous?”

Another example of this principle is found in the description of the “full armor of God” (Ephesians 6:10-17). This is the only place where all of the Believer’s spiritual armor is mentioned together. The belt that one “girds his loins with truth” is referred to in Isaiah 11:5. The “Breastplate” and “Helmet” are referred to in 1 Thessalonians 5:8. The “Sword” as part of one’s “armor” is implied in Hebrews 4:12.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 2D**

1. **Read 1 Corinthians 15. Give a title to the paragraph that relates to resurrection from each of the following paragraphs:**
  - a. 15:1-11
  - b. 15:12-19
  - c. 15:20-28
  - d. 15:29-34
  - e. 15:35-49
  - f. 15:50-58
2. **In 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, what are the essential elements of the gospel of salvation?**

### **E. Principle Seven: Recognize Human Volition**

This principle considers the freedom that God gave mankind to make decisions and the responsibility that goes along with such freedom (John 3:18; Galatians 6:7). The principle of human choice is clearly portrayed in the test established for Adam and Eve in Genesis 2–3. Because of His Omniscience, God knew that they would eat the fruit of the ***“tree of knowledge of good and evil,”*** but God was not the cause of that forbidden dinner. Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, because they chose to eat. They were then held responsible for their actions and, thus, driven from the Garden.

There are many terms and words that point clearly to mankind’s ability to choose—most notably the words “believe” and “faith” which have the same roots in the Greek language. Because of God’s Omniscience, He has always known who would believe in His Son Jesus Christ and thus be saved (Romans 8:29; 1 Peter 1:1-2). His foreknowledge, however, did not remove the requirement to believe.

The Bible records both the good and the bad decisions made by mankind. This serves as a testimony to its internal honesty. We recognize in this principle that the Word of God records many of the bad decisions of man. These were volitional acts by man that were allowed by God for the purpose of His plan but were never commanded by Him. Just because the Bible records that a person did a particular act does not mean that God condoned that act. Jesus Christ knew that Judas would betray Him, and in fact warned Judas against this act (Matthew 26:24), but Judas betrayed Jesus and then bore the consequences.

God gave mankind the freedom to choose, but not the ability to choose perfectly every time. Therefore, we must consider mankind's bad and sinful choices in our interpretation.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 2E**

- 1. Read John 3:16-18. What is the requirement of man so as to escape judgment?**
- 2. Read Romans 3:21-26. What is required of man to receive God's righteousness?**
- 3. Read Genesis 2-3. Did the man and the woman disobey God's command?**
- 4. What does their disobedience prove?**
- 5. Read the book of James. You will notice there are about 60 commands. Each command requires that a decision be made on the part of the one who receives the command. Therefore, what does each command infer?**

### **F. Principle Eight: Remember the Covenants**

This principle recognizes the agreements (or contracts) made between God and men. There are conditional covenants that depend upon man's compliance, and there are unconditional covenants that depend solely upon the truthfulness of God's Word.

Covenants are important because they give us a basic overview of history regarding how God relates to His people. If we understand God's covenants and allow those promises to guide us, we will be kept from incorrectly interpreting passages that seem to conflict. For example, the Israelites may be disciplined during human history with periods of difficulty and disaster (Leviticus 26) but will not be eliminated, as God has promised to protect them.

There are nine covenants that require individual study. We will simply note their titles and present a brief description of each covenant with its location in Scripture.

#### **1. The Edenic Covenant**

The Edenic Covenant was made in the Garden of Eden between Adam and God (Genesis 1–2). It was conditional based on the man's obedience, and involved God's promise to bless man with a perfect environment (2:8), perfect food, visual stimulation (2:9), perfect weather (1:6-7; 3:8), perfect sex (2:21-25) and daily fellowship with the Lord (1:26-27; 3:8). The covenant was initially accepted by man but broken when he violated God's order not to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree.

The Edenic Covenant is no longer in effect, but many of the blessings will be restored to man during the future period of the New Heavens and Earth (Revelation 21–22). Therefore, we must not interpret this Covenant into contexts that do not specifically deal with the Garden of Eden. Mankind will not establish all the blessings promised apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **2. The Adamic Covenant**

The Adamic Covenant was made between God and Adam in the Garden after the Fall, before the expulsion (Genesis 3:14-19). It was unconditional.

This covenant came as the consequences of the original sin, known as the "Fall." God cursed the instrument of deception (3:14) and brought a conflict into history between the descendants of Adam and the serpent (3:14-15). The woman was given pain in childbearing and a subordinate standing to the male (3:16). The earth was cursed (3:17-19), causing difficulty in the production of food. The man and

the woman were scheduled to die physically (3:19 cf. 2:17), and both were expelled from the perfect habitat of the Garden (3:17-19).

The Adamic Covenant spans all dispensations and will be in effect for all humanity until God throws the Devil into the Lake of Fire after the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20:7-10). We must realize that the effects of Adam's fall are passed on to all of mankind (Romans 5:12-14).

### 3. The Noahic Covenant

The Noahic Covenant, which is found in Genesis 8:20–9:17, was made between God and Noah after the Great Flood. It was made as an unconditional covenant, addressing the destruction of pre-flood civilization. It included a promise that there would never again be a universal flood that would destroy civilization. It also included God's command to repopulate the earth (9:1), the provision of animal flesh for food (9:2-4) and the installment of capital punishment as penalty for murder (9:5, 6). The rainbow was given as the sign of God's faithfulness in regard to this covenant.

The Noahic Covenant began at the Flood and lasts forever. While there may be local floods that destroy property and cause loss of life, there will be none that brings the universal destruction that the Great Flood brought. The freedom to eat animal flesh was also given, and thus we should not interpret passages that refer to a diet solely of vegetables (Daniel 1) to be the standard for all mankind. The final part of this Covenant established God's penalty for murder that is still His will today.

### 4. The Abrahamic Covenant

The basic promises of the Abrahamic Covenant are found in Genesis 12:1-3, with further additions and explanations given later. It was made with Abraham and was conditional to him until he met the Lord's requirements, then the covenant was extended unconditionally to his descendants.

The covenant with Abraham includes the promises of personal blessing, innumerable descendants, real estate, a city, national status, blessing by association, protection and the line of descent of the Messiah (Genesis 17:1-8).

The Abrahamic Covenant began with the promise to Abraham. The line of the Messiah was fulfilled at the First Advent by Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:16). The promise of material blessings associated with the Covenant have been given at various points in history but will reach their potential in the Millennial Kingdom. This covenant spans all dispensations from the promise to Abraham through the Millennium.

The meaning of a particularly confusing passage in God's Word is more readily understood when one applies the principles of the Abrahamic Covenant to it. The passage is found in Matthew 11:20-24 and says:

***Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. 'Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You shall descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.'***

By grace, Israel is given some extra time to repent because of the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. If Israel does not repent, the discipline will be severe, but the nation will not be destroyed and removed from history.

### 5. The Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic Covenant of Law was made with Moses on Mount Sinai. It can be found in Exodus 20 and several other passages in Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. This covenant is conditional, based on obedience. Those who obeyed were blessed, and those who did not were cursed (Leviticus 26).

The primary purpose of the Mosaic Covenant was to show the need for the Savior (Galatians 3:24-25). It clearly presented God's moral law. The covenant was also given to Israel to establish and set guidelines for the Levitical Priesthood and the Tabernacle.

Jesus Christ came to fulfill this covenant by perfectly keeping the Law (Matthew 5:17). This Covenant is only for the Age of Israel, which includes the time from the initial giving of the Mosaic Law (Exodus 20) until the Day of Pentecost which began the Church. It will also include the time known as the "Tribulation" which is seven years of human history that will occur after the Rapture of the Church.

We must realize that many passages found in the Old Testament refer only to time spent under the Mosaic Law. For example, many animals are declared "unclean" and are not to be eaten (Leviticus 11). This does not apply to us today, as Jesus Christ made it clear that all foods are now "clean" (Mark 7:14-18).

## **6. The Davidic Covenant**

The Davidic Covenant was made with David and is found in 2 Samuel 7:8-19 and Psalm 89. It is an unconditional covenant, which established national rulership in David's house and the promise of a "Greater Son" who would rule over the nations forever.

The Davidic Covenant became effective when it was given to David during his kingship. Part of the Covenant was fulfilled by the coming of the "Greater Son," who is Jesus Christ Himself, at the First Advent (Luke 1:32). The results will extend forever.

At one time, the line of David was in the hands of an eight-year-old king named Josiah (2 Kings 22:1). A Jew living during this time would still have a foundation of hope that is built on the promise of God. Jesus Himself received all authority in heaven and on earth, after His resurrection (Matthew 28:18), in fulfillment of this Covenant. The Believer today can have comfort knowing that Jesus is on the heavenly throne (Hebrews 8:1) and will one day return to establish His earthly throne (Matthew 25:31).

## **7. The Palestinian Covenant**

The Palestinian Covenant is a continuation of the Abrahamic Covenant. This conditional covenant promises dispersion of the Jewish peoples because of disobedience but then a re-gathering into the land after they repent (Deuteronomy 30:1-10).

This Covenant is for the Age of Israel and will be fulfilled when the Jews are supernaturally re-gathered at the Second Advent (Matthew 24:31; Mark 13:27) and the land promised to Abraham, from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates, is established (Genesis 15:18). From the giving of the Covenant forward, the interpreter should consider that dispersions of Israel from the land are only temporary.

## **8. The New Covenant to Israel**

A New Covenant was made with the House of Israel in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and was reiterated in Hebrews 8:8-12. This covenant is based on the blood of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:11-14), and is unconditional to regenerate Jews (Jews that have undergone the new birth).

The covenant, which includes the promises of the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit and great material wealth (Jeremiah 32:41; Isaiah 61:8), will be fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom. It is important to remember while studying the Scriptures that the promises made by God in this Covenant are given to believing Jews only. Jews will not be blessed under this covenant simply because of their race.

## **9. The New Covenant to the Church**

A New Covenant was also made to the New Testament Church (Matthew 26:26-28). It is unconditional for Believers in Jesus Christ, based on the cross (Hebrews 9:11-14) and commemorated in the ritual of the Lord's Table—Communion (1 Corinthians 11:25). It establishes the universal and royal priesthood of Believers (Hebrews 9:11) and promises to be fulfilled both in time and for eternity. Jesus Christ became the Mediator of this covenant (Hebrews 9:15).

This Covenant began on the Day of Pentecost with the establishment of the Church (Acts 2) and will last forever. The student should remember that the blessings received under this Covenant will last forever and cannot be taken away. Thus, the Church Age Believer has complete security that, no matter what difficulties one experiences in life, the Lord has not forsaken—and will never forsake—them (Matthew 28:18-20).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 2F**

**1. Which Covenants were conditional?**

- a.
- b.
- c.

**2. Which Covenants were unconditional?**

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

**3. Read the passages concerning each of the Covenants and see if you would add to the description given in the summary.**

## **Section 3**

### **Rule Three**

#### **Seek to Be Wise by Comparing Scripture with Scripture**

The third rule is to seek the wisdom that comes from the correct understanding and application of God's Word. We must realize and accept by faith that there is no confusion with God (1 Corinthians 14:33), so any lack of understanding comes from us. God placed figures of speech and riddles in the Bible to teach us wisdom (Proverbs 1:2-6).

Most disagreements in interpretation come from failure to properly compare Scripture with itself. An interpreter might overlook a passage or fail to consider how one passage he is aware of relates to another. It is wise for those who seek to know God's Word to pay attention to their own personal humility. Those who miss or do not consider one verse or one word will find that significant differences are made in one's understanding of Scripture.

There are six principles that relate to the use of this rule. We should look for the differences that God establishes in His Word. We do that by considering the context. Comparative interpretation seeks the Divinely established harmony of Scripture, considering the dispensation that the verses refer to and the care one must take with prophetic passages.

#### **A. Principle Nine: Look for the Differences**

This principle instructs us to consider differences where God establishes them. In other words, we are to recognize the Biblical difference between such concepts as faith and works, salvation and sin, law and grace and many others. The Bible makes many distinctions. Our challenge is to realize these differences in our interpretation.

An example of realizing differences is exemplified in the study of faith and works. We are told in Ephesians 2:8-10:

***For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.***

Clearly salvation is by grace through faith, not of works. Yet the importance of works is not negated. Works are not meant for salvation, but are important to the Christian life.

Faith has no merit in itself, because all the merit is found in the object of the faith. For one to have faith in faith is actually to have trust in oneself. We know that we all have sin and, thus, trusting ourselves is really not a wise choice of objects (Romans 3:23).

If a heavy adult were going to swing from cliff to cliff over a large hole and someone handed him a small piece of twine that is attached to a small branch, it would be difficult to have faith because there would not be sufficient merit in the object. However, if a strong rope were attached to a large branch, the faith would be easier to have because there is sufficient merit in the object.

Jesus Christ, who bore our sins in His body on the cross and rose from the dead, has more than sufficient merit to be the object of our faith.

Works involve actions that are good in their very nature, such as helping the poor (Galatians 2:10). But even good actions will not save us (Titus 3:5). Works are designed by God to be a display of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, we will give an account for the works we have done in the name of Jesus Christ, and we will be rewarded for them accordingly (2 Corinthians 5:10). Works should be done out of thanksgiving for what the Lord has done for us. They should not be done with an attitude toward personal gain.

Another difference we might consider is between the security of the Believer's salvation and the reality of sin in his life.

We are told that the Lord did the greatest work for us when He died to save us, even while we were His enemies. Should we expect any less of Him now that we are members of His family (Romans 5:6-10)?

The Bible makes it clear that Believers can and do sin after they are saved.

***If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us*** (1 John 1:8-10).

It should be clear that this passage refers to Believers. We do not have to read very far in the New Testament to discover the warnings to Believers against our tendency to sin. The question arises, do we as Believers lose our salvation when involved in sin, or not?

In the book of Romans, as well as many other books of the Bible, salvation is attested to be an eternal fact. Paul said, ***“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death”*** (Romans 8:1-2). The Corinthian church became heavily involved in a multitude of sins. Paul called them “fleshly” (1 Corinthians 3:1-2) but never referred to them as “unsaved.” He even refers to them as a “church” composed of “saints” (1 Corinthians 1:2).

Clearly, Christians may fall into sinful lifestyles. Equally clear is that our salvation cannot be lost: ***“If we are faithless, He remains faithful”*** (2 Timothy 2:13).

A Christian’s sinful lifestyle is certainly not without repercussions (consequences). It leads to loss of rewards: ***“If we deny Him, He also will deny us”*** (2 Timothy 2:12). The immediate context confirms that we will not reign with Him, if we deny Him.

From these two illustrations, we can begin to see certain differences that God has established within His Word. We will spend a lifetime discovering them and seeking to understand the relationships between the various concepts involved with them.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 3A**

- 1. Read Ephesians 2:8-10. What is God’s gift in salvation?**
- 2. What is man’s part in salvation?**
- 3. Once saved, what has the Believer been created for?**
- 4. Read Titus 3:5. Will good works save us?**
- 5. Read 1 John 1:8. Will the Believer still sin?**
- 6. Read 1 John 1:9. What is the Believer to do when he sins?**
- 7. Read 1 John 1:10. Who are we calling a liar if we say we have not sinned?**
- 8. Read Hebrews 13:15-16. What good works are mentioned in those verses?**
- 9. Read Colossians 3:12-17. What good works are listed there?**
- 10. Read 2 Corinthians 5:10. What will the Believer get for good deeds?**

## B. Principle Ten: Consider the Context

This principle is based on the fact that every word, sentence or verse in the Bible has information preceding it and following it (except the very first and the very last word, sentence or verse). This principle pays careful attention to the physical location of each word and verse and the relationship to other words and verses. God sheds light upon a subject either through passages that are nearby—that establish the theme for that section—or through passages that are similar in subject in another part of the Bible.

We should never take a verse out of its contextual setting and give it a foreign meaning. Using verses out of context is a deceptive way to try to prove one's own ideas and promote personal agendas. This incorrect practice is a form of allegory, which we discussed earlier.

Contextual interpretation basically means that readers determine who is speaking, who is the audience, what is the main theme of the passage and in what time frame and place the teachings are valid.

There are three types of context to consider for every passage of Scripture:

### 1. The Near Context

The Near Context includes verses within the same paragraph. For example, Galatians 5:1 tells us, ***“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.”*** We might have a tendency to apply the term “slavery” to a particular culture in a particular place and time, since “slavery” frequently refers to being physically under the ownership or control of a person or political entity. In context, however, we see that this verse refers to a kind of slavery that is spiritual. The passage refers to those who are enslaved by the rituals of the Law (specifically circumcision) and are not “free” to “serve one another in love” (Galatians 5:13).

### 2. The Intermediate Context

The Intermediate Context includes those verses found within the same book. An example of this is found in Matthew 24:40, which says, ***“Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left.”*** The context concerns the subject of the “last days.” The question involves who will be taken and who will be left behind. Will the righteous be taken and the wicked left, as at the Rapture of the Church; or will the wicked be taken and the righteous be left, as at the Second Advent when Christ establishes His literal Millennial Kingdom? The Near Context does not answer the question.

Matthew 13:49, however, gives the answer. In a passage also dealing with the “last days,” we are told that the ***“wicked will be taken out from among the righteous.”*** Thus the Intermediate Context has answered the question of who will be taken and who will be left behind. The passage is referring to the Second Advent.

This Intermediate Context informs us of the importance of studying verse by verse through a book in order to understand and maintain the context. If a student went first to Matthew 24, the answer to the above question would be difficult to find. But, if the student had read the entire book up to Matthew 24, the answer would have already been given.

### 3. The Remote Context

The Remote Context recognizes the internal consistency of the Word of God. It includes passages throughout the Bible that have a bearing on a particular passage under consideration.

A study of the Remote Context considers that a passage might be clarified by another distant portion of the Bible. Studies of a selected word, such as “grace,” “faith” or “love,” by means of a concordance, for example, lead to other remote passages containing that particular word. A concordance is a book that lists—by individual word—verses in which a given word may be found. An “exhaustive” concordance will give a list of every verse containing that word. More information about concordances will be given later in this book.

Often times the Remote Context must be consulted for more advanced principles, such as the interpretation of prophecy or the understanding of “types” and “symbols.” For example, the Veil in the Tabernacle (Exodus 26:31-35), which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, is interpreted for us in Hebrews 10:20 to have represented the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Interpreting contextually is extremely important in our quest to **“handle accurately the word of truth”** (2 Timothy 2:15). When we make “doctrinal” statements, we must be able to prove them from Scripture to demonstrate that the Bible is harmonious in terms of its Near, Immediate and Remote Contexts. If our beliefs are not in harmony with all of Scripture, then the “doctrine” resulting from our study is questionable.

## For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 3B

1. Read Galatians 5:1 and Romans 8:2. What are we to do with our spiritual freedom in Christ?
2. Read Galatians 5:13. How are we to use our freedom?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 10:28-31. How are we supposed to answer another person’s attack on our use of freedom?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 3:17. What does the Holy Spirit bring with Him?
5. Read James 1:25. Which perfect law must we hold to for blessing to occur?
6. Read James 2:12. How are we to speak and act?
7. Read 1 Peter 2:16. How are we to use our liberty?
8. Read 2 Peter 2:1, 17-19. What do false teachers promise?
9. Start with Galatians 5:1 (near context) and 5:13 (intermediate context). Use the other verses mentioned above (remote context) to identify other characteristics of freedom.

### C. Principle Eleven: Interpret Comparatively

This principle of comparative interpretation focuses on the internal consistency of the Word of God, pointing us to the importance of comparing Scripture with Scripture to analyze similarities in subject matter, so that we might arrive at correct meanings.

It is important to compare subjects similar to one another, such as grace and mercy, and also subjects very different from one another, such as God and Satan. When we compare similarities and differences of subjects in remote contexts, we put together a picture that has been cut into pieces—sometimes a great number of pieces. Theology is developed by putting these pieces together.

Not only the novice (1 Timothy 3:6), but also the experienced interpreter must be careful in the development of theology (Proverbs 3:5-6), realizing that important details within the 31,000+ verses of Scripture may have been overlooked. The sheer volume of material we are trying to understand should keep us aware of the potential for error and, therefore, keep us humble.

As we compare Scripture with Scripture, we come to find out that a given theological issue is considered in many parts of the Bible. One example is the issue of “Justification by Faith” (Genesis 15:6; Romans 3–4). When we find a contrasting passage that speaks of a “Justification by Works,” such as found in James 2:14-26, we must consider both passages. When we put both passages together, we understand “works” as necessary in the plan of God, as an outgrowth of the faith that led to salvation but not as a means to acquire salvation. This principle is also taught in Ephesians 2:8-10. We are **“saved by grace through faith,”** and have been **“created for good works.”**

This same principle teaches us to beware of building theology or doctrine on passages or textual readings of questionable intent. For example, the Greek text from Mark 16:9 to the end of the book is very uncertain. Some people have built doctrine on these passages, resulting in erroneous theology.

Another example of the importance of comparing Scripture with Scripture is seen in the identification of the “mystery” (namely, something unknown), which is referred to many times in the New Testament. Normally, if we were studying Ephesians 3 and ran into the word “mystery,” we would try to answer the question, “what is the mystery?” Our answer, however, is found in Colossians 1:25-27, which says:

***Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God; that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.***

The “mystery” is identified by Scripture as a new intimate relationship with the Messiah. This relationship is for the new era known as the Church Age.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 3C**

- 1. Read Romans 3:21-28. How is man declared righteous (justified) before God?**
- 2. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. How is man saved?**
- 3. Read James 2:14-26 and Ephesians 2:10. What should the Believer produce?**
- 4. In the James 2 passage, what does the writer say about faith without works?**
- 5. Does this mean, if a Believer does not produce good works, that the Believer is not saved? (Review Titus 3:5)**
- 6. In the James 2 reference to Abraham, was Abraham already a Believer when he offered his son Isaac?**
- 7. In James 2, who is the person who might ask, “You have faith, and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works?”**
- 8. Read Hebrews 11:1. Can faith be seen?**
- 9. Think through all these passages and then explain the word “saved” in James 2:14 and “justified” in 2:22 and 2:24.**

### **D. Principle Twelve: Seek the Harmony**

This principle recognizes the truthfulness and faithfulness of God, that He is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). In other words, there are no real contradictions in the Bible. The Bible is unified, framed and inspired by the Living God, thus, all its components are consistent.

Disagreements concerning interpretations of Scripture are human in scope, not Divine. Many people base their emotional security on their own understanding of God’s Word, but Scripture warns us against doing this (John 5:37; Proverbs 3:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:7). We will never understand some things in the Bible clearly or completely until such time as we meet the Lord face-to-face (1 Corinthians 13:12). So, the issue for us is always that we walk by faith (Hebrews 11:6; Colossians 2:6), trusting God to lead us to our heavenly home.

When we come to understand how two seemingly contradictory verses actually complement one another, we gain wisdom. We are told at the beginning of the book of Proverbs that when we learn to understand difficult statements and riddles, we become wise (Proverbs 1:2-6). This requires diligent study. For example, as we have already discussed, we must consider both James 2 and Romans 3–4 together to understand correctly the relationship between faith and works.

When looking for relationships between passages, we should be aware of indicators for time or place, realizing that every small detail may not have been written down, or that a problem may exist in the translation. Regardless, we must keep in mind that there are no true contradictions found in God's Word.

We should also realize that God's Word frequently states the same principle in different ways so that what is important might be more fully grasped. For example, Romans 3:23 says, "all have sinned..." likewise, the book of Leviticus commands all to bring sin offerings. Both passages essentially say the same thing.

What also becomes quite clear from the study of the Bible is that God directed the literary structure of His Word and its organization.

## For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 3D

1. Does the approach taken in the preceding study section (3C) demonstrate this principle?
2. Read Romans 3:21-28; 5:1-2, 8-10; 8:35-38 and John 10:27-29. What is the main point made about salvation?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. What do these verses teach?
4. Does there appear to be a conflict?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. How can one reconcile the apparent conflict?
6. Read James 1:12. What must a person do to receive the Crown of Life?
7. Read 1 Peter 5:1-4. What must a person do to receive the Crown of Glory?
8. Read 2 Timothy 4:7-8. What must a person do to receive the Crown of Righteousness?

### E. Principle Thirteen: Consider the Dispensation

Dispensations are periods of history in which God establishes different responsibilities for His people. They are divisions of history that are categorized by these responsibilities. We are told in Hebrews 7:12, "***For when the priesthood changes, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.***" This verse teaches us that God establishes different responsibilities at different periods of history.

#### There are Four Clear Dispensations since the Fall of Adam:

##### 1. The Age of the Gentiles from the Fall of Adam to the Exodus from Egypt

This age is covered in Genesis and Job. It extends from approximately 3900 B.C. to 1445 B.C.

##### 2. The Age of Israel from the Exodus to the Day of Pentecost

The Age of Israel is found in all Old Testament books except for Genesis and Job. It also extends to all of the four Gospels and Acts 1. There exist in the Old Testament some passages that refer to the Millennial Age. Two examples are Isaiah 61-66 and Ezekiel 40-48.

The approximate dates of this age are from 1445 B.C. until A.D. 33. This Age will also include the time period from the Rapture of the Church until the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, the period known as the "Tribulation" or "Daniel's 70th Week" (Daniel 9:24-27).

##### 3. The Age of the Church from the Day of Pentecost Until the Rapture

(The Tribulation Period, which is the final seven years of the Age of Israel lasts from the Rapture to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.)

The Church Age is covered in Acts 2-28, the Epistles and Revelation 2-3. The Tribulation period which completes the Age of Israel is found in Revelation 4-19.

This age began in 33 A.D. and is not completed until the Rapture of the Church.

#### 4. The Millennial Age from the Second Advent to the Great White Throne Judgment

This age is covered in Revelation 20 and certain passages in the Old and New Testaments.

Dispensations are most clearly understood when we consider the different priesthoods that God has assigned to man. For example, before Israel became a nation right after the Exodus, mankind was in the "Age (or Dispensation) of the Gentiles." The priesthood of this dispensation was conducted by the elders within one's own family and is called the "Family Priesthood." It was practiced by Noah (Genesis 8:20), Abraham (Genesis 22:2) and Job (Job 1:5). The laws they were to follow were those "**written in their hearts**" (Romans 2:15) by God.

Shortly after the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, the Age (or Dispensation) of Israel began and the tribe of Levi was called by God as a new and different priesthood, which became known as the "Levitical Priesthood." This priesthood was based on genealogy and descended through Aaron of the Tribe of Levi. The Levitical priesthood carried out its functions in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple. Priests of that age were to offer animal sacrifices, to lead in worship and to communicate God's Word, but by using very specific methods given to Moses by God. The laws they were to follow were recorded in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. As an additional note, it is both interesting and sad that these methods became so distorted by the time Jesus Christ was born that the ritual action itself had become more important than the reality of what it represented (Hebrews 10:8).

After the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the Day of Pentecost, God began a new age or dispensation. This is called the "Church Age" or "Dispensation of the Church." In this new dispensation, all those who believe in Jesus Christ become priests to God (1 Peter 2:5, 9). These new "Believer-Priests" are not to offer animal sacrifices but are instead to "**present their own bodies as living and holy sacrifices, acceptable to God, which is their spiritual service of worship**" (Romans 12:1). During this dispensation, the form of expression of the priesthood changed. However, the spiritual functions of the various priesthoods did not change. All offered sacrifices, led in praise and communicated God's Word. Dispensations are represented by the different forms or methods God prescribed to carry out His principles. The Dispensation of the Church is to follow the "Law of Liberty" (James 1:25; 2:12) "in the sphere of love" (Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8).

The Millennial Age or Dispensation will have a new priesthood that is led by the Zadokite line of the Tribe of Levi (Ezekiel 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11). The laws will be based on the "New Covenant to Israel" (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Hebrews 8:8-10) and established by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as He "**rules all the nations with a rod of iron**" (Revelation 12:5).

The Dispensational Interpretation, therefore, recognizes changes in the forms or methods, but has its basis in principles that are spiritual in nature more than physical. For example, in our current dispensation, we do not need to offer animal sacrifices to our God as a memorial to the ultimate sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:10). Instead of offering animal sacrifices, the Church partakes of the Lord's Table as a memorial, a sacrifice of praise (1 Corinthians 11:23-34). During the Millennial Age, animal sacrifices will be reinstated as another type of memorial to commemorate the finished work of Christ on the cross (Ezekiel 43:18-27).

The divisions of history are derived from an interpretative study of Scripture and are not rigidly set. There are several viewpoints as to the exact timing of the change from dispensation to dispensation. This does not negate the Dispensational Principle that God has different responsibilities for people at different points of history.

There is a modern-day trend toward "hyper-Dispensationalism," which seeks to put several small dispensations within the larger framework. We must note that this trend lacks serious Scriptural backing. It can be easily used to promote personal bias and distort accurate interpretation. Extreme rigidity in this principle can lead to legalism and even failure at recognizing opportunities to serve in the Christian life. For example, finding no value for the Church in the Sermon on the Mount, because Jesus spoke the principles during the Age of Israel, misses completely what we are told by Paul in 1 Timothy 6:3, that "sound doctrine" and "sound words" are those of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What we should really seek and cling to are the principles that extend from a study of dispensations. The forms and methods of the priesthood changed through the course of the Bible, but the principles upon which they functioned remain the same. All priests of any dispensation have been commanded both to bring sacrifices to the Lord, and to teach God's Word.

## For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 3E

1. Read Hebrews 7:12. When the priesthood changes, what must also change?
2. Read Genesis 8:20, and Job 1:5. These are examples of the priesthood during the Age of the Gentiles. It is called a “Family Priesthood.” Who is responsible for offering the sacrifices?
3. Read Romans 2:15. During the Age of the Gentiles, what law was to be followed?
4. Read Exodus 28:1. This is an example of the priesthood during the Age of Israel. Who is responsible for offering the sacrifices?
5. Read Deuteronomy 4:44-46. Which law was Israel to follow?
6. Read 1 Peter 1:1-2 and 2:5, 9. Who are the priests of the Church Age?
7. Read Romans 13:8-10 and James 2:8. What law are the priests of the Church to follow?
8. Read Ezekiel 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; and 48:11. Who are to be the priests during the Millennial Age?
9. Read Hebrews 8:8-10. What law will govern this Age?
10. The Levitical Priests offered animal sacrifices. Royal Priests are to offer themselves. What is the difference?

### F. Principle Fourteen: Be Careful with Prophecy

This principle recognizes that the Bible foretells future events. The Bible also tells us very clearly that true prophecies come through men moved by the Spirit of God, and that “no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation” (2 Peter 1:19-21). There have been many unique attempts at interpretation of prophecy, and sadly, many are totally deceptive. It is well known that cults often use special or unique interpretations of prophecy as a means to win converts. Remember that as Believers in Jesus Christ, we are all priests. Beware of anyone with a new and unique interpretation; beware of those who require you to believe their new and unique interpretation in order to be accepted into their group.

The interpreter of prophecy actually puts together a large picture that has been cut into many thousands of pieces (there are probably 10,000 verses of prophecy). When the picture is complete, we must see the face of Christ, who is the focal point of all history—past, present and future. The picture that emerges must account for all the known facts and must take all pieces of evidence into consideration. It is not our privilege to discount facts that do not fit the picture we think we are going to see.

The study of the interpretation of prophecy can be a course unto itself, as over 1/4 of all Scripture is found in prophetic books. For our purposes in this lesson, however, there are three simple guidelines to be followed.

#### 1. Determine If the Prophet Makes the Interpretation

First, determine if the prophet gives his own interpretation like Jesus did in John 2:19-21 concerning the Temple. The passage says:

***Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews therefore said, ‘It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in “three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body.***

Some prophecies such as this one are easy to interpret. Realize too that God may leap over centuries of time without making a comment. He may also leap over centuries of time even within the same verse, such as is seen in a comparison of Luke 4:18-21 with Isaiah 61:1-2, which Jesus quotes and interprets for us.

## **2. Determine if the Prophecy Has Been Historically Fulfilled**

We should first seek to determine whether other passages of Scripture might reveal the fulfillment of any given prophecy. This lets us know which prophecies are yet to be fulfilled and, thus, in our future.

One example of this principle is the Flood of Noah, which was prophesied 120 years before it occurred (Genesis 6:3). Scripture tells us that this was fulfilled (Genesis 7–8).

Scripture also prophesies that the Lord will supernaturally re-gather the nation of Israel (Zechariah 9:14; Matthew 24:31). This prophecy clearly has not yet been fulfilled. We determine this not only from Scripture but also from history.

We have to look at external sources, such as secular history books, to discover if and when some prophecies may have been fulfilled. Remember that secular history is not inspired by God and may not agree with His Word at times, but the Bible student always must accept God's Word as accurate.

## **3. Recognize the Language of Prophecy**

In prophecy, we must consider figures of speech (such as the representation of the Lord as the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah" or the "Lamb of God" in Revelation 5), symbols (such as the "Beasts" of Revelation 13) and types (such as the earthly Tabernacle found in Exodus 25–40). It should be obvious by now that first we must look for Biblical explanations of prophetic language.

Remember that speculation is not interpretation. Speculations occur when one guesses at the meaning of prophetic language. It is easy for man to attempt to turn personal speculations into "doctrines." We must realize, however, that some prophetic language will not be understood until the appropriate time (Daniel 12:4, 8-10).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 3F**

- 1. Read 2 Peter 1:19. Since Jesus Christ was born, died and rose again in fulfillment of prophecy, what can we say about the prophetic Word?**
- 2. Read 2 Peter 1:20. What is important about true prophecy?**
- 3. Read 2 Peter 1:21. To whom and how was true prophecy given?**
- 4. Read Luke 4:18-21 and Isaiah 61:1-2. What did Jesus say was happening at that very moment?**
- 5. Read Genesis 6-8. The prophecy is given in 6:3. Was it fulfilled?**
- 6. Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:18-25. Was this prophecy fulfilled?**
- 7. Read John 14:1-3. Has this prophecy been fulfilled?**
- 8. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. Has this prophecy been fulfilled?**
- 9. Read Zechariah 14:1-8. Has this prophecy been fulfilled?**
- 10. Seek to determine the different events portrayed in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 and Zechariah 14:1-8.**
- 11. Read Revelation 5:4-6 and list the different figurative terms that are used to describe Jesus Christ.**

## **Section 4**

### **Rule Four**

#### **Seek to Live the Christian Life by Properly Applying God's Word**

This rule comes from a direct statement of Jesus Christ found in John 7:17. If we truly want to “know” God's Word, then we must be willing to “do” His Word. This principle encompasses the necessity of intellectual honesty in the study of God's Word. We must seek to set aside our bias and our preconceived ideas and honestly seek illumination from the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:14). Applying this principle involves personal soul searching, for example, to evaluate the purity of our motives (2 Corinthians 13:5).

It is easy for us to hold personal prejudice or form unwarranted opinions and then go searching for a Biblical “proof” of them. However, by using that approach we can “prove” almost anything, because it makes us blind to passages that could lead in other directions, or to passages that urge us to seek balance.

For example, one might look at King David's actions concerning Bathsheba, the wife of one of his most loyal warriors (2 Samuel 11). Some people might try to use that passage to prove that it is acceptable for a person in power to commit murder and adultery. One simply needs to read the next chapter and compare it with the “Ten Commandments” (Exodus 20:1-17) to determine that murder and adultery are not acceptable to our God. David was retained as king because of God's grace displayed toward David's repentance (Psalm 51).

#### **A. Principle Fifteen: Proper Application is Built on Proper Interpretation**

Proper application of God's Word has to come from proper interpretation. There may be many applications, but there is only one correct interpretation of any particular verse. For example, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 gives the qualifications for an “overseer” in the church. The interpretation concerns real requirements for one who is to hold that position. The application considers that the “overseer” should not be a “new convert” and that the listed qualifications represent qualities of maturity, which should be the objective for all men in the church, especially its leaders.

The correct application of God's Word means that one has used the rules and principles that have just been considered in an honest and attentive manner. One has sought a knowledge of God for the purpose of a relationship with Him that is based in faith and grace. One has also sought Jesus Christ by the power and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The clear passage has become the guide for one's life, and the disciple has sought to determine the harmony of God's Word (as far as the extent of his knowledge of Scripture will take him) so as to live a life that is righteous but not legalistic and to share Christ's attitudes about everything.

### **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 4A**

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and list the qualifications for an overseer.**
- 2. For those who desire to be pastors, let them examine themselves concerning each of these requirements.**

#### **B. Five Steps to a Proper Application**

**Step 1:** Pray for understanding, recollection and proper application of spiritual principle(s) (James 1:5).

**Step 2:** Seek to correctly and fully understand the passage being considered. This involves studying the relationships that words have to sentences, sentences have to paragraphs, paragraphs have to chapters and chapters have to books (2 Timothy 2:15).

**Step 3:** Determine the spiritual principle that comes from the interpretation of a particular passage. A spiritual principle crosses all time frames and cultures. For example, sexual immorality (a physical relationship outside of marriage) is sin in all time frames and cultures. The spiritual principle is to avoid sexual immorality (Romans 13:8-10).

**Step 4:** Honestly examine your life to see if you are in violation of any principle of scripture, and submit yourself to God for correction of the wrongdoing. This involves an honest recognition of error presented to the Lord (1 John 1:9) and a renewal of one's walk of faith (Colossians 2:6). The student would do well to read Psalm 51 and note the elements of David's repentance concerning his sin with Bathsheba (2 Corinthians 13:5).

**Step 5:** Walk in grace and faith. The apostle Paul tells us that ***“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him”*** (Colossians 2:6). We received Him by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), and, thus, we are to produce actions that are in accordance with the grace we received (Ephesians 2:10).

## For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 4B

1. Read James 1:5. What does it tell us to pray for?
2. Read 2 Timothy 2:15. What is necessary to understanding and applying Scripture?
3. Concerning 1 Timothy 3:1-7, what would you consider the main spiritual principle?
4. Since these characteristics are required of an overseer, shouldn't they be desirable for any Believer?
5. Evaluate your own life in terms of these principles.
6. Are there any areas you need to confess to the Lord as sin? If so, do so.
7. Are there areas in which you need to renew your walk of faith? If so, are you willing?

### C. Six Hindrances to Proper Interpretation

There can be many hindrances to the proper interpretation of God's Word. We will examine six of them that lead to mistakes in interpretation. Remember that no one is immune from mistakes. It is wise, in addition, to remember the admonition from Paul found in 1 Corinthians 10:12, ***“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”***

#### 1. Carnality

The first hindrance to proper interpretation is Carnality. Carnality involves an ongoing sinful lifestyle that is often referred to as “fleshly” (1 Corinthians 3:3). It means that the Believer has chosen to pursue sin through “deeds of the flesh” rather than be led by the Holy Spirit and see His fruit (Galatians 5:19-23). This is life with unconfessed sin (1 John 1:9) and lack of repentance (2 Corinthians 12:21).

If one who studies God's Word is involved in deeds of the flesh—immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing and things like these (Galatians 5:19-21)—then his interpretation will surely be flawed. For instance, a teacher who is involved in sexual immorality would clearly have the tendency to distort passages that deal with that subject.

Since truth is revealed by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13) and the “fleshly” man has chosen to pursue a path of life apart from the leading of the Holy Spirit (if even for a short period of time), the “fleshly” man will get a distorted understanding of truth, since he is not “spiritually appraising” the Word.

The “fleshly” man is similar to the “natural man” (1 Corinthians 2:14) but slightly different. The “natural man” refers to an unbeliever who ***“does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised”*** (1 Corinthians 2:14). The “natural man” does not have access to the Spirit while the “fleshly/carnal” man is the Believer who is not in fellowship with the Spirit. Neither will be able to correctly understand God's Word.

## 2. Vanity

Vanity is the quest for fame or recognition found in the one who desires the applause of men. Vanity can also directly lead to improper interpretation. We are warned in Proverbs 16:18: ***“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.”*** This is good advice for the interpreter.

While it is true that we should diligently study God’s Word, it is also true that we must ***“handle it accurately”*** (2 Timothy 2:15). Our study must be guided by our love for the Lord and others (Mark 12:29-31), not a desire to be recognized for our insightful pondering. Learning something “new,” which expands our personal understanding is necessary to spiritual growth, but if we search God’s Word for new information to impress others, we are searching in vain because our motives are not pure.

We should not be so proud of our “method” of study that we think it guarantees accurate interpretation, lest we forget the primary role of the Holy Spirit in understanding God’s Word.

## 3. Partiality

The third hindrance to proper interpretation is partiality. Partiality is a prejudice based on individual preferences, and it basically distorts the text with a negative attitude: “I don’t *want* something to be this way.” If such an attitude is strong enough, it may distort portions of God’s Word.

Sadly, some have used their own personal prejudices in an attempt to justify with God’s Word such horrific attitudes like racism, even though the Bible is clearly against it.

***For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise*** (Galatians 3:27-29).

If God were prejudiced, then no Gentiles (non-Jews) would be saved.

## 4. Lack of Consistency

When we try to interpret God’s Word but are not consistent in several ***“SPIRITUAL”*** practices, we can succumb to incorrect interpretations.

### a. The Practice of Consistent Self-Evaluation and Confession

We are told in 2 Corinthians 13:5 to, ***“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!”*** We are to place not only our actions but also our motives before the Lord for comparison with His standards. When we find that we have failed, we must place the failure before the Lord and be cleansed. 1 John 1:9 says, ***“If we confess our sins, He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*** Failure to carry out this practice leads to carnality, which produces distortion and error in the interpretation of God’s Word.

### b. The Practice of Consistent Prayer

We are told in Matthew 7:7-8, ***“Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.”*** We should consistently pray for understanding and retention of God’s Word. Failure to carry out this practice leads to a break in fellowship with God the Father, whose Word you are trying to interpret.

### c. The Practice of Consistent Study

We are told in 2 Timothy 2:15 that an important part of handling accurately the Word of God is diligence: ***“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.”*** A lack of consistency in Bible study will lead to failures in keeping track of the context within which the specific verse is located.

## 5. Faulty Methodology

Our method of interpretation can also hinder accuracy. Our basic beliefs about the text will certainly affect the way we understand it. For instance, if we don’t believe that the entire Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17), then we might try to rationalize miraculous events with scientific reasoning.

If we do believe that the entire Bible is literally true, then miracles must be interpreted as divine interventions in history.

There are some who believe that only certain Christians have been given the gift of interpreting God's Word. However, the Bible says that all Believers are priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9). As priests we have access into the throne room of God (Hebrews 4:16), where we can be taught directly by God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:15).

Others distort the Bible with allegorical or mythological interpretations of passages that ought to be taken literally. Allegory refers to the insertion of foreign meaning into the text. If we claim the Flood of Noah was not literally a global worldwide catastrophe (flood) but, instead, a picture of the sufferings that mankind must endure, then we would be guilty of interpreting allegorically.

Mythology refers to narratives with a small amount of truth and a large amount of exaggeration. If we view the Flood of Noah as only a small, localized flood that was later exaggerated by the local inhabitants into a global disaster, we would be interpreting mythologically. One could say that, in mythology, there is a small amount of truth surrounded by a lot of lies.

Some even go so far as to apply allegorical and mythological interpretations to Jesus Christ, the Cross and the Resurrection. If such interpretations were true, then Jesus did not really die for our sins, nor was he buried nor resurrected for our redemption. According to the apostle Paul, we are in serious trouble if these events did not literally happen (1 Corinthians 15).

A purely literal method that does not consider figures of speech can also hinder interpretation. For example, the book entitled *Song of Solomon* is an extraordinary literary work, which interpreted literally makes absolutely no sense at all. Accordingly, the correct method involves a literal interpretation that recognizes figures of speech and typological language. We will discuss this topic in more detail later in this book.

## 6. Faulty Reasoning

Human reasoning can never fully comprehend the infinite God. If we could completely understand God through human faculties, we would certainly become arrogant. We are told in Proverbs 3:5-7 to, ***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil.”*** God wants us to walk by faith, and not by our own understanding.

We have been promised that one day we will fully comprehend our Lord. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:12, ***“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully, just as I also have been fully known.”*** All the unanswered questions about Scripture that we now have will one day be answered when we are face to face with our Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18).

The Jews of the first century had some problems when they relied solely on their ability to reason, which contributed to the tragic error of not recognizing Jesus as the Messiah. Consider the conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees recorded in Matthew 22:41-46:

***Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, ‘What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘The son of David.’ He said to them, ‘Then how does David in the Spirit call Him “Lord,” saying, The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, until I put Thine enemies beneath Thy feet”? If David then calls Him “Lord,” how is He his son? And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.***

Jesus quoted Psalm 110:1, asking the Pharisees how the Messiah can be David's "son," and simultaneously be David's "Lord." The answer is that the Messiah is both God and man; such reasoning seems to be contradictory to human reasoning, doesn't it?

## For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 4C

1. Read 1 Corinthians 3:3. What two things does Paul indicate are part of being “fleshly” or “carnal?”
2. Read Galatians 5:19-21. What are jealousy and strife said to be?
3. How might one involved in jealousy or strife try to change an interpretation?
4. Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and 1 Corinthians 8:1. What are we not to trust in and why?
5. Could we become arrogant about our study habits or method of study and, thus, become carnal and inaccurate in our interpretation?
6. Should we try to interpret the Bible from our desires? Why?
7. What is extremely important in our study of God’s Word?
8. Read 2 Corinthians 13:5 and 1 John 1:9. What two things are important to our study?
9. Read Matthew 7:7-8 and James 1:5. What should we seek in our studies?
10. Why should we be consistent in our study?
11. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What must we believe about the Bible itself before we can begin to seek correct interpretation?
12. Read Isaiah 55:8-9. What must we remember as we seek to apply human reasoning to God’s Word?
13. Read James 3:14. What three things bring failure in application?

### D. Eight Ways to Fail the Application

These eight ways are very simply stated but need to be considered by the student of God’s Word because there are degrees of failure within each one. It is best to again refer to the clear verse for our guidance. Let us consider Proverbs 3:5-6 which says, **“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”**

1. **Failure to rely on the Lord for the strength to carry out the application:**  
There may be times when our knowledge is accurate, but we consider the test too difficult for us to pass. For example, the sins of a person become evident, and they need someone to help “bear the burdens” (Galatians 6:1-2), but we avoid the person who needs us.
2. **Resistance to changing attitudes or actions that conflict with God’s truth:**  
There are numerous examples of this in Scripture. One is at the time of the First Advent of Jesus Christ when the Priests and Pharisees saw a man healed who had been born blind, and they refused to believe in the One who performed the miracle (John 9:30-34).
3. **Disobedience to the principles known to be correct:**  
Adam was told to not eat from one tree in the Garden of Eden, or he would die. This is an example of a willful decision to disobey.
4. **Succumbing to the pressure of conforming to worldly standards:**  
There is a constant battle in the life of a Christian to not “love the world,” because it is passing away (1 John 2:5-17). It occurs when the temptations of man: fame, fortune, power and pleasure become realized in an individual’s life. Some are driven by the desire for recognition, some money, some authority and some lust.

**5. Lack of interest in the application of God's Word to your life:**

This is exemplified in those who "do what is right in their own eyes" (Judges 17:6; 21:25). It is marked by a lack of appreciation of the grace of God and, thus, not giving God the credit that He deserves in one's life.

**6. Viewing sin in such a way that it is either legalistic or non-existent:**

Some people add to the Word of God and make their additions standards for spirituality. The Pharisees were noted for this, even having regulations that extended to a certain method of washing their hands (Mark 7:1-4). God did not prescribe any particular method. Another situation is when people do not consider as sin that which God clearly spells out. For example, homosexuality is viewed by some as not sinful (Romans 1:26-32).

**7. Substituting emotional feelings for wise choices:**

Lust is an emotion that will lead one to immorality unless wisdom prevails (Proverbs 5:1-6).

**8. Distortions of thinking due to prejudice, bias, or laziness:**

We are all equal in Christ (Galatians 3:26-29), so to fail to love one another in thought, speech or action, is a failure to comply with the "two greatest commands" (Mark 12:29-31).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 4, Section 4D**

**Take an honest look at yourself to determine if anything needs attention in your life.**



## **Chapter 5**

# **Doctrines of God's Person**

# **Section 1**

## **The Trinity**

### **A. A Description of the Trinity**

We are able to clearly establish that there is only one true God (Deuteronomy 4:35; 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; Ephesians 4:3-6; James 2:19) who manifests Himself as the Father (John 6:27), the Son (John 1:1) and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). The exact inner workings of His nature are where we lack understanding.

It is difficult to establish a perfect and complete definition of the Trinity because of the fact that God is beyond our total understanding, simply because He is God (Romans 11:33). Our Christian walk has to be a walk of faith in order to please Him (Hebrews 11:6). If we could, by some means, know and understand everything there is to know about God, this side of heaven, we could walk by sight. One of these days, we will fully know about our God (1 Corinthians 13:12), but for now we must accept by faith that which we do not fully understand. One illustration of the Trinity is found in an egg. It has a shell, a yoke and the whites, three distinctive parts, but still just one egg.

We are able to establish clearly that the members of the Trinity have three roles. The Father is the Planner (Acts 2:23), the Son is the Executor meaning the One who carries out the plan (John 5:36) and the Holy Spirit is the Revealer (John 16:13). While we may study their different roles, we must not seek to divide the Trinity. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit all share the characteristics that only God can possess.

This should not be a problem for us. We may not understand the inner workings of an automobile, but we see the results as we start the engine and drive to our destination. We can see the results of God's nature by what He has made (Romans 1:20).

### **B. Proof**

Proof of the Trinity is seen in the fact that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all called "God" as was documented in the previous point. If the Father, Son and Holy Spirit possess the attributes that only God can possess and work the works that only God can perform, it should be clear that the "Three" are indeed "One" who is "God."

In Chapter 4, Section 1 "Interpret Based on Divine Essence," God's essence was introduced. We will now expand the explanation of God's characteristics and connect each characteristic to each member of the Trinity.

This is an important area of study. These verses establish the two fundamental foundations of all Biblical theology, which the student of the Word must never forget. The first foundation is, "There is one and only one God." The second is, "I am not Him."

### **C. Ten Characteristics of Divine Essence**

The first bracket ( ) will denote the verses that refer to God the Father; the second < >, the verses for the Son; and the third [ ], the Holy Spirit.

#### **1. Sovereignty**

God is SOVEREIGN, meaning that He is King and acts accordingly. (Daniel 4:17; 1 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 47:2, 7), <Revelation 19:16; John 5:21>, [Zechariah 4:6; 1 Peter 4:14; 1 Corinthians 12:11].

Sovereignty means, "the exercise of supreme authority within a limited sphere." God, free from external control, is the supreme authority over all creation. He is the Creator, not the created (Romans 1:20, 25).

God has the authority to establish His own plan, His own laws and His own judgments. In short, He has the authority to act as He chooses to act, although His purposes may be hard to understand.

#### **2. Righteousness**

God is absolute RIGHTEOUSNESS, meaning that He is perfect in every way. (John 17:25; 1 John 1:5), <1 John 2:1; Luke 1:35; Hebrews 7:26>, [Isaiah 32:15-18; Psalm 143:10; Nehemiah 9:20]. He is the standard of righteousness in every regard. He is morally complete, setting the standard we are to imitate (Ephesians 5:1).

### 3. Justice

God is JUST. He is totally and completely fair. (Isaiah 45:21; Job 37:23), <John 5:22, 30; Revelation 19:11>, [Isaiah 4:4; 28:6]. God's justice is a response to the demands of His righteousness. God is not a "respector of persons" (Romans 2:11); He shows no partiality. Where sin (which is a violation of His law) occurs (Romans 5:13), His Justice must be satisfied.

Man is not able to satisfy the righteousness of God and, therefore, needs a Messiah who can "propitiate" (appease) the Justice of God. The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross accomplished this "propitiation" when He died to pay for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:1-2).

### 4. Love

God is LOVE, meaning that perfect and unconditional love is found in Him. (1 John 4:8-10; Titus 3:4; John 17:24-26), <John 15:9>, [Galatians 5:22].

This characteristic of God is the basis for sending Jesus Christ to redeem mankind (John 3:16). Love is what kept the Lord on the cross to pay for our sins <Luke 23:34>, and it is the first element in the "fruit" of the Holy Spirit [Galatians 5:22].

Love means doing what is right and best for others, even if doing so is accompanied with unpleasant feelings. Christians are to partake of God's love and spread it to others so that all might come to know God (John 13:34-35).

### 5. Eternal Life

God is ETERNAL LIFE. He always has been and always will be. (Isaiah 57:15), <John 8:54; 1 John 5:11-12; Micah 5:2; Revelation 1:8,17>, [Hebrews 9:14].

Eternal life has no beginning or end. We as Christians actually possess everlasting life, which has a beginning point, but no end. God's Eternal Life teaches that He is not ever subject to death.

### 6. Omnipotent–All Powerful

God is OMNIPOTENT, meaning that He has the power to do anything. (Mark 14:36; 1 Peter 1:5), <Matthew 28:18; Revelation 19:6>, [2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 15:13].

An example of His Omnipotence is found in the creation of the heavens and earth (Genesis 1:1). We are told that the "word of His mouth" created the heavens and His "breath" all their hosts (Psalm 33:6).

### 7. Omnipresent–At All Places

God is OMNIPRESENT, meaning that He is everywhere at the same time with the same intensity. (Proverbs 15:3; 2 Chronicles 2:6), <Matthew 18:20; 28:20>, [Psalm 139:7-16]. This does not mean that God is everything (Pantheism), but that He is everywhere. It displays to us the personal nature of God.

We also see from this characteristic that God is not in isolated places at different intensities (Psalm 139:7-17). He does not give less attention to some than He does others. Also, the fact that He is Omnipresent means that He could manifest Himself at more than one place at the same time.

### 8. Omniscient–All Knowing

God is OMNISCIENT. He knows everything: past, present and future. (Psalm 139:1-6; Hebrews 4:13), <John 2:24, 25; 18:4; Matthew 9:4>, [1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Isaiah 11:2].

He knows the outcome of all things; not only the actualities but also all the possibilities. He knows all of the effects throughout all of time that each decision will bring. His eternal plan has considered all of these factors (Romans 8:28-30).

### 9. Immutable–Unchanging

God is IMMUTABLE, meaning that the aspects of His Essence never change. (James 1:17; Hebrews 6:17; Malachi 3:6), <Hebrews 13:8>, [1 Corinthians 12:4; Ephesians 1:13].

This characteristic is beneficial to mankind, since God must always do what He promises. He will not change His mind. Since He said, **“There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus”** (Romans 8:1), we can be fully confident that He will not change His mind. He promised eternal life to those who trust in Jesus Christ; therefore, we know that He will not amend this gospel (John 3:16). If God did alter His promises, then He would be a liar, thus unrighteous (Hebrews 6:17-18).

Everything else in the universe is changing. God is the only constant. This is why hope in Him can be an “anchor” for our souls (Hebrews 6:19).

#### **10. Truthful**

God is absolute TRUTH. (Deuteronomy 32:4; John 7:28; 17:3), <John 14:6; 1 John 5:20>, [1 John 5:7, 8; 4:6; John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13].

This characteristic tells us that everything God utters is totally believable (Numbers 23:19). It is, in fact, impossible for God to lie (Titus 1:2).

The Truth is that God manifested Himself in the person of Jesus Christ <John 14:6>. Throughout history, truth has been sought simply in a concept, statement or principle. This is why anything that mankind deems to be truth, must be compared with the words of Jesus Christ <1 Timothy 6:3>.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 5, Section 1**

- 1. First read Deuteronomy 6:4-5. Then read John 6:27, John 1:1, and Acts 5:3-4. How many true Gods are there?**
- 2. From the above passages who is God?**
- 3. Read Acts 2:23. What is the Father’s primary role?**
- 4. Read John 5:36. What is the Son’s primary role?**
- 5. Read John 16:13-14. What is the Holy Spirit’s primary role?**
- 6. How do we prove that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all God?**
- 7. Read the following passages on the Sovereignty of God:**
  - a. The Father—Daniel 4:17; 1 Timothy 1:17 and Psalm 47:2, 7
  - b. The Son—Revelation 19:16 and John 5:21
  - c. The Holy Spirit—Zechariah 4:6; 1 Peter 4:14 and 1 Corinthians 12:11

**Is the Trinity Sovereign?**

- 8. Read the following passages on the Righteousness of God:**
  - a. The Father—John 17:25 and 1 John 1:5
  - b. The Son—1 John 2:1; Luke 1:35 and Hebrews 7:26
  - c. The Holy Spirit—Isaiah 32:15-18; Psalm 143:10 and Nehemiah 9:20

**Is the Trinity absolute Righteousness?**

- 9. Read the following passages on the Justice of God:**
  - a. The Father—Isaiah 45:21 and Job 37:23
  - b. The Son—John 5:22, 30 and Revelation 19:11
  - c. The Holy Spirit—Isaiah 4:4 and 28:6

**Is the Trinity Just?**

- 10. Read the following passages on the Love of God:**
- The Father—1 John 4:8-10; Titus 3:4 and John 17:24-26
  - The Son—John 15:9
  - The Holy Spirit—Galatians 5:22

**Does the Trinity possess perfect Love?**

- 11. Read the following passages on the Eternal Life of God:**
- The Father—Isaiah 57:15
  - The Son—John 8:54; 1 John 5:11–12; Micah 5:2 and Revelation 1:8, 17
  - The Holy Spirit—Hebrews 9:14

**Does the Trinity possess Eternal Life?**

- 12. Read the following passages on the Omnipotence of God:**
- The Father—Mark 14:36 and 1 Peter 1:5
  - The Son—Matthew 28:18 and Revelation 19:6
  - The Holy Spirit—2 Timothy 1:7 and Romans 15:13

**Is the Trinity Omnipotent?**

- 13. Read the following passages on the Omnipresence of God:**
- The Father—Proverbs 15:3 and 2 Chronicles 2:6
  - The Son—Matthew 18:20 and 28:20
  - The Holy Spirit—Psalm 139:7-16

**Is the Trinity Omnipresent?**

- 14. Read the following passages on the Omniscience of God:**
- The Father—Psalm 139:1-6 and Hebrews 4:13
  - The Son—John 2:24-25; 18:4 and Matthew 9:4
  - The Holy Spirit—1 Corinthians 2:10-11 and Isaiah 11:2

**Is the Trinity Omniscient?**

- 15. Read the following passages on the Immutability of God:**
- The Father—James 1:17; Hebrews 6:17 and Malachi 3:6
  - The Son—Hebrews 13:8
  - The Holy Spirit—1 Corinthians 12:4 and Ephesians 1:13

**Is the Trinity Immutable?**

- 16. Read the following passages on the Truthfulness of God:**
- The Father—Deuteronomy 32:4; John 7:28 and 17:3
  - The Son—John 14:6 and 1 John 5:20
  - The Holy Spirit—1 John 5:7-8; 4:6; John 14:17; 15:26 and 16:13

**Is the Trinity Truthful?**

## **Section 2**

# **The Names of God**

This section focuses on the titles or names for God that are found in Scripture. There are several different terms for God in the Greek and Hebrew languages, and these are used to call attention to distinctive aspects of His being or His character.

In some translation, the Hebrew or Greek words are simply transferred into the new language (called transliteration, based on their pronunciation without any assistance in understanding them. This study, however, provides the student with both the original title in the Hebrew or Greek and the translation.

### **A. Hebrew Names**

#### **1. God**

The Hebrew word translated “God” is ELOHIM. It is found first in Genesis 1:1 and then over 2,500 additional times in the Old Testament. The meaning of this word includes all of God’s essence and, thus, presents all of His attributes at once. While many times this title is used to describe the Father, the student will see that the title is also used to describe the Son and the Holy Spirit, because the Trinity is God.

ELOHIM is a plural (meaning more than one) word, which is described by scholars as a “plural of majesty.” It denotes His unlimited greatness. This word, although plural, consistently employs singular verbs, once again showing there is but one God (Deuteronomy 6:5).

The word ELOHIM is often attached to another word that gives additional information about God and becomes another title for Him.

#### **a. God Almighty**

“God Almighty” is the usual translation of EL SHADDAI. “EL” is a shortened form of ELOHIM. It was often used as to describe the blessings that God poured out on His people. It is found in: Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49:25; Exodus 6:3; Numbers 24:4, 16; Ruth 1:20, 21; Job 5:17; 6:4, 14; 8:3, 5; 11:7; 13:3; 15:25; 21:15, 20; 22:3, 17, 23, 25, 26; 23:16; 24:1; 27:2, 10, 11, 13; 29:5; 31:2, 35; 32:8; 33:4; 34:10, 12; 35:13; 37:23; 40:2; Psalms 68:14; 91:1; Isaiah 13:6; Ezekiel 1:24; 10:5; Joel 1:15.

#### **b. God Most High**

“God Most High” is the usual translation of EL ELYON, which refers to His supremacy in all matters. It is found in: Genesis 14:18, 19, 20, 22; 40:17; Numbers 24:16; Deuteronomy 26:19; 28:1; 32:8; Joshua 16:5; 2 Samuel 22:14; 1 Kings 9:8; 2 Kings 15:35; 18:17; 1 Chronicles 7:24; 2 Chronicles 7:21; 8:5; 23:20; 27:3; 32:30; Nehemiah 3:25; Psalms 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 46:4; 47:2; 50:14; 57:2; 73:11; 77:10; 78:17, 35, 56; 82:6; 83:18; 87:5; 89:27; 91:1, 9; 92:1; 97:9; 107:11; Isaiah 7:3; 14:14; 36:2; Jeremiah 20:2; 36:10; Lamentations 3:35, 38; Ezekiel 9:2; 41:7; 42:5.

#### **c. Everlasting God**

The descriptive title “everlasting God” is the usual translation of EL OLAM. The Hebrew word OLAM is better understood as eternal (having no beginning or end) rather than everlasting (having no end). It is found in Genesis 21:33 and Isaiah 40:28. God’s eternity is implied many times where the word “eternity” (OLAM) occurs.

#### **2. Lord**

YAHWEH is most often translated as “LORD” in all capital letters so that it may be distinguished from other words, which are translated as “Lord” or “lord.” YAHWEH is also combined often with other terms that further describe His person and role.

God’s name “LORD” is usually translated by the Hebrew word YAHWEH. YAHWEH is God’s personal name (Exodus 3:14) and is used over 5,300 times in the Old Testament. It denotes His active self-conscious existence. The first use of LORD is found in Genesis 2:4 where it is joined to ELOHIM and translated LORD GOD.

God's personal name became so sacred in Israel that after the Babylonian exile (586-516 B.C.) they did not pronounce His name but instead called Him ADONAI. During the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. the vowels of ADONAI were combined with the consonants YHWH to form the word "Jehovah" to remind the reader to pronounce YHWH as ADONAI.

**a. The Lord Will Provide**

"The LORD will provide" is the translation of the title YAHWEH JIREH. This title is found in Genesis 22:14 and refers to the time when the Lord provided a ram to Abraham as a sacrifice in place of His son, Isaac.

**b. The Lord is My Banner**

"The LORD is my Banner" is the translation of the title YAHWEH NISSI. This title is found in Exodus 17:15 and was given to the Lord by Moses after the defeat of the Amalekites.

**c. The Lord is Peace**

This title "the LORD is Peace" is the translation of YAHWEH SHALOM. It is used in Judges 6:24.

**d. The Lord of Hosts**

"The LORD of hosts" is the translation of YAHWEH SABBAOTH, a military term, which means that the LORD is commander over the armies, including the angelic armies and the armies of Israel. It is first used in 1 Samuel 1:3 and then hundreds of times more.

**3. Lord, Master, Owner**

ADONAI is also a plural word like ELOHIM, which denotes the majesty of God. However, unlike ELOHIM, it is found in the singular as ADON. The word ADON means a "lord" in the sense of a master or owner. It is used to denote authority. Its first use is in Genesis 18:3 where Abraham uses it to address the Lord.

The Greek equivalent is KURIOS.

**B. Greek Names**

**1. God**

The Greek word for "God" is THEOS. Like the Hebrew word ELOHIM, this title presents all of God's attributes at one time. It is the word most frequently selected to translate ELOHIM in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament).

In John 1:1, which clearly resembles Genesis 1:1, we find the word THEOS used for ELOHIM, thus demonstrating their clear relationship.

**2. Lord**

The Greek word for "Lord" is KURIOS. It is used over 700 times in the New Testament and emphasizes authority and supremacy. The word can also be used simply as a title of respect.

We saw in the previous point that THEOS and ELOHIM have the same meaning. We will also see that KURIOS and YAHWEH are equal in meaning to each other. In Mark 11:9, the writer is quoting Psalm 118:26, which says "***Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD.***" The Hebrew word in Psalm 118 is YAHWEH while the word used to translate it is KURIOS.

**3. Master**

"Master" is the usual translation of the word DESPOTES, although it is at times translated as "Lord" (Luke 2:29; Acts 4:24). "Master" emphasizes the idea of ownership rather than the ideas of authority and supremacy which are emphasized by KURIOS. It is found in: 1 Timothy 6:1, 2; 2 Timothy 2:21; Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18; 2 Peter 2:1; Jude 1:4; Revelation 6:10.

## For Personal Study: Chapter 5, Section 2

### 1. Match the following Hebrew names for God with the correct Hebrew word:

- |                          |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| a. GOD                   | 1) YAHWEH SABBAOTH |
| b. God Almighty          | 2) YAHWEH NISSI    |
| c. God Most High         | 3) ELOHIM          |
| d. Everlasting God       | 4) ADONAI          |
| e. LORD                  | 5) EL SHADDAI      |
| f. The LORD Will Provide | 6) YAHWEH SHALOM   |
| g. The LORD is My Banner | 7) EL OLAM         |
| h. The LORD is Peace     | 8) EL ELYON        |
| i. The LORD of Hosts     | 9) YAHWEH          |
| j. LORD, MASTER, OWNER   | 10) YAHWEH JIREH   |

### 2. Match the following Greek names of God with the correct Greek word:

- |           |             |
|-----------|-------------|
| a. GOD    | 1) KURIOS   |
| b. LORD   | 2) DESPOTES |
| c. MASTER | 3) THEOS    |

## **Section 3**

### **God the Father (Paterology)**

#### **A. His Person**

The best way to describe the Father is to examine the terms He uses to reveal Himself in His Word. In our study of the Trinity just completed, we noted that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit share the same characteristics. Now we will consider the descriptive terms that the Bible uses to teach us about our heavenly Father.

Note that while there are distinctions between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). Many times in Scripture, it is difficult to distinguish which member of the Trinity is referred to in a specific verse. This difficulty should be expected and embraced because God cannot be separated or divided (John 10:30; 14:9). In the examination of the Father's Person, words and passages have been selected that will increase our understanding and appreciation of who He is.

Many times a descriptive word, such as "my," is used with the word "Father." This is done to describe the personal nature of the Father. When a word such as, "your," "his" or "her" is added to the word "Father" it also denotes a personal relationship. When plural words, such as "our," "you" or "their," may be added they describe a corporate relationship.

#### **B. The Person of the Father Described**

- The "**Almighty**" which includes His power and ability to bless. Genesis 49:25; Numbers 24:4,16; Ruth 1:20, 21; Job 5:17; 6:4, 14; 8:3, 5; 11:7; 13:3; 15:25; 21:15, 20; 22:3, 17, 23, 25, 26; 23:16; 24:1; 27:2, 10, 11, 13; 29:5; 31:2, 35; 32:8; 33:4; 34:10, 12; 35:13; 37:23; 40:2; Psalms 68:14; 91:1; Isaiah 13:6; Ezekiel 1:24; Joel 1:15; Revelation 1:8
- The "**Ancient of days**" which is a reference to His eternal nature. Daniel 7:9, 13, 22
- The "**Everlasting God**" which is a reference to His eternal nature. Genesis 21:33; Isaiah 40:28
- The "**Faithful God**" which refers to His unchanging nature of love. Deuteronomy 7:9
- The "**Father of glory**" which refers to the fact that all glory proceeds from Him. Ephesians 1:17
- The "**Father of mercies**" which is a reference to His matchless grace. 2 Corinthians 1:3
- The "**God Most High**" which refers to holding the highest position of authority in the universe. Genesis 14:18, 19, 20, 22; Psalms 57:2; 78:35; Hebrews 7:1
- A "**God of faithfulness...without injustice**" which refers to the fact that He consistently does no wrong. Deuteronomy 32:4
- The "**God of glory**" which is a reference to His magnificent nature. Psalm 29:3; Acts 7:2
- The "**God of gods**" which refers to His superiority over the so-called "gods" of the world's religions. Deuteronomy 10:17; Psalm 136:2; Daniel 2:47; Daniel 11:36
- The "**God of peace**" which refers to the fact that God does not desire conflict. Romans 15:33; 16:20; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:20
- The "**God of the living**" which refers to eternal nature. Matthew 22:32; Mark 12:27; Luke 20:38
- The "**God on high**" which refers to His superior position that is worthy of reverence. Micah 6:6
- The "**God of truth**" which refers to the fact that He is the One who defines truth. Psalm 31:5; Isaiah 65:16
- A "**great and awesome God**" which refers to His magnificence and majesty. Deuteronomy 7:21; Nehemiah 1:5; Daniel 9:4
- A "**great and mighty God**" which refers to His magnificence and power. Jeremiah 32:18; Nehemiah 9:32
- The "**great King above all gods**" which refers to His supremacy over the gods of mankind. Psalm 95:3
- "**Him who is to be feared**" which refers to the respect that is owed to Him. Psalm 76:11
- "**Holy One**" which refers to the uniqueness of His righteous perfection. 2 Kings 19:22; Job 6:10; Psalms 22:3; 71:22; 78:41; 89:18; Proverbs 9:10; 30:3; Isaiah 1:41; 5:19, 24; 10:17, 20; 12:6; 17:7; 29:19, 23; 30:11-12, 15; 31:1; 37:23; 40:25; 41:14, 16, 20; 43:3, 14-15; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5; 55:5; 60:9, 14; Jeremiah 50:29; 51:5; Ezekiel 39:7; Hosea 11:9; 11:12; Habakkuk 1:12; 3:3; 1 John 2:20

- **“Jealous”** which refers to His desire to not share His people with any other “god.” Exodus 34:14
- A **“jealous and avenging God”** which refers to the fact that He will render judgment upon those who seek to steal His people. Nahum 1:2
- The **“King of glory”** which refers to the fact that His position deserves the highest glory. Psalm 24:7, 8, 9, 10
- A **“living and true God”** which refers to the eternality and reality of His nature. 1 Thessalonians 1:9
- The **“Lord God almighty”** which refers to His authority (Lord), nature (God) and power (Almighty). Revelation 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22
- **“Peace”** which refers to His perfect inner harmony. Judges 6:24
- The **“LORD most high”** which refers to the fact that He holds the highest position of authority that exists. Psalms 7:17; 47:2
- The **“Lord our God”** which refers to the personal nature of His authority. Psalm 90:17; Daniel 9:9, 15; Mark 12:29; Acts 2:39
- **“Love”** which refers to the inherent devotion found in His nature. 1 John 4:8, 16
- **“Lovingkindness”** which refers to the loyalty that characterizes His love. Exodus 34:6, 7; Deuteronomy 5:10; 7:9, 12; 1 Kings 8:23; 1 Chronicles 16:34; 2 Chronicles 6:14; Ezra 3:11; Nehemiah 1:5; 9:17; Job 37:13; Psalms 6:4; 13:5; 26:3; 31:16; 32:10; 36:5, 7; 63:3; 89:2, 14; 103:8, 11; 136:1, 2-28; 138:8; Lamentations 3:22, 32; Joel 2:13
- The **“Majestic Glory”** which refers to His marvelous nature. 2 Peter 1:17
- The **“Majesty in the heavens/on high”** which refers to His nobility. Hebrews 1:3; 8:1
- The **“Majestic One”** which refers to the uniqueness of His nobility. Isaiah 33:21
- The **“Most High”** which is a simple statement of the fact that He is above all in every way possible. Numbers 24:16; Deuteronomy 32:8; 2 Samuel 22:14; Psalms 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 46:4; 47:2; 50:14; 57:2; 73:11; 77:10; 78:17, 35, 56; 82:6; 83:18; 87:5; 91:1, 9; 92:1; 97:9; 107:11; Isaiah 14:14; Lamentations 3:35, 38; Daniel 3:26; 4:2, 17, 24, 25, 32, 34; 5:18, 21; 7:18, 22, 25, 27; Hosea 7:16; 11:7; Mark 5:7; Luke 1:32, 35, 76; 6:35; 8:28; Acts 7:48; 16:17; Hebrews 7:1
- **“My song”** which refers to the object of one’s musical expression. Exodus 15:2; Psalms 118:14; 119:54; Isaiah 12:2
- The **“only God”** which refers to the true uniqueness of Godhood. John 5:44; 1 Timothy 1:17; Jude 1:25
- The **“only wise God”** which looks at the uniqueness of His wisdom. Romans 16:27
- **“Perfect”** which means that there is no sin or fault in Him. Matthew 5:48
- The **“true God”** which means that He created man and that man did not create Him. 2 Chronicles 15:3; Jeremiah 10:10; 1 John 5:20

### C. The Father’s Role

The Father’s role in the Trinity concerns the Plan that He designed and established before the creation of the heavens and earth (Ephesians 1:11; 3:11).

### D. The Father’s Role Described

- The **“Architect”** which refers to His ability to design and plan a structure that considers all internal and external pressures, appearances and relationships of each part of the structure to one another. Hebrews 11:10
- The **“Builder”** which refers to His ability to turn a plan into a reality. Hebrews 3:4; 11:10
- The **“compassionate and gracious God”** which refers to His patience toward mankind. Exodus 34:6
- The **“defense for the helpless”** which refers to His dislike for powerful people who abuse those less powerful. Isaiah 25:4
- The **“everlasting King”** which refers to His eternal sovereignty. Jeremiah 10:10
- The **“Father of lights”** which refers to the One who gives gifts designed to light the world. James 1:17
- The **“Father of mercies”** which refers to His consistency of grace to His creation. 2 Corinthians 1:3
- The **“Father of spirits”** which refers to His gift of spiritual life to those who believe in Jesus Christ. Hebrews 12:9

- The **“father of the fatherless”** which is a reference to His compassion for the orphan. Psalm 68:5
- The **“God of forgiveness”** which refers to His desire to save mankind from their sins. Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 99:8
- The **“fountain of living water”** which refers to the fact that He is the One who gives and sustains eternal life. Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13
- The **“vinedresser”** which refers to His attention to the production of spiritual fruit. John 15:1
- The **“glory of Israel”** referring to His truthfulness and stability toward Israel. 1 Samuel 15:29; Micah 1:15
- The **“God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”** which refers to the divine creation of the body of Jesus Christ. Romans 15:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3
- **“God my Maker”** which refers to His direct involvement in the construction of man’s body. Job 35:10
- **“God my rock”** which refers to the stability He provides for Believers. Psalm 42:9
- The **“God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”** which refers to His part in the Abrahamic Covenant. Exodus 3:16; Acts 3:13; 7:32
- The **“God of all comfort”** which refers to the assistance He gives during times of affliction. 2 Corinthians 1:3
- The **“God of all flesh”** which refers to the fact that He is the source of all human creation. Jeremiah 32:27
- The **“God of hope”** which refers to the confidence we have in His plan for the future. Romans 15:13
- The **“God of love and peace”** which refers to His desire to reconcile conflicts. 2 Corinthians 13:11
- The **“God of my salvation”** which refers to the personal and individual nature of our eternal salvation. Psalm 18:46; 25:5; 27:9; 51:14; 88:1; Micah 7:7; Habakkuk 3:18; Luke 1:47
- The **“God of my strength”** which refers to the personal and individual nature of His support for mankind. Psalm 43:2
- The **“God of recompense”** which refers to the fact that He will render judgment on the unjust. Jeremiah 51:56
- The **“God of the spirits of all flesh”** which refers to life-sustaining nature. Numbers 27:16
- **“God our father”** which refers to the family relationship that Believers have with Him. Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:16; Philemon 1:3; James 1:27
- **“God our strength”** which refers to the fact that He is the source not only of personal strength but corporate strength as well. Psalm 81:1
- **“God over all the kingdoms of the earth”** which refers to His superiority over any authority structure established by angels or man. 2 Kings 19:15; Isaiah 37:16
- **“God the father”** which refers to His provision of all things. John 6:27; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 15:24; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 5:20; 6:23; Philippians 2:11; Colossians 1:3; Colossians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:17; 2 John 1:3; Jude 1:1
- The **“God who executes vengeance for me”** which refers to His personal avenging of wrongs done to an individual. 2 Samuel 22:48; Psalm 18:47
- The **“God who gives perseverance and encouragement”** which refers to the fact that He is the One who sustains the Believer during difficult times. Romans 15:5
- The **“God who relents concerning calamity”** which refers to the fact that He can cancel discipline upon a nation. Jonah 4:2
- The **“God who sees”** which refers to His attention to mankind. Genesis 16:13
- The **“helper of the orphan”** which refers to His assistance to the fatherless. Psalm 10:14
- **“He who comforts you”** which refers to His ability to ease pain. Isaiah 51:12
- **“He who declares to man what are His thoughts”** which refers to the revelation of His mind to mankind. Amos 4:13
- **“He who fashions the hearts of them all”** which refers to His creative power in the innermost parts of mankind. Psalm 33:15

- **“Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all we ask or think”** which refers to the infinite possibilities of His works. Ephesians 3:20
- **“Him who raised Jesus from the dead”** refers to His role in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:11
- **“Holy Father”** which refers to His righteous perfection. John 17:11
- **“Holy one in your midst”** which refers to His righteous presence. Hosea 11:9
- **“Your Husband”** which refers to His loving provision for His creation. Isaiah 54:5
- A **“judge for the widows”** who refers to His concern for those left unprotected. Psalm 68:5
- The **“Judge of all the earth”** which refers to the fact that His area of authority extends to every part of the world. Genesis 18:25
- The **“King of heaven”** which refers to the location of His throne. Daniel 4:37
- The **“living Father”** which refers to His present affection. John 6:57
- **“Lord”** which means that He is the master. Luke 2:29
- The **“LORD my Banner”** which refers to the fact that He is the One that we need to focus on, much like the flag of a nation. Exodus 17:15
- The **“LORD my rock”** which refers to the stability that He has for the Believer. Psalm 19:14; 28:1; 144:1
- The **“Lord of all the earth”** which refers to the fact that all the earth is under His area of authority. Joshua 3:11,13; Psalm 97:5; Micah 4:13; Zechariah 4:14
- The **“Lord of heaven and earth”** which refers to the fact that every area of the universe is under His authority. Matthew 11:25; Luke 10:21; Acts 17:24
- The **“Lord of Kings”** refers to His authority over even the Kings of the earth. Daniel 2:47
- The **“LORD our Maker”** which refers to His use of authority to make mankind. Psalm 95:6
- The **“Lord our shield”** which refers to His ability to protect His people. Psalm 59:11
- The **“LORD who heals you”** which refers to His authority over sickness. Exodus 15:26
- The **“LORD who sanctifies you”** which refers to the authority He has to set you apart from the rest of the world. Exodus 31:13; Leviticus 20:8; 22:32
- The **“LORD who strikes the blow”** which refers to the divine discipline that He brings upon His people at various times. Ezekiel 7:9
- The **“LORD who will provide”** which refers to the fact that He sustains His people. Genesis 22:14
- **“Your Maker”** which refers to the personal hand of God in your creation. Isaiah 54:5
- The **“Maker of all things”** which refers to the extent of His creative work. Ecclesiastes 11:5; Jeremiah 10:16; 51:19
- A **“Master in heaven”** which refers to the example He sets for others who have authority. Colossians 4:1
- **“My Advocate”** which means He stands in our defense. Job 16:19
- **“My confidence”** which refers to the personal nature of our trust in Him. Psalm 71:5
- **“My help”** which looks at the personal nature of deliverance. Exodus 18:4; Psalms 27:9; 40:17; 54:4; 63:7; 70:5; 118:7; 121:1; Hebrews 13:6
- **“My hiding place”** which refers to the personal nature of His protection of people. Psalm 32:7
- **“My hope”** which refers to the personal nature of trusting God concerning the future. Psalms 25:5, 21; 39:7; 62:5; 71:5; 119:74, 81, 114, 147; Acts 23:6; 26:6
- **“My light”** which refers to the personal nature of His guidance. Psalm 27:1; Micah 7:8
- **“My refuge in the day of disaster”** which refers to His protection in times of distress. Jeremiah 17:17; Psalm 59:16
- **“My support”** which refers to the personal nature of His provisions. 2 Samuel 22:19; Psalm 18:18
- The **“One who wipes out your transgression”** which refers to the personal nature of His forgiveness. Isaiah 43:25
- **“Our dwelling place”** which means that He is our true home. Psalm 90:1
- **“Our judge”** which means that He is judge over all mankind. 1 Samuel 24:15; Isaiah 33:22

- **“Our lawgiver”** which means that He has authority to establish standards for all mankind. Isaiah 33:22
- **“Our redeemer”** which means that He has purchased salvation for mankind. Isaiah 47:4; 63:16
- **“Our refuge and strength”** which means that He is the protector for those who are His. Psalm 46:1
- The **“possessor of heaven and earth”** which means that He is the owner of all things. Genesis 14:19, 22
- The **“Potter”** which means that He shapes that which is in His hands. Isaiah 29:16; 45:9; 64:8; Jeremiah 18:4, 6; Zechariah 11:13; Romans 9:21
- **“Your Redeemer”** which means that His purchase of salvation is for peoples other than oneself. Isaiah 54:5
- A **“refuge for His people”** refers to the protection that He offers to those that are His. Joel 3:16
- A **“refuge from the storm”** which refers to the protection that He offers from the violence of men. Isaiah 25:4
- The **“righteous Father”** which refers to His virtue. John 17:25
- The **“righteous judge”** which refers to the fairness of His decisions. Psalm 7:11; Jeremiah 11:20; 2 Timothy 4:8
- The **“rock in whom I take refuge”** which refers to the stability of His protection. Psalm 94:22
- The **“rock of my strength”** which looks at the stability that brings personal strength. Psalm 62:7
- The **“Rock of our salvation”** which refers to the stability upon which our salvation rests. Psalm 95:1
- A **“sanctuary”** which refers to the fact that He is a place of shelter. Isaiah 8:14; Ezekiel 11:16
- A **“saving defense”** which means that He is a refuge. Psalm 28:8
- A **“shade from the heat”** which refers to provision when pressure arises. Isaiah 25:4
- A **“strength”** which is a reference to His provision of power. Isaiah 28:6
- The **“strength of my heart”** which refers to the energy He imparts to the heart of the Believer. Psalm 73:26
- The **“strength of my salvation”** which refers to the power behind our salvation. Psalm 140:7
- A **“Stronghold for the oppressed”** which relates His protection to those who are under pressure from man. Psalm 9:9
- A **“stronghold in times of trouble”** which refers to His protection whenever there is pressure. Psalm 9:9
- The **“sustainer of my soul”** which refers to the personal nature of His spiritual provision. Psalm 54:4
- A **“teacher”** which refers to His ability to instruct people. Job 36:22; Isaiah 30:20
- The **“one who hears prayers”** which means that He understands all the desires of mankind. Psalm 65:2
- The **“one who keeps His covenants and lovingkindness”** which means that He keeps His covenants out of love. 1 Kings 8:23; 2 Chronicles 6:14
- A **“very present help in trouble”** which means that He is alongside us when we need help. Psalm 46:1

## For Personal Study: Chapter 5, Section 3

1. When singular pronouns (words that denote a person but do not call that person by name) such as “my,” “your,” or “his” are used with God’s names or titles, what type of relationship does this indicate?
2. When plural pronouns such as “our” or “their” are used with God’s names or titles, what type of relationship does this indicate?

- 3. Take the different descriptions of the Father's person listed in part "B" and link the descriptions to the characteristics of divine essence below. Some descriptions may include more than one characteristic, but it is only necessary to link them to one in this exercise. You may want to mark the divine essence descriptions in this book with an a, b, c, etc.**
- a. Sovereignty
  - b. Righteousness
  - c. Justice
  - d. Love
  - e. Eternal Life
  - f. Omnipotence
  - g. Omnipresence
  - h. Omniscience
  - i. Immutability
  - j. Truthfulness
- 4. Take the different descriptions of the Father's role listed in part "D" and link them to the descriptions of the Father's activities below. Again, these descriptions may relate to more than one category. You may want to mark the activities descriptions in this book with an a, b, c, etc.**
- a. Authority
  - b. Creator
  - c. Defender and Protector
  - d. Example
  - e. Giver
  - f. Judge
  - g. Leader
  - h. Lover
  - i. Producer and Provider
  - j. Stabilizer and Sustainer

## **Section 4**

# **God the Son (Christology)**

### **A. Jesus Christ's Person**

Jesus Christ, the Son, is God in the flesh. He is not a good man who became a god, but The God who became a man (John 1:1, 14). He is the exact representation of God's nature (John 14:8-9; Hebrews 1:3).

#### **1. His Pre-Existence**

Jesus existed before His physical birth. We are told that ***“By Him, all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created by Him and for Him”*** (Colossians 1:16). Jesus Himself even told the Jews that ***“before Abraham was born, I AM”*** (John 8:58).

The Gospel of John also establishes His pre-existence. John opens with, ***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him; and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being”*** (John 1:1-3). Later in the chapter, John says, ***“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth”*** (John 1:14).

#### **2. The God-Man Union**

Jesus is God and man together. He is fully God and fully man. This truth is often difficult to understand, but it is indeed truth.

Jesus posed a question to the Pharisees shortly before His death on the Cross (Matthew 22:41-46). He asked, “How could the Messiah be King David's ‘Lord’ and also be his ‘son’?” The only way for this to be possible is for the Messiah to be both God and man.

#### **3. His Perfection**

Jesus was perfect in every way. As God, He was perfect, but some have questioned the perfection of His humanity.

We learn from the book of Romans that ***“through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned”*** (Romans 5:12). That one man is Adam whose fall spread sin and death to all men (Romans 5:13-19). Jesus did not have an earthly, biological father but was “fathered” by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). This was not solely that He might be called the “Son of God,” but also that the sin and death that was passed through the first man, Adam, may not be passed on to Him. Unlike the rest of humanity, Jesus did not have Adam's sinful nature. While Adam was created perfect and then fell, Jesus was born perfect and never fell.

God's Word also tells us that Jesus lived a perfect life and would be forever perfect. He “committed no sin” nor spoke any deceit (1 Peter 2:22). Because of His sinless life in the flesh, He is said to be “made perfect forever” (Hebrews 5:9; 7:28) which means that He will never sin.

### **B. Jesus Christ's Role**

Jesus' role in God's Plan was to do what was required by the Plan (John 8:28-29). He completed the actions, which were needed to pay for the sins of mankind so that mankind could be saved (2 Corinthians 5:21).

#### **1. Jesus' Arrival as a Child**

The birth of Jesus was prophesied in the Old Testament, especially through the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:1; 53:2). Jesus is the “promised seed of the woman” (Genesis 3:15).

It was prophesied that He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and would be “the seed” of Abraham (Genesis 22:18; Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:16), through the line of Isaac (Genesis 21:12), Jacob (Genesis 35:10-12), Judah (Genesis 49:8-11), Jesse (Isaiah 11:1) and David (2 Samuel 7:12-16; Jeremiah 23:5; Psalm 132:11).

## 2. The Virgin Birth

The Plan of God required that Jesus the Messiah (Christ) would be born through a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). Although this is theologically significant, it is also important to note that Jesus' birth was miraculous.

This prophecy was clearly fulfilled through Mary (Matthew 1:20, 25).

## 3. Christ's Death

Jesus' death accomplished many things. He was not the one who deserved to die (Luke 23:4). All who have sinned (Romans 3:23) are the ones who deserve to die (Romans 6:23). Since we all have sinned, all of us deserve to die. Jesus, not deserving of death because He did not sin, was free to choose to take our place as the payment for sins before a Holy and Righteous God (John 10:15-17).

### a. Substitution

"Substitution" means that Jesus took our place on the cross. We are told that, ***"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed"*** (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus did not simply go to the cross "on behalf" of us, but "in the place" of us. He bore our "curse" (Galatians 3:13).

### b. Redemption

"Redemption" means that one has been set free because a payment has been made. It indicates a condition of involuntary slavery existed prior to the purchase and that the price of freedom has been paid. Redemption is a forgiveness of sins that moves us from the authority of Satan into the Kingdom of God (Colossians 1:13-14).

Christ paid the purchase price for all mankind (2 Peter 2:1) so that all could be set free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). The price was His own blood, which refers to His death on the cross (Revelation 5:9-10). Because the price for our freedom was paid, we are now free to choose to serve the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) out of thanksgiving for the grace He has given to us and not out of obligation. We should choose to be a bondservant (one who has placed themselves under a master because of the master's greatness) to Christ first and not to man's opinions (1 Corinthians 7:19-23).

There is an ongoing struggle to keep the freedom we have been given in Christ (Galatians 5:1). Our human tendency is to submit to the temptations and sins that enslave our souls so that we act like unbelievers (Ephesians 5:1-14). The freedom, paid for by Christ and given in grace to us, is not to be used as "an opportunity for the flesh" but is to be guided by love as we serve one another (Galatians 5:13).

### c. Reconciliation

"Reconciliation" is the removal of hostility between two parties. Thus, the result of reconciliation is peace.

Unbelievers are declared the "enemies of God" (Romans 5:10) and are, therefore, facing His wrath (Romans 5:9). This means that every individual, before belief in Jesus Christ for salvation (John 3:16, 18, 36), is in a position of hostility toward God (Ephesians 2:3). Jesus came to reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God in order to establish peace (Ephesians 2:16), providing the basis of peace through the offering of His fleshly body (Colossians 1:22).

Sins had to be paid for in order that reconciliation to God could occur (2 Corinthians 5:19). Jesus took care of the basis of the hostility and then committed to us a ministry to others of establishing peace between God and man (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). An application of an individual's ministry of reconciliation is when one serves as a peacemaker between two or more people who are hostile toward each other (Matthew 5:9).

The fact that we have been reconciled to God is a display of the magnitude and greatness of His love (Romans 5:8; Luke 6:31-35). Reconciliation is available to all of mankind (Colossians 1:20).

### d. Propitiation

"Propitiation" means to satisfy the righteousness and justice of a Holy God. This is done by means of an offering.

God possesses anger or wrath concerning sins. The fact of His anger is clearly taught in both the Old and New Testaments (Deuteronomy 6:14-15; Joshua 23:16; Psalm 78:21; John 3:36; Romans 1:18; Ephesians 2:3; 1 Thessalonians 2:16 and many others). God is also loving and merciful. As Charles Ryrie says,

So the Old Testament concept is not a pagan one of an unreasonable God who demands to be placated (satisfied), but of a righteous God who cannot overlook sin but whose love also provides avenues for fellowship with Himself.<sup>99</sup>

God's wrath, therefore, needs to be satisfied or appeased, and the death of Jesus Christ is what satisfied God's wrath concerning sins (Romans 3:23-25). He satisfied God's wrath for all of mankind (1 John 2:2) as a display of His love (1 John 4:10). This was always part of the Plan of God and was an important part of the reason that Jesus became man (Hebrews 2:17-18).

#### **4. Jesus Christ's Resurrection**

"Resurrection" is a specific term that is used to describe someone who has returned from the dead in an imperishable body that will never die again (1 Corinthians 15:42, 54). It is distinguished from "resuscitation" which means to return from the dead in the same body that will eventually die again (1 Kings 17:21-22; 2 Kings 4:34-35; John 11:43).

Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead. Scripture makes it clear that Jesus was indeed dead and not just sleeping or in a coma (Matthew 27:62-66; Mark 15:39, 44; Luke 23:48, 49; John 19:33). A tomb was provided in fulfillment of prophecy (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-58; Mark 15:42-45; Luke 23:50-52; John 19:38), and Jesus was wrapped in burial cloths (Matthew 27:59-60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53-54; John 19:40-42) and placed in the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66). Even the Jews knew where He was buried, as they placed four Roman guards at the entrance and then sealed the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66). The Jews later spread the rumor that Jesus' disciples had stolen the body (Matthew 28:11-15; Mark 14:15).

On the third day, the stone was rolled away up a hill (Matthew 27:60 uses the Greek word KULIO meaning to "roll about"; Mark 16:3-4 uses ANAKULIO meaning to "roll up"; Luke 24:2 uses APOKULIO meaning to roll away; and John 20:1 uses AIRO which means to "lift up." The stone was rolled up a hill and then lifted up.) and the tomb was empty (Matthew 28:5-8; Mark 16:2-8; Luke 24:1-8; John 20:1).

All that was left inside the tomb were His burial wrappings. They were arranged in such a manner that the body could not have been removed, except supernaturally (John 20:2-10). Jesus had been wrapped in strips of cloth. The head piece was the only part removed so as to show that the body was gone. It does not seem feasible that anyone would have taken the time to unwrap the body and then wrap the strips back in such a manner, even if it could have been unwrapped and then wrapped back in that way. The body had simply withdrawn itself.

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (John 20:14), to other women (Matthew 28:9-10), to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5), to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-33), to the apostles with Thomas absent (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-24) and again with him present (John 20:26-29), to seven of the disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-23), to over 500 disciples on a mountain in Galilee (1 Corinthians 15:6), to His half-brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7), to the eleven disciples at His ascension to heaven (Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:33-52; Acts 1:3-12) and to Paul after His ascension (Acts 9:3-6; 1 Corinthians 15:8).

Christ's resurrection is a crucial part of the central theme of the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). It sets Him apart from other leaders of the world's religions, none of whom have been resurrected.

Jesus Himself claimed that He would be raised from the dead (Matthew 16:21; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; Mark 9:10; Luke 9:22-27) and, thus, had it not literally and historically occurred, the entirety of His ministry would have been discredited, and we would still be lost in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:16-17).

God the Father was an agent of His resurrection (Colossians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Peter 1:21; Hebrews 13:20), as was the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:24; Romans 8:11; 1 Peter 3:18).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is authentication (proof) of the fact that all He said and did was true and good.

Our acceptance of Christ's resurrection is the basis for our Christian walk (Romans 6:4).

## 5. Jesus Christ's Ascension

Christ's "Ascension" refers to His return to heaven from earth after His resurrection. He took His rightful place at the right hand of the Father, the highest position in all of creation (Psalm 110:1; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 1 Peter 3:22).

The Ascension occurred ten days before the Day of Pentecost. He then sent the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), as He had promised (John 14:16-17), and established His Church (Acts 1:9-11 cf. Acts 2). His ascension is proof that He has won the Angelic Conflict (Hebrews 1:3-13).

When Jesus ascended, He took with Him the souls of those who had previously died and resided in "Abraham's Bosom" (Luke 16:22; Ephesians 4:7-10). He also "gave gifts to men" (Ephesians 4:8) which were distributed by the Holy Spirit to the Church (1 Corinthians 12:11).

## C. Jesus Christ's Session

The time Christ spends at the right hand of the Father until He returns at the Second Advent is known as the "Session." It is necessary for Him within the Plan of God to sit at the Father's right hand until He returns to earth for the final victory when His **"enemies are made a footstool for His feet"** (Psalm 110:1).

The Session refers to Christ's exalted position as the ascended and now glorified God-man. It is the picture that **"all authority has been given to Him,"** and that **"at His name, every knee should bow"** (Philippians 2:9-10). It is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel 7:13-14.

During His Session, Jesus Christ ministers to mankind as:

### 1. Intercessor

As "Intercessor" Christ appeals to the Father for the saints (Hebrews 7:25). This is done together with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26, 27, 34) and is a request to the Father to **"work all things together for good"** (Romans 8:28) in accordance with the Father's will.

### 2. Advocate

As our "Advocate" Jesus stands as our defense attorney to answer charges brought by Satan against God's children (1 John 2:1; Revelation 12:10).

### 3. Mediator

As our "Mediator" Jesus is the "man in the middle," the one who is our connection to God. A mediator is one who has been designated to act for parties who have a disagreement, or who need to come to an agreement.

Jesus Christ is the one "mediator" between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5). In His position, He mediated a New Covenant between God and man that is grounded in mercy rather than law (Hebrews 8:6-13). The New Covenant came about because of the sacrifice that He offered for sins, in payment for the penalties for the sins committed under the old covenant based in the Mosaic Law (Hebrews 9:13-15). This New Covenant will last for eternity (Hebrews 12:22-24).

Jesus Himself pointed out that He was the mediator between God and man when He declared that **"no one comes to the Father, except through Me"** (John 14:6).

### 4. High Priest

Christ is our "Great High Priest" by direct appointment of the Father. He was not born into the priestly line of Levi and, therefore, could not claim a position as a priest based on His genetic line (Hebrews 5:4-10; 7:5-28). The High Priesthood of Jesus Christ is a major theme of the book of Hebrews.

Jesus is a High Priest like Melchizedek, who lived 400 years before the Levitical Priesthood was established, during the time of Abraham (Hebrews 7:1-3). A humanity that was able to be tempted was required for this priesthood so that He could be merciful and faithful to mankind and propitiate (satisfy) the Father (Hebrews 2:17; 4:14-15). His priesthood is forever (Hebrews 6:20; 7:3, 24).

The function of a priest is to offer sacrifices (Hebrews 8:1-3). Jesus offered Himself (Hebrews 9:6-14) as the **“one sacrifice for all time”** (Hebrews 10:10, 12). His “intercessory” work and “mediatorship” are, therefore, extensions of His High Priesthood.

Since all in the church are priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6), we are to imitate Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1) by offering ourselves as a sacrifice to God’s will (Romans 12:1).

## 5. Head of the Church

Jesus Christ is the “head” or leader of the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18). All who believe in Jesus Christ form the “bride” or “body” of Christ that is known as the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Jesus is the promised husband of the church (Ephesians 5:23) and, as such, continuously extends His unchanging love (Ephesians 5:25-27). The actual “wedding ceremony” will take place in heaven just before Christ returns at the Second Advent (Revelation 19:7-10 cf. 11-16), but the love and faithfulness is present now. The church as the “bride” is being made ready for her husband (Ephesians 4:15; 5:26-27).

## 6. The Shepherd

The term “pastor” is actually a word that means “shepherd.” Christ as the “Good Shepherd” laid down His life for His sheep (John 10:11), which rendered Him the “Great Shepherd” (Hebrews 13:20).

During His present Session at the right hand of the Father, He is the “Chief Shepherd” (1 Peter 5:4), the one who guides and protects His sheep.

## D. Jesus Christ Described

- (An) **“Advocate”** referring to the fact that He speaks to the Father in our defense. 1 John 2:1
- The **“Alpha and the Omega,”** the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, which refers to the fact that He is the foundation of communication. Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13
- The **“Amen”** which means He is the final word on any given subject. 2 Corinthians 1:20; Revelation 3:14
- The **“Anointed One”** which refers to Jesus’ eternally divine selection as Messiah. 1 Samuel 2:35; 2 Chronicles 6:42; Psalms 2:2; 28:8; 84:9; 89:38, 51; 132:10, 17; Daniel 9:25-26; Acts 4:26
- The **“Apostle”** which indicates that He has been sent out with authority. Hebrews 3:1
- The **“Author and Perfecter of our faith”** which means that as God, Christ wrote the Plan and as man, He did it. Hebrews 12:2
- The **“Author of salvation”** which refers to His role as the originator of salvation. Hebrews 2:10
- The **“Beginning and the End”** which refers to the fact that He is the central issue in life. Revelation 21:6; 22:13
- The **“Beginning of the creation of God”** which refers to the fact that He is the ruler of God’s creation. Revelation 3:14
- The **“blessed and only Sovereign”** referring to His position of highest authority. 1 Timothy 6:15
- The **“Branch of the LORD”** which refers to His humanity taking sustenance from His deity. Isaiah 4:2
- The **“bread of God”** which refers to His divine maintenance of life. John 6:33, 51
- The **“Bread of life”** which refers to Him being the one who satisfies the needs of life. John 6:35, 48
- The **“bridegroom”** which refers to the intimate and protective nature of His relationship with Believers. Isaiah 62:5; Matthew 9:15; 25:1, 5, 6, 10; Mark 2:19, 20; Luke 5:34, 35; John 2:9; 3:29; Revelation 18:23
- The **“bright morning star”** which means that He is the brightest star surrounded by spiritual darkness. Revelation 22:16
- The **“Chief Shepherd”** which means that He is the one responsible for the flock. 1 Peter 5:4
- The **“choice stone, a precious corner stone”** which refers to the fact that He was specially selected to be the standard of measure. The cornerstone establishes the standards for the building. Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:4, 6
- **“Christ Jesus my Lord”** which means that the man Jesus is the Messiah and is the authority in my life. Philippians 3:8

- **“Christ Jesus our hope”** which refers to Jesus the Messiah being our confidence for the future. 1 Timothy 1:1
- The **“Christ of God”** which refers to His selection as Messiah. Luke 9:20; 23:35
- The **“Commander of the host”** which refers to His position of authority over armies. Daniel 8:11
- The **“consolation of Israel”** which refers to the encouragement Christ gives. Luke 2:25
- A **“covenant to the people”** referring to Jesus being the foundation of a new agreement to Believers. Isaiah 42:6
- The **“Door”** which refers to the fact that He is the entrance into God’s kingdom. John 10:7, 9
- The **“Eternal Father”** to show us that He has always been God. Isaiah 9:6
- The **“Eternal Life”** to teach us that it is found in a person, not a concept. 1 John 1:2
- The **“everlasting Rock”** to teach us the stability that will always be found in Him. Isaiah 26:4
- The **“Exact Representation of His nature”** which refers to the humanity of Christ being God in the flesh. Hebrews 1:3
- **“Faithful and True”** which refers to His consistency and honesty. Revelation 19:11
- The **“faithful and true Witness”** which refers to the consistency and honesty concerning prophetic events. Revelation 3:14
- The **“faithful Witness”** which refers to His testimony of resurrection. Revelation 1:5
- The **“First and the Last”** which refers to the fact that He is the only source of creation. Revelation 1:17; 2:8; 22:13
- The **“First-born from (of) the dead”** which refers to being the first to conquer death and receive a resurrection body. Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5
- The **“First-born of all creation”** which means that He is the beginning of all creation. Colossians 1:15
- The **“First-fruits of those who are asleep”** which means that He is the first blessing of resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:20
- The **“fragrant Aroma”** which is a reference to the blessing of His sacrifice. Ephesians 5:2
- A **“Friend of tax collectors and sinners”** which refers to His care for those whom society avoids and who violate laws. Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:34
- The **“Glory of thy people Israel”** which refers to His worthiness to receive praise. Luke 2:32
- The **“God of all the earth”** which is a reference to the extent of His essence in relationship to mankind. Isaiah 54:5
- The **“God over all”** which is a specific reference to being the God of Israel. Romans 9:5
- The **“good Shepherd”** which refers to the nature of His leading and protection. John 10:11
- The **“great High Priest”** which refers to the skill with which He exercises the office. Hebrews 4:14
- The **“great Light”** which refers to the extent of His removing of darkness. Isaiah 9:2; Matthew 4:16
- The **“great Shepherd”** which refers to the superiority of His provision and protection. Hebrews 13:20
- The **“Guarantee of a better covenant”** which means that Jesus was the promise of a better contract with God. Hebrews 7:22
- The **“Guardian of your souls”** which refers to His protection of the souls of Believers. 1 Peter 2:25
- The **“Head”** which refers to the intelligence behind His leadership. 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 2:19
- **“He who arises to rule over the Gentiles”** which refers to the authority Christ will have over even non-Jews. Romans 15:12
- **“He who sanctifies”** which refers to the Lord’s ability to set apart for service. Hebrews 2:11
- **“He who searches minds and hearts”** which is a reference to Jesus’ ability to determine the motives (intentions) of mankind. Revelation 2:23
- **“Head of the body”** which is a reference to His intelligent leadership of the Church. Colossians 1:18
- **“Head of the church”** which refers to His intelligent leadership of Believers. Ephesians 5:23
- **“Head over all rule and authority”** which refers to His absolute authority. Colossians 2:10

- **“Heir of all things”** which means that as the Father’s Son, He receives all things. Hebrews 1:2
- **“High priest”** which is a reference to the position He holds. Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11; 13:11-12
- **“Him who loves us and released us from our sins”** which refers to Christ’s forgiveness of our sins because of His love. Revelation 1:5
- **“His only begotten Son”** is a reference to the fact that Jesus Christ is totally unique in all of creation. John 3:16; Hebrews 11:17; 1 John 4:9
- The **“Holy and Righteous one”** which is a reference to His perfect character. Acts 3:14
- The **“Holy One of God”** which refers to His perfectly lived human life. Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; John 6:69
- The **“holy Servant”** referring to the fact that He learned obedience as a child would. Acts 4:27, 30 (Greek word PAIS used which means “child”)
- The **“Hope of Israel”** which refers Israel to the true basis of confidence. Jeremiah 14:8; 17:13; Acts 28:20
- The **“Horn of salvation”** which refers to the power necessary to bring about salvation. Luke 1:69
- The **“Image of the invisible God”** which means that Jesus is God in the flesh. Colossians 1:15
- **“Immanuel”** which is a Hebrew word meaning, “God with us.” Isaiah 7:14; 8:8; Matthew 1:23
- The **“indescribable Gift”** which means that we do not have the vocabulary to fully tell of Christ’s greatness. 2 Corinthians 9:15
- **“Jesus of Nazareth”** which refers to the town in which He grew up. Matthew 26:71; Mark 1:24; 10:47; Luke 4:34; 18:37; 24:19; John 1:45; 18:5, 7; Acts 2:22; 6:14; 10:38; 22:8; 26:9
- **“Judge of the living and the dead”** which refers to His position which has the authority to render verdicts and punishments. Acts 10:42; 2 Timothy 4:1
- **“KING OF KINGS”** which refers to His superior position over even the highest authorities. Revelation 19:16
- **“King of the nations”** which refers to His superior position over political groups. Revelation 15:3
- The **“Lamb of God”** which refers to the sacrifice that Jesus will offer of Himself to satisfy the righteousness of God. John 1:29, 36
- The **“last Adam”** which refers to the fact that He is the last being to come into existence without sin. 1 Corinthians 15:45
- The **“Life”** which refers to the fact that true life is found in the person of Christ and not in simply a physical condition. John 1:4; 11:25; 14:6
- A **“life-giving Spirit”** which is used to describe Jesus’ union with the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 15:45
- A **“Light of revelation to the Gentiles”** which refers to the fact that Jesus was to be disclosed to all mankind. Luke 2:32
- The **“Light of life”** which refers to His guidance on our journey through the things not easily understood in life. Job 33:30; Psalms 49:19; 56:13; John 8:12
- The **“Light of men”** which refers to the guidance available from Him for all mankind. John 1:4
- The **“Light of the world”** which refers to His guidance through the spiritual darkness of the world. John 8:12; 9:5
- The **“Living One”** which refers to the eternal nature of His resurrection. Revelation 1:17-18
- The **“Living Stone”** which refers to the stability found in His life. 1 Peter 2:4
- **“Lord”** which refers to His authority. Acts 4:24; Revelation 6:10
- **“Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”** which refers to the fact that He used His authority to deliver mankind from their sins. 2 Peter 1:11, 20; 3:18
- **“Lord of glory”** which refers to the wonderful nature of His authority. 1 Corinthians 2:8
- **“LORD OF LORDS”** which refers to the fact that He is the authority over all other authorities. Revelation 19:16
- **“Lord of peace”** referring to His desire to use His authority to establish peace between God and man. 2 Thessalonians 3:16

- **“Lord of the harvest”** which refers to His authority over the spread of the gospel. Matthew 9:38; Luke 10:2
- **“Lord of the Sabbath”** referring to His authority over the Fourth Law of the Ten Commandments. Matthew 12:8; Luke 6:5
- The **“LORD our Righteousness”** referring to the fact that He is the standard for and giver of our righteousness. Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16
- A **“man attested to you by God”** which teaches of God’s approval of Him. Acts 2:22
- A **“man from heaven”** referring to His divine nature. 1 Corinthians 15:47
- A **“man of sorrows”** referring to His compassion for mankind who often rejected Him. Isaiah 53:3
- **“Master”** which refers to His superiority of authority or skill. Luke 5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33; 17:13; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:21
- The **“Mediator of a new covenant”** which means that He is the One who secured a better covenant with God. Hebrews 9:15; 12:24
- A **“Merciful and faithful High Priest”** which refers to the compassion and consistency of His office. Hebrews 2:17
- The **“Messenger of the covenant”** who will bring the news of a new contract with God. Malachi 3:1
- The **“Messiah”** which means He was selected by God to deliver the people from their sins. John 1:41; 4:25
- **“Mighty God”** which refers to the power of His deity. Isaiah 9:6
- The **“Morning Star”** which refers to His being the brightest light among the stars that are surrounded by darkness. 2 Peter 1:19; Revelation 22:16
- A **“Nazarene”** which was a title of ridicule. Matthew 2:23
- The **“offspring of David”** which refers to His humanity passing through the line of King David. Revelation 22:16
- **“One with the Father”** which refers to the unity of God’s essence. John 10:30
- The **“only begotten from the Father”** which is a reference to the uniqueness of His being. John 1:14,18
- The **“only God our savior”** which refers to the uniqueness of His person and work. Jude 1:25
- **“Our glorious Lord”** which is a reference to the greatness of His authority among Believers. James 2:1
- **“Our God and Savior”** which refers to the relationship Jesus’ person and work has to the Church. 2 Peter 1:1
- **“Our Life”** which is a reference to the existence He gives the Church. Colossians 3:4
- **“Our Lord”** referring to the Church’s acceptance of His authority. Romans 1:4; 5:21; 7:25; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Jude 1:25
- **“Our only Master and Lord”** which refers to the Church’s recognition of His superiority and authority. Jude 1:4
- **“Our Passover”** which is a reference to His sacrifice on behalf of the Church. 1 Corinthians 5:7
- **“Our Peace”** which refers to the establishment of peace between God and the Church. Ephesians 2:14
- **“Our Savior”** referring to the deliverance from sins that He gave to the Church. Titus 3:6
- The **“Physician”** which is a reference to His ability to heal. Luke 4:23
- **“Prince and Savior”** which refers to the One who takes the lead in life and salvation. Acts 5:31
- The **“Prince of life”** which refers to the fact that He takes the lead in life. Acts 3:15
- The **“Prince of Peace”** which means that He takes the lead in establishing harmony with God. Isaiah 9:6
- The **“Prince of princes”** which means that there is no leader greater than He. Daniel 8:25
- The **“Prophet”** which is a reference to His fulfillment of prophecy. Deuteronomy 18:18 cf. Acts 3:22
- The **“Propitiation for our sins”** which means that He satisfied the righteousness and justice of the Father. 1 John 2:2
- The **“Purifier”** which refers His activity to see sin removed from mankind. Malachi 3:3
- The **“radiance of His glory”** which refers to the brightness of the Father’s character. Hebrews 1:3

- A **“ransom for all”** which means that He paid the price to set us free. 1 Timothy 2:6
- The **“Resurrection and the Life”** which teaches us that resurrection to eternal life is through the person of Jesus Christ. John 11:25
- The **“Righteous Judge”** which means that He administers discipline or reward in accordance with His perfect standards. Psalm 7:11; 2 Timothy 4:8
- The **“Righteous One”** which points to His own perfect personal application of His perfect standards. Isaiah 24:16; Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14; 1 John 2:1
- The **“root of David”** which refers to the fact that His eternal nature was involved in the making of David. Revelation 22:16
- The **“ruler of the Kings of the earth”** which refers to His authority over even the highest authorities on earth. Revelation 1:5
- The **“Savior of the world”** which means He is the only One who can deliver from sins. John 4:42; 1 John 4:14
- The **“Shepherd”** to display His care for those He loves. Genesis 49:24; Psalm 80:1; Ecclesiastes 12:11
- The **“Shepherd of your souls”** which is a reference to His care for the immaterial part of man. 1 Peter 2:25
- **“A signal for the peoples”** which means that He is the person that people need to seek. Isaiah 11:10
- The **“Son of God”** which refers to His relationship within the Trinity. John 10:36; 11:4
- The **“Son of the living God”** which refers to His relationship with the real God and not an idol. Matthew 16:16
- The **“Son of the Most High God”** which refers to how He is viewed by the angels. Mark 5:7; Luke 8:28
- The **“Source of eternal salvation”** which refers to the fact that He is the foundation of salvation. Hebrews 5:9
- The **“stability of your times”** which refers to the ability to endure attacks during life. Isaiah 33:6
- A **“stone”** which refers to the stability that He is for mankind’s life. Isaiah 28:16
- The **“stone the builders rejected”** which refers to the stability that the leaders of Israel chose to attack. Psalm 118:22; Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; 1 Peter 2:7
- **“Teacher” (Rabboni)** which refers to His ability to instruct. John 20:16
- A **“tested stone”** which refers to Christ’s experience in life. Isaiah 28:16
- The **“Testimony borne in its proper time”** which refers to Jesus’ witness that was revealed in accordance with God’s perfect time. 1 Timothy 2:6
- The **“true Bread”** which means that Jesus is really the spiritual nourishment from God. John 6:32
- The **“true Light”** which refers to the accuracy of His revelation of truth. John 1:9; 1 John 2:8
- The **“true Vine”** which means that Jesus is really the spiritual provider of spiritual fruit (good works). John 15:1
- The **“Truth”** which refers to the perfection of every part of His life. John 5:33; 8:31-32; 14:6
- The **“Way”** which means that He is the source of salvation and divine guidance. Matthew 7:14; John 14:5-6
- A **“wealth of salvation”** which refers His value in the deliverance of mankind. Isaiah 33:6
- **“Wisdom”** which refers to His ability to understand and properly use everything found in God’s Word. Isaiah 33:6
- The One **“who became to us righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption”** which refers to the fact that salvation and spiritual maturity is truly discovered in His person, rather than in a concept. 1 Corinthians 1:30
- The One **“who became to us wisdom from God”** which refers to the fact that wisdom is also found in His person. 1 Corinthians 1:30
- A **“witness to the peoples”** which refers to the testimony He gave to all mankind. Isaiah 55:4
- **“Wonderful Counselor”** which refers to His ability to offer the perfect assistance that is needed in times of trouble. Isaiah 9:6

- The **“Word”** which means that He is the basis of all communication. Psalm 119:81; John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; Revelation 19:13
- The **“Word of God”** which refers to the fact that He is the foundation of all communication from God. 2 Peter 3:5; John 1:1-5; Revelation 19:13
- The **“Word of life”** which means that He is the basic building block of all that lives. Philippians 2:16; 1 John 1:1
- **“Your husband”** which refers to the possible intimacy of peoples’ relationship with Him. Isaiah 54:5
- **“Your maker”** which refers to Him as the Creator of mankind. Isaiah 54:5
- **“Your Redeemer”** which refers to Him as the One who paid for the sins of mankind. Isaiah 54:5
- **“Your Salvation”** which refers to Him as the One who delivers mankind from their sins. Luke 2:29-30

## For Personal Study: Chapter 5, Section 4

1. Read Colossians 1:16 and John 8:58. What does this tell us about the person of Jesus Christ?
2. Read Matthew 22:41-46. How could the Messiah be both King David’s Lord and also be his son?
3. Read 1 Peter 2:22. What does this tell us about sin in the life of Jesus Christ?
4. Read Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:1-2 and 53:2. Write a brief summary of what they reveal about the Messiah to come.
5. Read the following passages and tell what Jesus’ death did for us:
  - a. Galatians 3:1
  - b. Colossians 1:13-14
  - c. Ephesians 2:14-16
  - d. 1 John 2:1-2
6. Read the following passages and give some facts about Jesus’ resurrection:
  - a. Matthew 27:62-66
  - b. John 20:2-10
  - c. John 20:14; Matthew 28:9-10; John 20:26-29; 21:1-23 and 1 Corinthians 15:6
  - d. 1 Corinthians 15:1-3
7. Read Acts 1:9 and Colossians 3:1. What did Christ do after His resurrection?
8. Read the following passages and describe what Jesus presently does while at the right hand of the Father (in Session):
  - a. Hebrews 7:25
  - b. 1 John 2:1
  - c. 1 Timothy 2:5
  - d. Hebrews 4:14
9. Read Ephesians 1:22-23. What is Christ to the Church?
10. Read John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20 and 1 Peter 5:4. What kind of “Shepherd” is our Lord?
11. Take the different descriptions of the Son’s person and role listed in part “D” and link them to the descriptions of the Son’s activities below. Again, these descriptions may relate to more than one category. You may want to mark the Son’s activities descriptions with 1, 2, 3, etc.
  - a. His Pre-Existence
  - b. The God-Man Union
  - c. His Perfection
  - d. His Birth and Life
  - e. His Death
  - f. His Resurrection
  - g. His Ascension and Session
  - h. His Ministry

## **Section 5**

# **God the Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)**

### **A. His Person<sup>100</sup>**

It has already been proven that the Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not simply a title used to denote divine power or divine motive. This is proved by the fact that He possesses all three of the characteristics of a person: intelligence, feeling and will.

There have been frequent disagreements throughout the history of the church over the subject of the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. We must pay careful attention to the principle of **“being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”** (Ephesians 4:3). A true understanding and reliance on the Holy Spirit will lead us to love (Galatians 5:22), which will not only include our love for God but also for one another (1 John 4:20).

The “temple” of the Holy Spirit is the Body of Christ. The Apostle Paul asks, **“do you not know that your (plural meaning “all of you”) body (singular) is a temple (singular meaning one body and one temple) of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?”** (1 Corinthians 6:19). Previously in 1 Corinthians, Paul asked a similar question, **“Do you not know that (all of) you (plural) are a temple (singular) of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in (all of) you?”** (1 Corinthians 3:16). The Holy Spirit connects individuals within the Body of Christ to each other. We are warned that we are not to harm that “temple” with unholy activity (1 Corinthians 3:17). There is only one “bride” of Jesus Christ. Let this be our guide in this study.

#### **1. Intelligence**

The Holy Spirit has the ability to know and search the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:10-11). This teaches that He has a mind (Romans 8:27) and the ability to teach people (1 Corinthians 2:13).

#### **2. Feelings**

God’s Word says specifically that the Holy Spirit can be grieved (Isaiah 63:10; Ephesians 4:30), which indicates that He possesses feelings. If He were simply an influence or motive, He would not be subject to such feelings. This is also evidenced by the fact that He can be blasphemed (Mark 3:29).

#### **3. Will**

It is also clear that He possesses the ability to choose, a will. The Holy Spirit sovereignly distributes spiritual gifts to the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:11). It is also clear that He guides and directs the activities of Christians (Acts 16:6-11).

#### **4. Form**

Only once in Scripture, at the Baptism of Jesus, do we see the Holy Spirit take on the form of a dove, symbolizing peace (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 5, Section 5A**

### **1. What are the three characteristics of a person?**

- a. Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-11. What does this teach us about the Holy Spirit?
- b. Read Ephesians 4:30. What does this teach us about the Holy Spirit?
- c. Read 1 Corinthians 12:11. What does this teach us about the Holy Spirit?

### **B. His Role**

#### **1. Creation**

It is clear that the Holy Spirit had a part in the Creation and forming of the heavens and earth. After the earth became formless and without population, the **“Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters”** (Genesis 1:2) as a bird “hovers” over its young (Deuteronomy 32:11). Scripture says that the Lord made the expanse of the heavens by simply saying the “word” and that the Holy Spirit put the stars in them (Psalm 33:6). The Holy Spirit also has control over His creation (Job 26:13).

The Holy Spirit also has a role in the creation and formation of mankind (Job 33:4) as well as in the formation of animals (Psalm 104:24-25 cf. 104:30).

His role in creation is to reveal the Lord God through His creation (Isaiah 40:12-13 cf. Romans 1:20 cf. John 16:13-14).

## **2. Revelation**

The role of the Holy Spirit in revelation is to clearly inform mankind of new truths (John 16:13). He uses human agents to communicate truth (2 Samuel 23:2) and at times that truth is bad news (Micah 3:8).

Scripture itself is a revelation from the Holy Spirit (Matthew 22:42-43; Acts 1:16; 4:24-25; 28:25-26; Hebrews 10:15-16).

## **3. Understanding**

The Holy Spirit has revealed spiritual information to mankind, but some of it is difficult to understand (1 Corinthians 13:12). Therefore, the Holy Spirit also assists our understanding of God's Word (1 Corinthians 2:12-16) and which portions of God's Word apply to different circumstances that we face in life (Luke 12:11-12; Hebrews 3:7-8). This application of spiritual understanding to life is called "wisdom."

## **4. Inspiration**

The Holy Spirit stimulated certain men to write the Holy Scriptures (2 Peter 1:21). We are told by God's Word that "all Scripture is God-breathed" which means literally "God-Spirited" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Apostle Paul, when writing that passage, used a Greek word that is not found anywhere else. It is the word THEOPNEUSTOS which is a word that has been formed by the Greek words THEOS and PNEUMA, which mean "God" and "Spirit." All of the Bible is inspired by God the Holy Spirit.

## **5. Miracles**

Jesus performed miracles in the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:18).

The Holy Spirit was also the direct agent in other miraculous acts. One clear example is when Philip baptized an Ethiopian and then disappeared (Acts 8:39). Another is the Virgin Birth.

## **6. The Virgin Birth**

Mary, a virgin, was told by the angel Gabriel that she would conceive a child who would be fathered by the Holy Spirit and, thus, be called the "Son of God" (Luke 1:27, 35). This passage not only tells us which member of the Trinity was the heavenly Father of Jesus, but also is another proof that the Holy Spirit is God.

After Mary became pregnant with Jesus, an angel appeared to Joseph, the man to whom Mary was engaged to be married, and told him that Mary was pregnant with a child fathered by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18-20).

## **7. Conviction of Sin**

Another specific role of the Holy Spirit is to convict mankind of sin. This means that He makes it clear to not just the world but also to individuals that they have not obeyed the laws of God and, thus, are sinners in need of a savior (John 16:8). He convicts of sin through our conscience (Romans 9:1).

## **8. Regeneration**

Regeneration is a term that means "new birth." It is descriptive of what happens at salvation, not of something that occurs after salvation. The Holy Spirit is the Person who gives the "new birth" as a result of God's promise in His Word (1 Peter 1:23 cf. Titus 3:5).

## **9. Baptism**

There has been a lot of confusion in Christianity concerning the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let us examine clearly and closely what the Bible says about this topic.

The Greek word for "baptize" (BAPTIDZO) means "to dip" and was used among the Greeks to signify "the dyeing of a garment, or the drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another or of being overwhelmed with questions."<sup>101</sup> When a ritual baptism or "dipping" occurred (such as a person in water, or a spear

being dipped in blood by soldiers before a battle), it was symbolic of the acceptance of, or commitment to, another person or cause. It was a method used to proclaim that contact, whether verbally, physically or emotionally, had been made with another party or set of circumstances. For example, Jesus said that He had a “baptism” to undergo which was actually a reference to the cross (Mark 10:38), since His water baptism had already been done (Mark 1:9). Jesus’ water baptism was a picture of His acceptance of the Father’s plan for His life.

John the Baptist’s message included the promise that the Messiah would **“baptize with the Holy Spirit”** (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5). Therefore, Baptism of the Holy Spirit did not occur until the Lord sent the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (John 14:16-17; Acts 2:1-4), which Peter called “the beginning” (Acts 11:16). Neither was it something any Believer received prior to that day. It was new for the Church when it began on the Day of Pentecost.

It is impossible to understand the Baptism of the Holy Spirit without realizing that its purpose was to place Believers from the Day of Pentecost onward into a “body” known as the “body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), or the Church (Ephesians 5:22-30). Please notice that sin and carnality does not remove anyone from that “Body,” or else the Corinthians would certainly have been removed (read 1 Corinthians 1–11 for the multitude of sins they were committing).

There is no command or instruction found anywhere in Scripture to be “baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Therefore, it is something that happens when one believes in Jesus Christ, accepting His death, burial and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). It is not a “wet” baptism, but rather a “dry” one.

The spiritual truth of baptism for Believers is stated clearly by the Apostle Paul. He says,

***Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection*** (Romans 6:3-5).

Baptism of the Holy Spirit in which the Believer becomes indwelt by the Holy Spirit (John 14:17; Romans 5:5), therefore, occurs when a person accepts Jesus Christ as their savior and is, thus, identified with His work on their behalf.

## 10. Sealing

The “seal” refers to an impression that is made, much like a ring impressed into wax. The Jews did this to the tomb of Jesus Christ, so that they would be able to tell if the stone covering the tomb had been moved (Matthew 27:66). The Holy Spirit places the invisible “seal” of God on a person when that person believes in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:13).

It is the Divine endorsement that the person bearing this seal has been accepted. The Believer has been entered into a permanent union with Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit has in effect “signed His name” to that union. The Holy Spirit, being God, uses the “seal of God” (2 Corinthians 1:22) to make this invisible mark.

Since the Holy Spirit has sealed Believers, we are not to “grieve” Him by being involved in sinful acts (Ephesians 4:30).

We are said to be “sealed unto the Day of Redemption” (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30) which refers to the future day in which our redemption will be fully completed at the Resurrection (Romans 8:23).

## 11. Indwelling

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit occurs at the time of salvation. This is the fulfillment of a promise that Jesus made in which He states, **“and I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you”** (John 14:16-17).

Prior to the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was said to be “upon” Believers. Since the Day of Pentecost He is said to be “inside” or “dwelling” inside Believers. The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit is, therefore, unique to the Church (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Timothy 1:14).

The various primary ministries of the Holy Spirit, such as the conviction of sin and revelation of truth, were the same, but His “location” changed.

The Holy Spirit’s move to the inside of the Believer occurs at the same time as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, namely at the point of salvation. Since both the Baptism and Indwelling of the Holy Spirit are gifts from God (Acts 11:16-17; Romans 5:5), they will not be removed (Romans 11:29). The Spirit’s “Indwelling” is not even removed for flagrant sin by a Believer as proved by the Corinthian church. In 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; and 6:19, the Believers at Corinth are still considered saved in spite of the many sins that Paul addresses in chapters 5 and 6.

There are two instances recorded in the book of Acts where the Holy Spirit was given after salvation (Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-6). Hopefully, the student remembers the importance of asking the questions, such as, “Who?” “What?” and “When?” In both cases, the people involved had believed that Messiah would come, but did not yet know that He had indeed come. After being instructed that Messiah had come and believing the report, they then received the Holy Spirit. It is not wise to take special events and then believe that they are normal.

## 12. Filling

In our study of the Filling of the Holy Spirit, we will again turn to God’s Word for answers. We will look at the Bible’s description of the Filling of the Holy Spirit and then seek to determine the significance in our own life.

### a. The Filling of the Holy Spirit is:

#### 1) Given for special services such as craftsmanship and leadership

The Filling of the Holy Spirit was given during the Age of Israel to specific individuals in order to carry out specific tasks. The Holy Spirit could be requested (Luke 11:13), but it was not necessary. Scripture records that it was given to Bezalel, one of the workers on the Tabernacle, so that His craftsmanship might be honoring to God (Exodus 31:3; 35:31). It also says that **“Joshua was filled with the Spirit of wisdom”** (Deuteronomy 34:9) in order to lead Israel after the death of Moses.

#### 2) Given for special ministry, encouragement and prophecy

In the Gospel of Luke we find that John the Baptist (Luke 1:15), his mother Elizabeth (Luke 1:41) and his father Zacharias (Luke 1:67) were also filled with the Holy Spirit. These references establish a basic principle that the “filling” of the Holy Spirit is a reference to Divine power given to carry out special service.

#### 3) Given for special communication to a specific audience

Jesus, after His resurrection and just before His ascension to heaven, told the disciples to “receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). This is evidently an instruction to listen to the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2) and to wait for His empowering (the giving of power) which would take place a few days later (Acts 1:8). This would give them the grace to forgive those who crucified Jesus (John 20:23).

When the Holy Spirit empowered them by filling them on the Day of Pentecost, they began to speak in human languages that they had not previously known (Acts 2:1-11, especially verses 4, 8, 11). Peter was empowered to preach the sermon that is recorded in that same chapter (2:14-40) and to offer the promise of the Holy Spirit to all who would accept the message about Jesus Christ (2:38-40). It is evident here that, as in the Age of Israel, the filling of the Holy Spirit involved a special empowering to carry out special service.

#### 4) Given for spiritual defense and boldness

The next instances of the filling of the Spirit occur when Peter made a defense to the Jews (Acts 4:5-12) and then gave a report about that defense to friends. Both Peter and his friends were filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered to speak the Word with boldness (Acts 4:31).

Notice that these two empowerings did not involve speaking in other languages. Therefore, to believe that the Filling of the Holy Spirit always involves speaking in other languages is incorrect.

From these early examples of the Filling of the Holy Spirit, we can determine that while the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit occurs once in the life of the Believer and is permanent, the Filling of the Holy Spirit occurs more than once and, thus, is not permanent. Another proof of that point is that Believers are not commanded to be “indwelled” by the Holy Spirit, but they are commanded to be “filled” (Ephesians 5:18). The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit involves a position (the Holy Spirit in us and we in Christ) while the Filling of the Holy Spirit involves a display of His power through the Believer.

**5) Given to empower ministry**

The Filling of the Holy Spirit is designed in the Church to empower our actions of service to other Believers. When a problem arose in the early church concerning the care of widows (Acts 6:1), the twelve disciples told the congregation to select men of character who were filled with the Spirit and wisdom to take care of this matter (Acts 6:2-5), which the congregation did. The disciples saw the need for the spiritual empowering of people to carry out ministries within the Church.

**6) Given to identify Satanic deceit**

Saul (Paul), on his First Missionary Journey, was presenting God’s Word to a Roman official named Sergius Paulus and was opposed by a magician named Elymas (Acts 13:6-7). Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, knew that Elymas was attempting to pervert the Word of God (Acts 13:8-10).

**7) Given to deal with rejection**

This recorded instance of the filling of the Holy Spirit involves Paul and Barnabas being rejected by the Jews at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:42-51). The filling of the Holy Spirit in this context indicates that more of an ongoing relationship with the Holy Spirit is in existence at this point in their ministries (13:52).

**b. The Filling of the Holy Spirit in the Growing Christian**

Since the Believer is commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), we can conclude that not every Believer is filled at all times.

Since sin will hinder the Believer’s fellowship with God, we conclude that it also will hinder the empowering or Filling of the Holy Spirit (1 John 1:6). The ongoing Filling of the Holy Spirit is indicative of our Christian walk, which is referred to as “**walking in the light**” (John 8:12; 12:35-36; Ephesians 5:7-10; 1 John 1:7). At times the Believer will sin (1 John 1:8, 10). This sin harms our fellowship with God, and the Believer must then confess his sins, accepting by faith the fact that God is “**faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**” (1 John 1:9).

Please notice that the Filling of the Holy Spirit has clearly been a completed act, an instantaneous event, and not a process that is partially completed. No reference is made to someone who is half-filled or partially filled with the Holy Spirit, and the filling of the Holy Spirit is not subject to one’s Christian maturity. Therefore, the Filling of the Holy Spirit: (1) is available to all Believers, no matter their degree of maturity and (2) is complete. It must also be clear that since the Holy Spirit can be resisted (Acts 7:51), the individual must yield to Him in order to be filled.

From the facts we have just gathered, we can conclude that the Filling of the Holy Spirit is a completed action that empowers the Believer to live the Christian life. However, it is not the objective of the Christian life but is a key element that begins and sustains the Christian life.

Four specific outgrowths of the Filling of the Holy Spirit are the power to praise God (the outward expression), worship God (the inward expression), give thanks to God and submit to one another (Ephesians 5:19-21).

### 13. Praying

In the section on the Filling of the Holy Spirit, we saw the importance of consistency. We are also taught that it is important to “pray in the Spirit,” referring to our relationship to God the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:18; Jude 1:20-21). In our prayer life, it is obvious that we should be in fellowship with God as we pray, thus we must consistently practice confessing our sins (1 John 1:9).

There will be times when we do not know how to pray, we don’t know what words to use, or even exactly what we are trying to say. When this occurs, we can take comfort in the fact that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us to get our prayers before the Father (Romans 8:26-27).

### 14. Assuring

Part of the role of the Holy Spirit is to assure the Believer of salvation and eternal blessings. We are told that He “**bears witness... that we are children of God,**” and that we are “**heirs with Christ**” (Romans 8:16-17).

The Holy Spirit is the “pledge” of our eternal inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14).

### 15. Interceding

The Holy Spirit makes sure that the Father knows our desires even when we are not able to express them (Romans 8:26-27).

### 16. Gifting

Jesus Christ, when He ascended to the Father, gave gifts to mankind (Ephesians 4:11). These Spiritual Gifts are distributed to Believers by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11, 18; Hebrews 2:4).

A Spiritual Gift is a God-given ability to excel (surpass normal abilities) in a special area of life so as to benefit the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12). Each Believer has a gift and is to use it to serve other Believers (1 Peter 4:10).

While a Spiritual Gift is not a natural or acquired ability, the Holy Spirit will often use your natural talents and abilities through the Spiritual Gift. Musical talents, for example, might be expressed through the Gift of Instruction (Romans 12:8).

You also may need some acquired abilities for your Spiritual Gift to fully function. For example, if you have been given the Gift of Teaching (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11), you will need to study the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15) and learn how to teach it.

We will expand the study of Spiritual Gifts in Chapter 8.

### 17. Teaching

An important role of the Holy Spirit is to teach us about the things of God (John 14:26). He may teach us quickly in accordance with a specific need (Luke 12:11-12) or He may lead us through the process of learning (John 16:13-15).

Only by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit do we truly learn spiritual things (1 Corinthians 2:10-16).

### 18. Guiding

The Holy Spirit is our Guide through the Christian life. As our Guide, His primary objective is to teach us about Jesus Christ (John 16:13) so that we may become like Him (1 Corinthians 11:1; Ephesians 5:1).

Where God’s will is clearly revealed through His Word, such as in moral issues (1 Timothy 1:8-11; Romans 8:12-14), the guidance of the Holy Spirit is obvious. Since the Holy Spirit inspired the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21), we can know His will from what is written and, thus, it becomes our guide.

Where God’s specific will is not clearly revealed in His Word, such as in choices between two good things, we are to submit to Him ourselves “as a living and holy sacrifice” (Romans 12:1) so that we may come to know His will for that matter (Romans 12:2).

For other examples of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, see Acts 8:29; 10:19-20; 13:2-4; 16:6-7; 20:20-23.

### 19. Producing Fruit

The Indwelling Holy Spirit desires to produce fruit through us. This fruit is “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23). For this to occur, we must let the Holy Spirit empower our Christian walk (Galatians 5:16, 25) so that the flesh and its works of sin may be conquered (Galatians 5:17-21).

### 20. Stimulating Joy and Rejoicing

The Holy Spirit stimulates joy within us and rejoicing that comes out of us. This joy can occur even during times of intense persecution (1 Thessalonians 1:6). It is frequently a response to the Father’s blessing on others and not just a response to personal blessing (Luke 10:21).

### 21. Outpouring of Love

When the Holy Spirit indwells the one who believes in Jesus Christ, He brings true godly love with Him and a hope that will not disappoint (Romans 5:5).

### 22. Revealing Righteousness, Peace and Joy

In the life of the Believer, the Holy Spirit reveals that the most important blessings of God’s kingdom are spiritual rather than physical (Romans 14:17).

### 23. Empowering

The Holy Spirit brings the power with Him to the Believer so that the Believer may have abundant hope (Romans 15:13) and then be able to preach the eternal and heavenly gospel (1 Peter 1:12).

### 24. Sanctifying

We are “set apart (sanctified)” to God so that we may offer to God acceptable sacrifices of praise and do good for others (Romans 15:16 cf. Hebrews 13:15-16). This sanctification includes moral issues, because those who get involved in immorality are slowed and potentially stopped in their spiritual progress (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8). Part of our sanctification is to let the “Holy” Spirit make us “holy” just as He is “holy” (1 Peter 1:16).

### 25. Establishing Fellowship

The Holy Spirit is the One who establishes fellowship between Believers, based on the grace of Jesus Christ and the love of the Father (2 Corinthians 13:14).

## For Personal Study: Chapter 5, Section 5B

### 2. Read the following verses and describe the role of the Holy Spirit:

- |                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Job 33:4              | m. Ephesians 6:18             |
| b. John 16:13            | n. Romans 8:16-17             |
| c. 1 Corinthians 2:12-16 | o. Romans 8:26                |
| d. 2 Peter 1:21          | p. 1 Corinthians 12:11 and 18 |
| e. Luke 4:18             | q. John 14:26                 |
| f. Luke 1:27 and 35      | r. Galatians 5:22-23          |
| g. John 16:8             | s. 1 Thessalonians 1:6        |
| h. Titus 3:5             | t. Romans 5:5                 |
| i. Matthew 3:11          | u. Romans 14:17               |
| j. Ephesians 1:13        | v. Romans 15:13               |
| k. John 14:16-17         | w. Romans 15:16               |
| l. Ephesians 5:18        | x. 2 Corinthians 13:14        |

### C. The Holy Spirit Described

- “**Another Helper**” which refers to His ministry of comfort and encouragement like that of Jesus. John 14:16
- The “**Breath of the Almighty**” which refers to His power to give life. Job 32:8; 33:4
- The “**Gift**” which is a reference to His presence being a gift from God. Acts 2:38; 8:19-20; 10:45
- The “**Helper**” which refers to His encouragement in teaching people the truth. John 14:26

- A **“pledge”** which refers to a mark given us concerning our salvation. 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:14
- **“Promised”** which refers to His role within the Plan of God. Acts 2:33; Ephesians 1:13
- The **“Spirit of adoption”** which refers to His role in bringing us into the family of God. Romans 8:15
- The **“Spirit of judgment and burning”** which refers to His righteousness and justice as God. Isaiah 4:4
- The **“Spirit of Christ”** which refers to His role in the humanity of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:9; Philippians 1:19; 1 Peter 1:11
- The **“Spirit of counsel and strength”** which refers to the compassion and support that He gives to those in need. Isaiah 11:2
- The **“Spirit of faith”** which refers to His worthiness to be believed. 2 Corinthians 4:13
- The **“Spirit of glory”** which refers to His own majesty. 1 Peter 4:14
- The **“Spirit of God”** which refers to His own Divine nature. Genesis 1:2; Exodus 31:3; 35:31; Numbers 24:2; 1 Samuel 10:10; 11:6; 19:20, 23; 2 Chronicles 15:1; 24:20; Job 33:4; Psalm 106:33; Ezekiel 11:24; Matthew 3:16; 12:28; Romans 8:9, 14; 1 Corinthians 2:11, 14; 7:40; 12:3; Ephesians 4:30; Philippians 3:3; 1 John 4:2
- A **“Divine Spirit”** which refers to His nature as God. Genesis 41:38
- The **“Spirit of grace and supplication”** which refers to His attitude of grace and His willingness to listen to prayers. Zechariah 12:10
- The **“Spirit of His Son”** which is a reference to all of the Trinity. Galatians 4:6
- The **“Spirit of holiness”** which means that He is not just the Spirit who is Holy (set apart) but also that He reveals the facts of holiness. Romans 1:4
- The **“Spirit of judgment”** which refers to His revelation of judgment. Isaiah 4:4
- The **“Spirit of justice”** which is a reference to His fairness. Isaiah 28:6
- The **“Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord”** which refers to the knowledge He gives that leads to respect for the Lord. Isaiah 11:2
- The **“Spirit of life”** which refers to His role in giving spiritual life. Romans 8:2
- The **“Spirit of our God”** which refers to His role in the life of the Church of revealing God. 1 Corinthians 6:11
- The **“Spirit of the living God”** which is a contrast between God and idols. 2 Corinthians 3:3
- The **“Spirit of the Lord”** which refers to His assistance to the Master. Luke 4:18; Acts 5:9; 8:39; 2 Corinthians 3:17
- The **“Spirit of the LORD God”** which refers to His assistance to God who is the Master. Isaiah 61:1
- The **“Spirit of truth”** because there are no lies in Him. John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6
- The **“Spirit of wisdom and understanding”** which refers to His ability to give the correct comprehension and use of God’s Word as it is applied to life. Isaiah 11:2
- The **“Spirit of wisdom and revelation”** which refers to His ability to lead one into correct use of God’s Word so that Christ may be further known. Ephesians 1:17
- The **“Voice of the Almighty”** which refers to His role as communicator of God’s Word. Ezekiel 1:24
- The **“Voice of the Lord”** which refers to His communication for the supreme authority. Isaiah 6:8

## For Personal Study: Chapter 5, Section 5C

3. Take the different descriptions of the Spirit’s person and role listed in part “C” and link them to the descriptions of the Spirit’s activities below. Again, these descriptions may relate to more than one category. You may want to mark the Spirit’s activities descriptions in this book with an a or b.
  - a. His Role
  - b. His Person

## **Chapter 6**

# **Doctrines of God's Production**

## **Section 1**

### **Creation (Cosmology)**

The first verse of the Bible tells us that, ***“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”*** (Genesis 1:1). The Hebrew word translated “created” is the word BARA which means to “initiate something new,”<sup>102</sup> including the fact of “creating something out of nothing.”<sup>103</sup> Only God is said to “BARA” things into existence.

The fact that God created the heavens and the earth is stated in several other Bible passages (Isaiah 40:26-28; 42:5; 45:12, 18). It is important that we accept this fact as it answers one of mankind’s greatest questions, “How did mankind begin?” The answer is that God created mankind.

The writer of the Book of Hebrews tells us that, ***“By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible”*** (Hebrews 11:3). This teaches us that God spoke and brought the heavens into existence. Creation came into existence by God’s authority and power, not by evolutionary processes (Psalms 33:6; 148:4-5).

The Bible also says that God created all life (Genesis 1:21), including the souls of mankind (Genesis 1:27; 5:2; 6:7; Isaiah 45:12) and then “rested” from His creative work (Genesis 2:3-4). One day in the future, however, He will create a new heavens and earth (Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1).

### **For Personal Study: Chapter 6, Section 1**

- 1. Read Genesis 1:1. Who created the heavens and earth?**
- 2. Read Hebrews 11:3. How did God create them?**
- 3. Read Genesis 1:2-31. What else did God create?**
- 4. Read 2 Peter 3:10-13 and Revelation 21:1. What will God create in the future?**

## **Section 2**

### **Angels (Angelology)**

#### **A. Their Person**

God's Word tells us that there is a creation of intelligent beings other than that of mankind, known as angels. They are mentioned many times and are seen throughout the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The basic meaning of the word "angel" in both the Hebrew (MALA'AK) and Greek (ANGELOS) languages is "messenger." These beings are, therefore, able to think and communicate. Since they possess intelligence (Matthew 8:29; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Peter 1:12), have feelings (Luke 2:13; James 2:19; Revelation 12:17) and possess the ability to choose (Luke 8:28-31; 2 Timothy 2:26; Jude 6), they are personal beings.

Angels are "spirit" beings (Hebrews 1:14) who can take the form of mankind when permitted by God to do so (Luke 2:9; 24:4). They are supernatural beings who are in a higher position than mankind (Hebrews 2:7). This means that they are stronger and more intelligent than mankind (Revelation 10:1-3), yet they do not know all things (1 Peter 1:12) or possess all power (Matthew 25:41) like God, nor are they omnipresent.

We are only given three personal names of angels in Scripture. They are Michael (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 1:9; Revelation 12:7), Gabriel (Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26) and Satan (Revelation 12:9).

#### **B. Their Maker**

Angels were created by God (Psalm 148:2-5) at some point before He made the earth able to be lived on (Job 38:7). Since angels do not produce angelic "children" like mankind produces children (Luke 20:35), and they do not die (Luke 20:36), their numbers have always been the same. Although we are not told how many, we do know that there is a great number of them (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 5:11).

We know and accept that God is perfect (Matthew 5:48) and without sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). Since He is perfect, it is simple to conclude that He would create beings in a perfect state, without sin, since ***"no evil dwells with Him"*** (Psalm 5:4). This is particularly pointed out in the case of Satan, who was created without sin and then chose to oppose God (Ezekiel 28:12-15; Isaiah 14:12-14).

Some people believe that angels are human beings who have died. It is simple to conclude that, since angels existed before mankind, they are not human beings who have died but are indeed a separate and distinct creation.

#### **C. Their Organization**

We know that angels have rank and organization, because they are presented as having an assembly (Psalm 89:5, 7) and are organized for battle (Revelation 12:7).

The highest ranking angel is an archangel, based upon the title that means ruling angel. Michael (Jude 9), who is said to be one of the "Chief Princes" (Daniel 10:13) is the only one designated as an archangel. He is mentioned as leading the Lord's angels in the battle against Satan (Revelation 12:7), so it appears there is only one archangel. He possesses a very distinctive voice (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

We also see that angels can be designated as "rulers" (Romans 8:38; Ephesians 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:10, 15), "authorities" (Ephesians 1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:10, 15; 1 Peter 3:22), "powers" (2 Peter 2:11) or "thrones" (Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16; 2 Peter 2:10; Jude 1:8). These are basically references to their position or function within the angelic realm.

There are two other groups of angels known as the "Seraphim" and "Cherubim." The Seraphim are only mentioned in one chapter in the Bible and are described as having six wings and a human-like body (Isaiah 6:2, 6). They appear to be angels who cleanse by means of fire (their name means "to burn").

The Cherubim are another kind of angel who evidently hold a high position, because Satan was one of them (Ezekiel 28:14, 16). After the fall of Adam and Eve and their resultant removal from the Garden of Eden, Cherubim were used to keep anyone from going to the Tree of Life in the Garden (Genesis 3:24).

We find the Cherubim significantly represented in the Tabernacle being made a part of the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:18-22), the Linen Curtains (Exodus 26:1) and the Veil (Exodus 26:31). Moses heard the Lord speaking to him from above the Mercy Seat and between the two Cherubim (Numbers 7:89).

The Cherubim are also an important part of the Temple of Solomon. There were two of them made from olive wood, overlaid with gold, that were about fifteen feet tall (5 meters) with wingspans that were fifteen feet (5 meters) wide (1 Kings 6:23-28). They spread their wings over the Ark of the Covenant (1 Kings 8:6-7). They were also carved into the walls and on the doors leading into the inner sanctuary (1 Kings 6:29-35). They were also placed on some of the Temple furniture (1 Kings 7:29, 36).

In a vision given to the prophet Ezekiel, we find Cherubim transporting the throne room of God (Ezekiel 10:1-22). It is clear from the portions of Scripture that mention them that the Cherubim have an important part in history, even though that part is not easily understood. Their role is not over yet as they will also be an important part of the Millennial Temple (Ezekiel 41:18, 20, 25) which is still to come.

What is clear concerning the Cherubim is that they are a significant and important part of God's Plan. We will explore their role in greater detail later in our study.

#### D. Their Ministry

Angels have been present and involved in major events of human history. They joined in praise and rejoiced when the Lord made the earth habitable (Job 38:6-7). They were involved in the giving of the Mosaic Law (Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2) and have frequently been involved with other revelation of God's truth (Daniel 7:15-27; 8:13-26; 9:20-27; Revelation 1:1; 22:6, 8). They are concerned not only with Israel (Daniel 12:1) but other nations as well (Daniel 4:17; 10:21; 11:1; Revelation 8-9, 16).

Angels foretold the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:20), warned His parents to flee to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15), told them when to return from Egypt (Matthew 2:19-21), ministered directly to Him after He was tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:11) and while in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43). They were present at His resurrection (Matthew 28:1-2) and ascension to the Father (Acts 1:10-11).

Angels were active during the early years of the Church directing evangelists to those ready to hear the gospel (Acts 8:26; 10:3), giving visions to those needing instructions (Acts 10:3, 7), bringing answers to prayer (Acts 12:5-10) and rescuing people from danger (Acts 12:11). They will also be involved in events surrounding the return of Jesus Christ (Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7), including the judgments (Revelation 7:1; 8:2).

Angels praise God (Psalm 148:1-2; Isaiah 6:3), worship Him (Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 5:8-13) and carry out His instructions (Psalm 103:20; Revelation 22:9).

Angels also play a part in administering judgment on the unrighteous. They announce approaching judgments (Genesis 19:13; Revelation 14:6-7; 19:17-18), inflict certain judgments in accordance with God's direction (Acts 12:23; Revelation 16:1) and will eventually be used to separate the unrighteous from the righteous (Matthew 13:39-40).

Angels still help Believers (Hebrews 1:14), and we are even told to ***“not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it”*** (Hebrews 13:2). They still observe what Christians do (1 Corinthians 4:9) and actually learn from us (Ephesians 3:8-10; 1 Peter 1:10-12). In special instances, they can even come and encourage us in times of need (Acts 27:23-24). When we die, angels will take us to our heavenly home (Luke 16:22).

#### E. Satan

##### 1. Who Satan Is

Satan is a personal being who possesses intelligence (2 Corinthians 11:3), emotions (Revelation 12:17; Luke 22:31) and the ability to choose (Isaiah 14:12-14; 2 Timothy 2:26). There are some who believe that Satan is not a creature but simply an influence of evil. Jesus Christ made it clear that Satan is accountable for his actions and will one day bear the punishment in the Lake of Fire (Matthew 25:41). It is not possible to punish an influence, so to not believe Satan is an actual creature is to cast doubt on the truthfulness of Jesus Christ. Satan has used the method of casting doubt on God's Word since the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-5).

## 2. What Happened

Satan was the highest ranking Cherubim who was created perfect and then sinned (Ezekiel 28:12-15 where the “King of Tyre” is used as an illustration to teach us what happened to Satan. The King of Tyre possessed a beautiful garden, but it was not in the Garden of Eden). The precious stones that were his covering (28:13) and the fact that he “profaned his sanctuaries” (28:18) indicate that he was the angelic high priest. As high priest and through the “abundance of his trade” (referring to his self-promotion), he was able to permanently lead one-third of the other angels astray (Revelation 12:4).

Satan decided to challenge God. This is seen in his statements found in Isaiah 14:12-14. His underlying sin was pride (1 Timothy 3:6) and is found in the five statements of self-will (what I want, no matter what God wants) recorded in Isaiah. Satan is the one who created sin (Ezekiel 28:15) and is held responsible for it (Matthew 25:41). It came from his heart (Isaiah 14:13).

Satan’s first expression of self-will is, **“I will ascend to heaven,”** which refers to his goal to become equal with God. His second statement, **“I will raise my throne above the stars of God,”** reflects his ambition to rule over all angelic creation from heaven. The third statement, **“I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north,”** is a reference drawn from the supposed location of the Babylonian gods who were believed by the Babylonians to rule the universe. His fourth desire, **“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,”** refers to desiring the glory that belongs to God (who is often associated with “clouds”). The fifth statement, **“I will make myself like the Most High,”** refers to his desire for authority and power so as to take God’s place.

After learning of the elements of Satan’s original sin, it is easy to see why we are instructed to, **“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself”** (Philippians 2:3). If we have pride and self-will, we are imitating Satan.

## 3. Satan’s Names and Titles

The names and titles he was given and uses reveal to us a great deal about his character. He is called the “star of the morning” (Isaiah 14:12), which means “light bearer” and is translated from the Latin language as “Lucifer.” Jesus Christ is the real “morning star” (Revelation 22:16) which teaches us that Satan has been a counterfeiter of Christ since his fall.

He is called Satan. This name comes from the Hebrew word for his name, which is “SATAN.” It means “one who opposes” (Numbers 22:22, 32; 1 Samuel 29:4; 2 Samuel 19:22; 1 Kings 5:4; 11:14, 23, 25; 1 Chronicles 21:1; Job 1:6, 7, 8, 9, 12; 2:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; Psalm 109:6; Zechariah 3:1, 2; Matthew 4:10; 12:26; 16:23; Mark 1:13; 3:23, 36; 4:15; 8:33; Luke 10:18; 11:18; 13:16; 22:3, 31; John 13:27; Acts 5:3; 26:18; Romans 16:20; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 7:5; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14; 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; 1 Timothy 1:20; 5:15; Revelation 2:9, 13, 24; 3:9; 12:9; 20:2, 7). Satan accuses Believers constantly (Revelation 12:10), but the Lord Jesus Christ defends us (1 John 2:1-2). Satan also tempts people to sin (Genesis 3:1-5; Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; Acts 5:3; 1 Corinthians 7:5).

He is called the Devil. This title comes from the Greek word “DIABOLOS” which means “slanderer” (one who tells lies about someone else). (Matthew 4:1, 5, 8, 11; 13:39; 25:41; Luke 4:2, 3, 6, 13; 8:12; John 6:70; 8:44; 13:2; Acts 10:38; 13:10; Ephesians 4:27; 6:11; 1 Timothy 3:6, 7; 2 Timothy 2:26; Hebrews 2:14; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 3:8, 10; Jude 1:9; Revelation 2:10; 12:9, 12; 20:2, 10).

He is called the Serpent of Old which refers to his craftiness and deceit (Genesis 3:1, 2, 4, 13, 14; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9, 14, 15; 20:2).

Satan is also called a “great red Dragon” which refers to his fierce nature in battle (Revelation 12:3, 4, 7, 9, 13, 16, 17; 13:2, 4, 11; 16:13; 20:2).

He is also referred to as “Beelzebul” which means “lord of the dung-heaps.”<sup>104</sup> It is a title of contempt given to the ruler of the demons by the Jews (Matthew 10:25; 12:24, 27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18, 19).

The Apostle Paul once called him “Belial” which refers to his worthlessness and wickedness (2 Corinthians 6:15).

Satan is called the **“ruler of this world”** (John 12:31), the **“god of this world”** (2 Corinthians 4:4), **the “prince of the power of the air”** (Ephesians 2:2) and **“the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience”** (Ephesians 2:2). What these descriptions all say is that Satan is in total opposition to God.

#### 4. His Present Activities

Satan’s constant objective is to attack the Plan of God with the intent of destroying it, so that he can succeed in his stated desires (Isaiah 14:12-14). Satan’s plan is to counterfeit God’s Plan and leave God out. He will use any means to succeed including his angels, called demons (1 Timothy 4:1) and mankind who **“disguise themselves as servants of righteousness”** (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

Satan’s plan of attack on the Plan of God involves the total completion of an orderly system with himself as its head that is in opposition to God. The concept of an orderly system comes from the Greek word for “world” which is “COSMOS.” The main concept of the word “COSMOS” is “order.”<sup>105</sup>

To accomplish his plan, Satan first “blinds the minds” (2 Corinthians 4:4) so that unbelievers will not accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ and tries to take away the words of truth they have heard about the Lord (Luke 8:12). To “blind the minds” of unbelievers, he often uses a counterfeit of Christianity that **“holds to a form of godliness, but denies its power”** (2 Timothy 3:5). On the outside, it appears to be “Christian,” but on the inside it is Satanic (Matthew 23:25-26). This counterfeit system of beliefs will take many forms that will include everything from an intense denial of self (Colossians 2:16-23) to a conscious practice and approval of sin (Romans 1:32; Revelation 2:24). Satan will use anything in the world to keep someone from entering the Kingdom of God (Colossians 1:13; 1 John 2:15-17).

When a person accepts Jesus Christ as their savior, they have overcome the world, the system that Satan has established (1 John 5:4-5). Satan, however, will not leave the saved alone. He comes as a “thief” to “steal, kill and destroy” (John 10:10) because of his hatred for mankind (Psalm 69:1-4; Matthew 10:22).

The main thing he wants to destroy is a true Christian witness so that other people will not want to come into the Kingdom of God. He tempts the Believer to conform to and desire the worldly order with its standards (1 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 John 2:15-17). He also tempts the Believer to try to hide their own selfishness (Acts 5:1-3) and, of course, he tempts them to commit immoral acts (1 Corinthians 7:5).

Satan **“prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour”** (1 Peter 5:8). This means he is seeking to find someone who will fall prey to his temptations so that he can “accuse the brethren” (Revelation 12:10). He will also put all the pressure he is permitted to on a Believer seeking to get that person to stop being a disciple of the Lord (Luke 22:31).

The Believer should keep in mind that Satan, because of his nature (John 8:44), does not play fair. He will use anyone or anything to accomplish his objective.

#### F. Satan’s Angels

Satan’s angels are those who chose to go with him, which involve one-third of the total number of angels (Revelation 12:4). These angels are called either “demons” or “unclean spirits.” They include those creatures that rebelled with Satan since he is their “prince” (Matthew 12:24). The Greek word translated “demon” is a word that refers to an inferior pagan deity. The “unclean spirit” refers to a spirit being who is involved in sin and evil. As we have already discussed, they hold different positions of authority within Satan’s governmental system. Demons are physically strong (Mark 5:3; Acts 19:16) and thus can accomplish many things through their power.

Satan’s angels have intelligence that is seen in their identification of Jesus (Mark 1:24), their realization of their own doom (Matthew 8:29) and the development and promotion of their own “doctrine” (1 Timothy 4:1-3). They also know the plan of salvation but cannot accept it (James 2:19).

The activities of Satan’s angels include anything that opposes God. They can seek to distort His revealed will, or they can seek to take the credit from the Lord for being the source of all that is truly good.

Demons are involved in all types of idolatry and the magic arts (Acts 16:16). Idolatry occurs when a person puts anything or anyone between them and the Living God. The idol may be made of wood or stone, or it may be a person like will be seen in the worship of the Antichrist (Revelation 13:15). Mankind can even worship its own intelligence (John 5:39-40). Demons seek to get mankind to worship anything but the Living God.

Demons also promote false religion. False religion is a system of beliefs that promote a worthless “savior” (1 John 4:1-4), a salvation by works (1 Timothy 4:3-4 cf. Ephesians 2:8-9) or a freedom to pursue sinful activities by claiming that evil is good (Revelation 2:20-24 cf. Galatians 5:13; Romans 6:1).

Demons are able to inflict physical diseases (Matthew 9:33) or mental disorders (Mark 5:4-5) upon people. However, NOT ALL physical diseases are a result of demonic activity, since the Bible makes a distinction between a natural illness and a demonic illness (Matthew 4:24; Mark 1:32, 34; Luke 7:21; 9:1).

Demons are also capable of possessing people (Luke 8:28-31) and animals (Luke 8:32-33). “Possession” means to take physical control of someone by going inside of that person. Since we are clearly told that **“greater is He who is in you (the Holy Spirit) than he who is in the world”** (1 John 4:4), it is impossible for a Believer to be actually possessed by demons. The Believer though can be so heavily under the influence of demons that it may appear to be demon possession. While we would expect that demon possession would lead to wild outbursts from possessed people (Luke 8:28-31), let us not forget that Satan himself can be presented as an “angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). The most important factor in deciding if a “spirit” is lying is by the message that is presented about Jesus Christ (1 John 4:1-4).

It is important that we know about the methods Satan uses to try to “devour” the Believer (2 Corinthians 2:11). He will offer us fame (recognition), fortune (money or any kind of wealth), power (authority) or pleasure. His common tactic is to offer the Believer what God has already given him. God has given the Believer “fame” because he is now God’s child (1 John 3:1). He has given him “fortune” because he has been given eternal life and a heavenly citizenship (Ephesians 2:19-20). He has given him “power” because he is now in union with the Lord God Himself (Romans 8:1-2). He has given him “pleasure” in that he can have the **“peace which passes comprehension”** (Philippians 4:7).

We must be cautious while learning about Satan’s methods, because if he can get us to study his system more than God’s system, he will have won a victory. Satan has been working on his system for thousands of years and has developed a multitude of counterfeits. The best way to identify a counterfeit is to know the real item so well that you can spot a counterfeit immediately.

If we fail to consider either Satan or his demons in our life, we will become a casualty in the conflict between God and Satan. The Apostle Paul clearly warns us that,

***For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm*** (Ephesians 6:12-13).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 6, Section 2**

- 1. Read the following passages and tell what characteristics angels possess:**
  - a. 1 Peter 1:12
  - b. Luke 2:13
  - c. Jude 6
- 2. Read Luke 24:4. Can angels take the form of men?**
- 3. Read Hebrews 2:6-7. Is mankind presently a higher or lower form of being?**
- 4. Read Psalm 148:2-5. Who made the angels?**
- 5. Read Luke 20:35. Do they have children?**

6. Read Ephesians 6:12. Does Satan's angels have organization in their ranks?
7. Read Revelation 12:7. Which angel is a leader of God's armies?
8. Which type of angel is most frequently mentioned in Scripture, Cherubim or Seraphim?
9. Read Hebrews 1:14. What is the primary role of angels?
10. Read Revelation 12:7-9. Who is Satan?
11. Read Matthew 25:41. What is Satan's final end?
12. Read Isaiah 14:12-14. What did Satan's original sin involve?
13. What does the name "Satan" mean?
14. What does the title of "devil" mean?
15. What does his description as a "serpent" mean?
16. Read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. What do Satan and his workers use to deceive?
17. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4. What do Satan and his forces try to accomplish?
18. What are the two main titles for Satan's angels?
19. Read 1 John 4:1-4. What is the most important factor used to determine if a spirit is true or false?
20. Read Ephesians 6:12-13. Against whom is the real battle for the Believer?

## **Section 3**

### **Man (Anthropology)**

#### **A. The Creation of Man**

The creation of man was planned by God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (who have all been shown to be God). The plan is recorded in the verse that says, **“Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness”** (Genesis 1:26). All three members of the Godhead were involved in the creation of man.

The Plan included making man in the “image” and “likeness” of God. The two words for “image,” “TSELEM” in the Hebrew and “EIKON” in the Greek, basically refer to the material part of man. The two words for “likeness,” “DEMUTH” in the Hebrew and “HOMOIOSIS” in the Greek, basically refer to the immaterial part of man. These descriptions, material and immaterial, are general and should not be used in an extremely restricted manner. God’s Plan was to make all of man, both the material and immaterial. Man would be living, intelligent, moral and have the ability to decide, just like God, but not being God. Thus, he would have the ability to have fellowship with God.

The Lord God Himself made the first man, Adam. We are told that He, **“formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being”** (Genesis 2:7). The word translated “being” is the Hebrew word “NEPHESH” which means “soul.” God formed the material part of man out of material He had already called into existence—the dust of the ground. He made man’s soul (the part of man that is not material) out of nothing (Genesis 1:27). Then He combined the two into a being known as “man.”

Let the student remember that Adam was a unique creation. He was not born in the normal sense. He was made as an adult male who came into existence with intellect. God placed him in the Garden and had him give names to all the animals (Genesis 2:8, 19).

God proclaimed that, **“It is not good for the man to be alone”** (Genesis 2:18), so He decided to make for Adam a helper who would complement him. She would be called “Woman” because she came from the man through a divine surgery (Genesis 2:18-23), and her name would be “Eve” because she was the **“mother of all living”** (Genesis 3:20). It is said that God “built” the Woman meaning that He used existing materials (Adam’s “rib”), fashioned it into the Woman’s body and gave her life (Genesis 2:21-23). Both the Man and the Woman were the result of a direct, special and immediate creation. They did not evolve from a lower creature.

God also made animals **“out of the dust of the ground,”** and gave them life (Genesis 2:19). Animals are not said to be **“made in the image of God.”** While none will argue that they have life and some may argue that they have some level of intellect, they do not have the ability to make moral decisions (decisions between right and wrong). They are alive but lack the ability to reason (2 Peter 2:12; Jude 1:10).

#### **B. Man’s Fall**

The man and the woman (Adam and Eve) who God made lived in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:10, 15). The man’s job was to cultivate the Garden and look after it (Genesis 2:15). God told the man that he was permitted to eat from every tree in the Garden except one, the **“Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil,”** which was located in the middle of the Garden next to the “Tree of Life” (Genesis 2:16). Adam was warned (before the Lord made Eve) that if he ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that he would “surely die” (Genesis 2:17), indicating that the penalty for violation of God’s Word would affect both his body and soul (The Hebrew text actually repeats the same word and says literally, “dying, you shall die”).

The “serpent” (inhabited by Satan, Revelation 12:9) was able to get to the man through the woman. He was able to deceive Eve (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:14) so that she partook of the forbidden fruit. Eve then gave the fruit to Adam and he too violated God’s command (Genesis 3:6).

Let us briefly analyze in more detail the events that led to mankind’s fall. Notice that the serpent approached the Woman who was not with the Man at that time. The man was the authority in the Garden because he was to “keep” (meaning to guard) it (Genesis 2:15). Both the Man and the Woman had been told not to eat of the fruit of that particular tree (Genesis 3:1). The serpent went after the one he perceived would be the easiest to trap.

Satan began the conversation with a question that was exactly the opposite of what God had commanded. The serpent asked if God told them to not eat from any tree of the Garden (Genesis 3:1). On the surface, this is an absurd question to ask because if they could not eat from fruit inside the Garden, they would have to leave it in order to get food. The question began a subtle attack on God's goodness. The question was also designed to find out what the Woman knew and how seriously she took God's commands.

The Woman's response to the serpent is quite revealing (Genesis 3:2-3). She seeks to correct the serpent's statement and answers him. One problem is that she uses words that were not part of God's command and thus she added to it. She adds, "don't touch it." Some people think that maybe Adam added that phrase when he passed on the command to Eve. Whether it was Adam or the Woman who added the phrase the results are the same—they were beginning to add to God's Word and, thus, were questioning its sufficiency. Satan seized on that addition and directly challenged God's penalty (Genesis 3:4) and His motives (Genesis 3:5). He presented this "knowledge of good and evil" as something that God is withholding which is beneficial for them to know.

Remember that "good" has already been defined as that which God does (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31; 2:9, 12). The type of "good" that is not desirable to know about must, therefore, involve things that God does not have a part in but are not in themselves harmful to others. For example, one may give a thirsty person a drink, seeking personal recognition for being so helpful instead of just giving that thirsty person a drink because it is God's desire (Mark 9:41). It is an act of "good" that leaves God out. As we have discussed, Satan's desire is to create an order in this world that leaves God out.

The serpent appealed to the Woman's sense of sight and her intellect (Genesis 3:6). At this point the Woman stopped walking by faith. She stopped trusting God and began trusting herself. Satan told her that she could be as intelligent as God (Genesis 3:5). If she could be as intelligent as God, she would not have to depend on Him for her life and, thus, could make her own rules. He was in effect offering her godhood, which he himself so desperately wanted to attain (Isaiah 14:12-14). We know that **"without faith, it is impossible to please Him"** (Hebrews 11:6). The Woman did not trust God when she ate of the forbidden fruit. Satan had deceived her into believing that God was not really good and that she didn't need Him; she would be able to enjoy life without faith (2 Corinthians 11:3). She ate.

The Scripture then says, **"and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate"** (Genesis 3:6). We are not told about any conversation the two had before Adam ate. Neither are we told anything about Adam's thoughts except that he was not deceived by the serpent (1 Timothy 2:14). Adam made a conscious choice to sin. The Scripture simply tells us, "and he ate" (Genesis 3:6). They both sinned, but the penalties will be different.

Adam and the Woman immediately realized they had violated God's command and became afraid. They were now ashamed of their nakedness (Genesis 2:25 cf. 3:7) and tried to take care of the shame problem themselves by sewing together fig leaves for a covering (Genesis 3:7). Then they tried to hide themselves from God (Genesis 3:8). This is man's first attempt to save himself.

### C. The Penalties for Man's Fall

The serpent was the first to receive a penalty. He would spend the rest of his days eating the dust of the earth (Genesis 3:14). The serpent was not Satan, but Satan was in the serpent (Satan himself was able to roam around on the earth [Job 1:6; 2:1] as well as go to heaven to accuse the brethren [Revelation 12:10]). The serpent as the instrument used by Satan was condemned to be a feared and despicable animal on the earth (Genesis 3:14).

Since Satan was the one empowering the serpent to talk, he too received a judgment. There would be an ongoing hostility between him and the "seed of the Woman" (Genesis 3:15). This is actually the first reference in Genesis to the Messiah. It infers the special nature of His birth, because normally the "seed" is spoken of as coming through the male (Genesis 12:7; 22:17, 18 et al). That Messiah would be born to a virgin is clearly presented later in Scripture (Isaiah 7:14). This is the prophecy around which all other prophecies of the Messiah are related (cf. Revelation 12:4-5). The serpent would bruise the heel of the Messiah (which is actually a picture of the cross), but the Messiah would crush the serpent's head (which indicates victory).

The first penalties for sin were the sense of guilt ("ashamed of their nakedness" Genesis 3:7) and the loss of fellowship ("hid themselves" Genesis 3:8).

The Woman was promised **“great pain in childbearing”** (Genesis 3:16) and that she would desire to rule over her husband yet would also desire to be ruled over by her husband. This is really the same test that Eve faced when she wanted to lead her husband (with the fruit) but wished that he had somehow stopped her.

The Lord then responded to Adam’s accusations against the Woman (Genesis 3:17). It is clear that Adam should not have listened to her. A man who does not fully understand this verse may believe that he should not ever listen to his wife. That is a misapplication because God even once told Abraham to listen to his wife Sarah (Genesis 21:12). The standard of acceptance for anyone’s words is always to be based on what God has said. Adam’s sin was not based in listening to his wife but in his decision to eat the forbidden fruit. The curse on Adam included the requirement of hard labor to be able to eat (Genesis 3:17-19).

The original penalty for eating the forbidden fruit had not been forgotten. When Adam sinned, he died spiritually in that he had lost fellowship with God. His physical death occurred 930 years later (Genesis 5:5). God displayed grace to Adam and Eve when he clothed them with animal skins (Genesis 3:21). To have an animal skin required that an innocent animal be killed as a sacrifice. This is obviously a picture of the need of a sacrifice to pay for sins, which would be fulfilled in the Messiah (Hebrews 10:10, 12).

After Adam and Eve had been clothed by the Lord, they were sent out of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:22-24). This had to be done, **“lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.”** It is not difficult to determine why God did this when we realize that man is now fallen, and it would not be good to live forever in a fallen state, under the curse. Death for Believers will be good because they will be resurrected into a new body that is pure and perfect like their Messiah, Jesus Christ (1 John 3:2), and taken to heaven where there is a Tree of Life and no curse (Revelation 22:2-3).

#### D. Man’s Nature

##### 1. Body

Man’s “body” began when God formed Adam out of dust in His image (Genesis 1:26) and then formed Eve out of Adam (Genesis 2:7, 21). Adam and Eve had sex and produced children. The first two were Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1, 2). The rest of mankind came from Adam and Eve. Eve’s name, in fact, means **“the mother of all living”** (Genesis 3:20).

The body is the material part of man. It possesses the senses of sight, touch, hearing, taste and smell. We are all familiar with the different parts of the body such as the head, hands and feet. It is important to note that they do not have the same function. We don’t walk on our hands, nor eat with our feet. Our physical bodies are designed to teach us about a spiritual body known as the “Church,” the “Body of Christ” (Romans 12:4-5). All Believers are part of that spiritual body and all have an important but different function within that body (1 Corinthians 12).

The body is a marvelous organism, designed by God to be a house for the immaterial part of man. The Lord presented His earthly body as a sacrifice for our sins (1 Corinthians 11:24) and then reconciled us to the Father so that we may be **“holy and blameless and beyond reproach”** (Colossians 1:21-22). The Lord paid for our sins in His body (1 Peter 2:24).

In a like manner, as an “imitator of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1), our body is to be presented to the Lord as a living sacrifice so that He may use it in accordance with His will (Romans 12:1-2). Christ is to be exalted in our body through every part of life even into death (Philippians 1:20).

We are expected to do our part to keep our bodies ready for service (1 Corinthians 9:27), knowing that one day we will give an account to the Lord for the deeds done in the body (2 Corinthians 5:10). The small part of our body, known as the tongue, must also be guarded through our speech (James 3:2-5). Our bodies are to be used to carry the message of the death of Jesus Christ for our sins so that we may now have life (2 Corinthians 4:10).

One day this earthly body will be changed into a new body that is no longer subject to death (1 Corinthians 15:40-44). It will be like the resurrected and glorified body of Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:20-21). This new body will let us have a complete and full relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:6-8).

## 2. Soul

The soul is a portion of the immaterial part of mankind. It cannot be seen, touched, heard, tasted or smelled. Since the body cannot live without the soul (Genesis 35:18), many times the Hebrew word “NEPHESH” and the Greek word “PSUCHE” are translated not simply as “soul” but as “life” or “person.”

When Adam was created, the Bible says, **“Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (soul)”** (Genesis 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:45). It is not within the scope of this study to pursue all of the words used to describe life with their various meanings. Let us simply believe that God made the souls of Adam and Eve through His breath, and a soul is given to all other members of the human race (Exodus 1:5). “NEPHESH” is even used for the life of animals (Genesis 1:20, 21, 24, 30; 2:19).

As we seek to determine what the soul does within the body, we must first realize that God has a soul (Matthew 12:18; Hebrews 10:38) and that mankind is created in His image (Genesis 1:26-27).

We must realize that within man’s soul is the capability to make moral decisions (choices between right and wrong). This means that within the soul is a place where options may be considered before a choice is made. The ability to choose is called volition. Since the soul is where moral decisions are made, we must conclude that the soul needs saving (Psalm 33:18-19; Acts 2:41; Hebrews 10:39; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:8-9) and healing from sin (Psalm 41:4). Jesus not only gave His body, but also His soul to redeem lost mankind (Matthew 20:28; Mark 3:4; John 10:11, 15, 17; 15:13) and, thus, is to be the **“Shepherd and Guardian of our souls”** (1 Peter 2:25). If through unbelief the soul is not redeemed, it will be ruined in hell (Matthew 10:28; 16:26).

Some of the decisions that mankind needs to make include loving God (Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12-13; 30:6), entrusting ourselves to our Creator as we do what is right (1 Peter 4:19) and sacrificing our lives (souls) for the brethren (1 John 3:16). The soul of man is where war is waged with immorality (1 Peter 2:11) and where false teachers entice the spiritually unstable (2 Peter 2:12-14).

In addition to being the place where decisions are made, the soul is also the place from where emotions proceed. The soul can be sympathetic (Job 30:25), bitter (2 Kings 4:27), experience deep grief (Psalm 43:5; Jeremiah 13:17; Matthew 26:38), be pierced (Luke 2:35), be distressed (Romans 2:9) and hate (2 Samuel 5:8). It also can love (Song of Solomon 1:7; 3:1-4), exalt the Lord (Luke 1:46) and be merry (Luke 12:19).

## 3. Human Spirit

The words for spirit are “RUACH” in the Hebrew and “PNEUMA” in the Greek. This is a difficult topic to study from Scripture because both words are used numerous times and can denote wind, breath, the Holy Spirit, unclean spirits and the human spirit, depending on the context in which the words are used.

The human spirit is the spiritual life force and is a portion of the immaterial part of man which originates from and is formed by God (Ecclesiastes 12:6-7; Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:9), in particular the Holy Spirit (John 3:6; 6:63). The human spirit is necessary for life (Luke 8:55; James 2:26).

In accordance with the principles of interpretation that we have previously learned, we will take the clear passages and use them to determine some basic facts about the human spirit. As we look at the characteristics of the human spirit, we will quickly see that many of the characteristics of the human spirit, the soul (our last topic) and the heart (our next topic) are the same. We must note, however, that God’s Word tells us the human spirit is different from man’s heart and soul (Hebrews 4:12).

As we study the verses relating to the human spirit, we find that it has four functions:

### a. Receive Information

It can receive information that comes its way, such as grace (Galatians 6:18; Philemon 1:25), moral truth (Malachi 2:15-16) and revelation (Ephesians 1:16-17). It can also be provoked (Acts 17:16) and stirred up (1 Chronicles 5:26; Ezra 1:1, 5).

### b. Evaluate Information

The human spirit can also evaluate information that it receives. It can perceive events (Job 6:4), know our thoughts (1 Corinthians 2:11), ponder (Psalm 77:6), understand (Job 20:3; 32:8) and be wise about the evaluation (Exodus 28:3; Deuteronomy 34:9; Ephesians 1:16-17).

**c. Make Decisions**

Once the human spirit receives and evaluates information, it can decide which course of action to take. It can choose to continue to be led by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:22-23), to be committed to God (Psalm 31:5), to have faith (2 Corinthians 4:13-14), to be repentant (Isaiah 57:15; 66:2), or to turn against God (Job 15:13) and be unfaithful to Him (Psalm 78:8).

**d. Respond**

When situations are perceived, evaluated and decisions made, the human spirit can respond in a number of ways, even sinful ones.

**The Human Spirit is described in a number of ways as it:**

- Can be angered. Judges 8:3; Ecclesiastes 7:9; 10:4
- Can be angered quickly. Proverbs 14:29 (tempered is "spirited")
- Can be anguished. Job 7:11
- Can be arrogant. Psalm 76:12; Proverbs 16:18; Ecclesiastes 7:8
- Can be broken. Psalm 51:17; Proverbs 15:13; 17:22; 18:14; Isaiah 65:14
- Can be calm. Proverbs 17:27
- Can constrain. Job 32:18
- Can be crushed. Psalm 34:18; Proverbs 15:4
- Can be deceitful. Psalm 32:2
- Can be defiled. 2 Corinthians 7:1
- Can be depressed. Exodus 6:9 (Despondency is "Anguish of Spirit")
- Can have empathy. 1 Corinthians 5:3-5; Colossians 2:5
- Can err. Isaiah 29:24
- Can experience the presence of the Lord. 2 Timothy 4:22
- Can express itself. Proverbs 29:11 (Temper is "Utters His Spirit"),
- Can faint. Psalms 77:3; 143:7; Isaiah 57:16; 61:3; Ezekiel 21:7
- Can be faithful to man. Proverbs 11:13 (Trustworthy "Faithful Spirit")
- Can be fervent. Acts 18:25; Romans 12:10-11
- Can be foolish. Ezekiel 13:3
- Can be gentle. 1 Corinthians 4:21; Galatians 6:1; 1 Peter 3:4
- Can be given to the Lord. Acts 7:59
- Can be grieved. Isaiah 54:6
- Can be hardened. Deuteronomy 2:30
- Can be holy. 1 Corinthians 7:34
- Can have honor. 2 Corinthians 12:18
- Can be humble. Proverbs 16:19; 29:23
- Can be jealous. Numbers 5:14
- Can live in God's will. 1 Peter 4:6
- Can be loyal. Numbers 14:24
- Can be made mature. Hebrews 12:23
- Can motivate people. Exodus 35:21; Proverbs 16:2; Revelation 19:10
- Can be moved. John 11:33
- Can be made new. Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31; 36:26
- Can be oppressed. 1 Samuel 1:15
- Can be overwhelmed. Psalms 142:3; 143:4
- Can plan. Acts 19:21

- Can be poor. Matthew 5:3
- Can pray. 1 Corinthians 14:14-16
- Can be preserved. Job 10:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Can be quiet. 1 Peter 3:4
- Can have racial traits. Isaiah 19:3; Jeremiah 51:11
- Can be refreshed. 2 Corinthians 7:13
- Can rejoice. Luke 1:47
- Can be renewed. Ephesians 4:21-24
- Can need rest. 2 Corinthians 2:13
- Can be revived. Genesis 45:27; 1 Samuel 30:12
- Can be ruled by self. Proverbs 16:32
- Can be sad. 1 Kings 21:5
- Can seek the Lord. Isaiah 26:9
- Can serve. Romans 1:9
- Can endure sickness. Proverbs 18:14
- Can sigh. Mark 8:12
- Can be steadfast. Psalm 51:10
- Can be strong. Luke 1:80
- Can be subject to others. 1 Corinthians 14:31-32
- Can submit. Hebrews 12:9
- Can be timid. 2 Timothy 1:7
- Can be troubled. Genesis 41:8; Job 21:4; Daniel 2:1-3; John 13:18-21
- Can become uncontrolled. Proverbs 25:28
- Can unite with the Lord. 1 Corinthians 6:17
- Can unite with other Believers. Philippians 1:27
- Can be weakened. Joshua 2:11; Judges 15:19; 1 Kings 10:4-5
- Can be willing. Psalm 51:10-12
- Can worship. John 4:23
- Can attest to our salvation. Romans 8:16

#### 4. Heart

The “heart” of man is a topic that is considered throughout the Bible. The Hebrew word “LEBH” and the Greek word “KARDIA” together are used almost 1,000 times. The words are rarely used for the physical organ inside the body which pumps blood through the veins and arteries (2 Samuel 18:14; 2 Kings 9:24). Instead, the word usually indicates the center of activity in the inner man.

As we consider the different ways that the word “heart” is used in the Bible, four definite meanings emerge:

##### a. The Center of Intelligence

The heart is used to denote the center of intelligence. It has the ability to evaluate (Deuteronomy 8:5), to appreciate (Psalm 119:11) and to plan (Hebrews 4:12). The heart can also be the source of evil thoughts and actions (Matthew 15:19-20).

##### b. The Center of Emotions

The heart is used as the center of emotions. It can love (Deuteronomy 6:5), have desires (Psalm 37:4), rejoice and be glad (Psalm 104:15; Isaiah 30:29; Colossians 3:16). The heart can also be sorrowful (Nehemiah 2:2; Romans 9:2), bitter (Psalm 73:21) and rebuke itself (Job 27:6).

**c. The Center of Volition**

The heart is the center of volition. It can seek God (Deuteronomy 4:29), be changed (Exodus 14:5) or even hardened toward God (Exodus 8:15; Hebrews 4:7).

**d. The Center of Spiritual Life**

The heart is at the center of spiritual life. God's Word says, "***With the heart man believes resulting in righteousness***" (Romans 10:9-10). For the Believer, the heart is the home of the Son (1 Peter 3:15; Ephesians 3:17) and the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22).

**5. Conscience**

The word "conscience" appears only in the New Testament. The functions of the conscience are rendered by the word, "heart" in the Old Testament (1 Samuel 24:5; Job 27:6). The Greek word "SUNEIDESIS" means literally, "to know with" or to "have knowledge with oneself." It refers to the individual's concepts of right and wrong. The conscience is the part of man that prompts him to do what he has been taught to be right. Conscience does not teach us what is right and wrong. One can do what is wrong in "good" conscience because he has been misinformed.

An unsaved person's conscience may be a good guide (John 8:9; Romans 2:15), if the person has been taught God's standards of right and wrong. The conscience may become "***seared as with a branding iron***" (1 Timothy 4:2) when one constantly rejects God's standards. When one violates God's standards, the conscience is said to be "defiled" (Titus 1:15), but the conscience can be cleansed from evil (Hebrews 10:22).

The Christian's conscience, through the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit, should pressure him to do what is right in the various relationships of life. It should pressure him to obey the government under which he lives (Romans 13:5), to bear up under an unjust employer (1 Peter 2:19) and to not harm the conscience of a weaker brother (1 Corinthians 8:7, 10, 12).

**6. Mind**

The Greek word for "mind" is "NOUS." The mind is the place where all the senses, emotions and intelligence come together for evaluation and conclusion. The term includes all the activities of the human brain as well as the soul, thus it is the meeting place for the material and immaterial parts of man. W.E. Vines says:

The "mind" is "the seat of reflective consciousness, comprising the faculties of perception and understanding, and those of feeling, judging and determining." Related Greek words are "DIANOIA" meaning "to think through," and "ENNOIA" meaning an "idea, notion or intent." While the mind and heart are closely related, they are different (Hebrews 8:10, 16).<sup>106</sup>

While the concept of the "mind" is discussed in the Old Testament, there is no one Hebrew word. Rather it is discussed in terms of the heart, soul and spirit. Therefore, we will derive our understanding of the mind from the Greek usages of the word.

Both the saved and unsaved have minds (Romans 14:5). It is important to God how one thinks and uses the mind God has given him (Ephesians 4:17-18; Hebrews 4:12 where ENNOIA is used and translated "intentions"). Since the Lord has a "mind" and we are to seek to know it (Romans 11:34; 1 Corinthians 2:16), He has given us a mind so as to love Him (Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27) and understand Him (Luke 24:45). The Christian's mind is designed to know the truth found in the Father and Son (1 John 5:20 where DIANOIA is translated "understanding").

The mind the Lord has given us can reason logically. This is proved by the fact that it can calculate mathematical formulas (Revelation 13:18) and understand the results of logical thought (Revelation 17:9). Through this ability and understanding, the mind determines which standards will become its guide and thus establishes one's conscience (Romans 7:23, 25). This personal development leads to the ability to instruct others (1 Corinthians 14:19) and hopefully become mature enough to build unity in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:10). The mind should be honest with self, God and others (2 Peter 3:1). The mind is designed to work with the human spirit in all these areas (1 Corinthians 14:15).

Just as the mind can be used in service to God (Mark 12:30), it can choose against God or become “depraved” which means not holding to divine standards (Romans 1:28; 1 Timothy 6:5; 2 Timothy 3:8). It can even be hostile to God (Colossians 1:21). The mind is, therefore, able to be defiled (Titus 1:15).

Even the mind of a Believer can be unproductive (1 Corinthians 14:14) when it is arrogantly selfish or thinking only of the matters of the flesh (Luke 1:51; Ephesians 2:3; Colossians 2:18). It can also be shaken when false doctrine is believed to be true (2 Thessalonians 2:2 where NOUS is translated “composure”).

With much thanksgiving, we find that the mind can be renewed so as to know God’s will (Romans 12:2), turn from sinful pursuits (Ephesians 4:22-24), be prepared for action (1 Peter 1:13), be prepared for undeserved suffering (1 Peter 4:1 where ENNOIA is translated as “purpose”) and be guarded by God’s peace (Philippians 4:7).

## **7. Flesh**

At times the word “flesh” is a reference to the material nature of a living creature, either the tissue that covers its body (Genesis 2:21; Exodus 12:8; Luke 24:39) or all of its material being (Genesis 6:17, 19; 1 Corinthians 15:39; Hebrews 5:7). Biblically, the word “flesh” is used to show that the material and immaterial parts of man are connected.

God became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14; 1 Timothy 3:16) as a descendent of David (Romans 1:3; 9:5). This means that God became true humanity. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, but His flesh was not sinful (Romans 8:3). He was David’s “Lord” and also David’s “Son” at the same time (Matthew 22:45). Jesus came to bear our sins so that He may establish peace for mankind with God (Ephesians 2:14-15; Colossians 1:22-23) and break the power of the devil (Hebrews 2:14). God’s Word tells us that false teachers will rise up who will claim that Jesus did not really become flesh (1 John 4:2; 2 John 1:7).

The Old Testament pictured the need for God to come in the flesh. The “Veil” of the Tabernacle and Temple was a symbol of the fact that Jesus’ flesh would open up eternal life with God to mankind (Hebrews 10:19-20; Matthew 27:51). The “Manna” which sustained the Jews while in the wilderness for forty years was a symbol of the deliverance and sustenance that Christ would bring through His flesh, which would be provided by grace and partaken of by faith (Exodus 16:31-35; John 6:51-56). A Psalm of David also stated that Messiah’s flesh would not undergo decay (to rot), which portrayed His resurrection from the dead (Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:31) and God’s answer to prayer (Hebrews 5:7).

The suffering and purpose of Christ’s flesh became a model for mankind to imitate (1 Peter 4:1-2). The flesh of mankind is most frequently viewed in Scripture to be the stronghold of sin and in a constant battle with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-17). Part of the role of the Holy Spirit is to point out the problem of sin and its consequences (John 16:8-11).

There are certain characteristics of the flesh described in God’s Word. The flesh without the spirit is not alive (John 6:63), and since flesh can only give birth to flesh, the Holy Spirit must give the flesh the spirit for life to exist (John 3:6). We love, nourish and cherish our flesh (Ephesians 5:28-29), and the flesh can even possess some wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:26-29).

The flesh is weak against temptation (Matthew 26:41), and prior to salvation, indulgence of the flesh is the normal life of mankind (Ephesians 2:3). The flesh, therefore, affects the way the mind thinks (Colossians 2:18). Indulgence of the corrupt desires of the flesh indicates a dislike of authority (2 Peter 2:9-10), so Christians grow by learning to serve those who have fleshly authority over them (Ephesians 6:5). Acceptance of authority is a battle, since the flesh is passionately against the standards of divine law (Romans 7:5).

Our life in the flesh is what will be judged by others, even though we are not to judge others according to the flesh (John 8:15). We are not to honor others based on fleshly actions (2 Corinthians 5:16), nor put confidence in the flesh concerning rituals, genetics, citizenship, actions or overt righteousness (Philippians 3:2-7). Our time in the flesh is to be lived in accordance with God’s will (1 Peter 4:6).

The flesh has many weaknesses. It is weak in resisting sin (Romans 6:19), and the world offers the flesh sinful things to desire (1 John 2:16). The flesh, left to itself, will produce many sins which will cost the sinner eternal blessings (Galatians 5:19-21). The selfish pursuits of the flesh will bring corruption to the flesh (Galatians 6:8). The flesh will eventually wither (1 Peter 1:24-25). False teachers lure followers by appealing to these fleshly desires (2 Peter 2:18-19).

The flesh also has weaknesses in sexual areas. Marriage is the joining of a man and woman into one flesh, and therefore, a lust of the flesh is going after "strange" flesh, which would include homosexuality, lesbianism and bestiality (Mark 10:8; Jude 1:7). Willful sin can lead to destruction of the flesh (1 Corinthians 5:5).

Another weakness is that the flesh is open to wide and rapid changes (2 Corinthians 1:17), which can produce a lack of stability in the life of the Believer. If we change our mind frequently, based on momentary impulses, we can become rapidly confused and disturbed.

The flesh also has limitations. What is done to the flesh (such as circumcision) does not indicate spirituality (Romans 2:28). Rituals will not solve the weaknesses and limitations of the flesh (Colossians 2:23; 1 Peter 3:21).

The flesh cannot be declared righteous by keeping the Law (Romans 3:19-20), and the flesh alone will not produce good (Romans 7:18). Neither are God's blessings designed for mere flesh and blood (1 Corinthians 15:50). The flesh needs divine illumination (Matthew 16:17).

There is also a battle in the life of the Believer with the flesh. When a person believes in Jesus Christ, he has recognized that Jesus died to pay for the sins of his flesh (Galatians 5:24). The appreciation of this fact requires some spiritual growth in the Believer. An immature Believer may find out he is forever secure in God's hands (John 10:27-30) and that he has been set free by Jesus Christ (Galatians 5:1), so he mistakenly wants to pursue the lusts of his flesh. This security and freedom though is not designed to be an opportunity for fleshly pursuits (Galatians 5:13). This is part of the battle.

Another part of the battle recognizes that the flesh has a will (John 1:12-13), and the flesh with its tendency to sin does battle with the mind (Romans 7:25) and the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16). The Believer must choose whether to pursue the sins of the flesh or the things of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:3-13). Only by the power of the Holy Spirit can the desires of the flesh be conquered (Galatians 3:3; 5:16). Note, however, that the true spiritual battles we face are not from other people's flesh (2 Corinthians 10:2-3), but with Satan and his forces (Ephesians 6:12).

Part of our spiritual journey is to seek to be cleansed from all defilement of the flesh by becoming holy (2 Corinthians 7:1). We must seek to move Jesus Christ into our life and our fleshly lusts out (Romans 13:14), so that Jesus can be manifested through our flesh (2 Corinthians 4:11). This can only be done through a life of faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:20), so that our flesh might be devoted to the Body of Christ (Colossians 1:24).

Let us also realize that God loves us and may even give us a "thorn in the flesh" so that we do not arrogantly exalt ourselves (2 Corinthians 12:7).

## **8. Sin Nature**

The fact that the sin of Adam was passed down to every member of the human race is described by the term "Sin Nature." This means that every member of the human race (except Jesus Christ who had no earthly father) has received the sinful nature of Adam resulting in condemnation (Romans 5:12-14, 18-19).

This "Sin Nature" is part of the flesh and stimulates personal sins in an individual's life. We will study man's Sin Nature in the Chapter 7, "God's Plan."

## **9. Will**

There are two main Greek words that are used to indicate the will of man. The first word, "THELEMA" indicates a desire. The second word, "BOULEMA" indicates a plan or design. Both are most frequently used to declare God's desire or design, but since man is created in the image of God (indicating that man too has a "will"), they are used to declare man's desire or design as well.

Man's will can be strong. Just as man can choose for God, he can choose against Him (Joshua 24:15) and ***"indulge the desires of the flesh and mind"*** (Ephesians 2:3). Man's will is not strong enough by itself to conquer the Sin Nature within (Romans 7:15-21). The Holy Spirit gives the power through Christ to ***"do all things"*** (Philippians 4:13).

No matter how strong a man's will may be, it cannot save that man (John 1:12-13). He must accept the gift of Jesus Christ by believing in His Name (John 1:12-13; Acts 4:12). When a person believes in God's Son, Jesus Christ, that person will have eternal life and never be lost (John 6:39-40).

God wants man's will (desires) to be the same as His. Jesus Christ Himself taught and lived this fact (John 5:30; 6:38, 39). The reason David was called "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22) was because he desired to do God's will, even though he failed miserably at times.

The desire to do God's will is crucial in our understanding of it (John 7:17). God is not seeking an academic pursuit of His will but a changed life. A person who studies God's Word simply to know it and not to live by it will always have a distorted view of life.

In God's Word we find that mankind can exercise his own will in order to protect (Matthew 1:19), bring a legal matter against (Matthew 5:40) and borrow from others (Matthew 5:42). We also find that mankind can will (or desire) to follow Christ (Matthew 16:24-25), to become great (Matthew 20:26-27), to live godly in Christ (2 Timothy 3:12) and to want others to treat them in a certain way (Matthew 7:12).

When the "will" goes a step past a "desire" it becomes a "plan." The Greek word "BOULEMA" means that desires have become plans. This word is translated several different ways, but all imply the concept of having a plan to go with a desire. God has a will that is planned (Romans 9:19). The Son has a specific role within that plan (Matthew 11:27).

Plans can be developed from a desire to protect others (Acts 27:43), harm them (John 11:53; 12:10; Acts 5:33), or to save oneself (Acts 27:39). There can also be plans made for travel (Acts 15:37), to discover facts (Acts 23:8), to do battle (Luke 14:31) and even to sin (1 Peter 4:3). Plans can either come from God or from our flesh (2 Corinthians 1:17).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 6, Section 3**

- 1. Read Genesis 1:26. In whose image is man made?**
- 2. Read Genesis 2:7. What did man become through God's breath?**
- 3. Read Genesis 2:18. Why was the woman made?**
- 4. Read 2 Peter 2:12 and Jude 1:10. What does man do that animals do not?**
- 5. Read Genesis 2:16-17. What was the prohibition to Adam?**
- 6. Read Genesis 2:17. What was the penalty?**
- 7. Read Genesis 3:8-19. How did the man and woman's life change after they violated God's command?**
- 8. Read the following passages and give the essential elements of man's nature.**
  - a. Genesis 2:7
  - b. James 2:26
  - c. Romans 10:9-10
  - d. 1 Timothy 4:2
  - e. Romans 12:2
  - f. Genesis 2:21
  - g. Romans 5:12-14
  - h. John 1:12-13

## **Section 4**

# **The Angelic Conflict**

The fact that there is a war between God and Satan has been referred to several times during the course of this study. This war is known as the “Angelic Conflict.” The details of this conflict are extensive and are beyond the scope of this program. However, the outline is important as it helps answer the ageless question, “Why is mankind here?”

At some point before the creation of man, God chose to make another type of being. These beings are known as “angels.” The chief angel was Lucifer who chose to try to take God’s place (Isaiah 14:12-14). Lucifer sinned (Ezekiel 28:11-19) and became known as the devil and Satan (Revelation 12:9). Satan was sentenced to an eternal fire that was prepared for him and the angels who followed him (Matthew 25:41).

Satan appealed God’s decision, because the sentence has not yet been executed. It will be executed after the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ (Revelation 20:14). Man is in the middle and, therefore, has a role in the resolution of this conflict between God and Satan.

The apostle Paul made it clear that the conflict affects the life of Believers. He said in Ephesians 6:12, **“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”** The real conflict for Believers is with Satan and his forces, not with other human beings. In order to participate in this battle, we are to, **“take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.”** (Ephesians 6:13).

All the details of the conflict and our precise role are not now fully known but one day will be disclosed to us (1 Corinthians 13:12). For now what we know is enough. We are to walk by faith (Hebrews 11:6) and love God and one another (Mark 12:29-31).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 6, Section 4**

1. Read Isaiah 14:12-14. What was Satan’s original sin?
2. Read Ezekiel 28:11-19. What was Satan’s original position?
3. Read Matthew 25:41. For what purpose was the lake of fire created?
4. Read Revelation 20:14. When will Satan and his angels be cast into the Lake of Fire?
5. Read John 16:11. What has already happened to Satan?
6. Since Satan has already been judged and his sentence pronounced yet not carried out, what conclusion must we reach?
7. Since Satan was already fallen when he misled Adam and Eve, what must we conclude about the timing of Satan’s fall?
8. Since man is in between Satan’s judgment and execution of the sentence, what may we conclude about man’s existence?
9. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. What is the Christian to do to fight Satan’s schemes?



## **Chapter 7**

# **Doctrines of God's Plan**

## **Section 1**

### **The Revelation: The Bible (Bibliology)**

The Bible is the written part of God's revelation of Himself to mankind. He also has revealed Himself through what He has made (Romans 1:20). The word "revelation" means literally to "take a covering off so as to let what is covered be known and seen." God has let Himself be known and "seen" through His written word. God revealed Himself to various men throughout history and aroused them to write down His revelation of Himself. This is called "inspiration."

Since God directed and supervised this revelation and inspiration, it was written down without error in the original manuscripts. Therefore as God's Word, the Bible has His authority and, thus, is our guide in all spiritual matters.

From 1450–400 B.C. God inspired several authors to write 39 different books, which were compiled into what is called the Old Testament. From A.D. 46–96, He inspired several more authors to write an additional 27 books, which became the New Testament. The combining of these books is called the Canon of Scripture. It should be clear to the student of the Word that, since God inspired these different authors to reveal Himself to mankind so that mankind would have a written authority, the assembled books that formed the Canon would be what He desired.

### **For Personal Study: Chapter 7, Section 1**

- 1. Read Romans 1:20. What is clearly seen of God through His creation?**
- 2. Define "Revelation."**
- 3. Define "Inspiration."**
- 4. As God's Word, what is the Bible?**
- 5. What is our guide in spiritual matters?**
- 6. What is the combining of the Old and New Testament called?**
- 7. Read John 17:17. What is God's Word?**
- 8. Read Psalm 119 and consider the statements about God's Word.**

## Section 2

# The Problem: Sin (Harmartiology)

### A. Introduction

In general, sin means to violate an established Divine standard. God's Word makes it clear that there has to be a standard set by Him for sin to occur, so if He has not established the standard, then there is no sin (Romans 4:15; 5:13). The two main Hebrew and Greek words for sin (CHATA' and HAMARTIA) mean that one has "missed the mark." It is similar to shooting an arrow at a target and not hitting the center. If a person misses the center by even a small amount, then one has "missed the mark."

### B. There Are Three Different Kinds of Sin Found in God's Word

#### 1. Imputed Sin

At birth, every member of the human race shares in the responsibility and penalty for the original sin of Adam. The word "imputed" means that it was charged to Adam's children (all of us) because of his original sin. Romans 5:12 says, **"Therefore, just as through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned."** It is again referred to in Romans 5:18-19, which says, **"So then as through one transgression (context indicates Adam committed the transgression) there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous."** Adam's sin and the resultant condemnation passed from Adam to every member of the human race.

It is important to notice that this sin passes through the earthly father. Jesus did not have an earthly father, but a heavenly one and, thus, was not imputed with the sin of Adam.

#### 2. Inherent Sin

The result of "Imputed Sin" is that everyone inherits a nature that entices and enables a person to commit personal acts of sin. This is frequently called the "Sin Nature" or the "Old Man." Even though the result of Adam's sin, which is condemnation, has been removed (Romans 6:6; 8:1), the Sin Nature remains with everyone until physical death.

The Apostle Paul wrote of his own battle with the Sin Nature in Romans 7:16-18. He writes, **"But if I do the very thing I do not wish to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that it is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which indwells me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not."** From this passage, we can conclude that even Paul lost some battles with his Sin Nature. He tells us that this is indeed a war with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-17) and that the Believer must seek to **"lay aside the old self"** (Ephesians 4:20-22).

Notice here too that Jesus, having no "Imputed Sin," had no "Inherent Sin" either.

#### 3. Personal Sin

Personal sins are acts that violate God's standards. Although we are no longer under the rituals of the Mosaic Law, the moral principles taught in it are still valid. Paul writes in 1 Timothy 1:8-10, **"But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching."** Other sins, called "deeds of the flesh" are mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21 which says, **"Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."**

## C. There Are Three Different Categories of Personal Sins

### 1. Mental Sins

The first category of personal sin concerns how one thinks. Jesus tells us in Matthew 5:28 that **“everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”** In our mind and our thoughts, sins can arise. They are sins, because they are not holy thoughts, and we are commanded to “be holy even as I (God) am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). The 10th Commandment of the Mosaic Law is a prohibition against the mental sin of “coveting” (Exodus 20:17).

Mental sins, like the other personal sins, violate the law of love. An example is the mental sin of partiality found in James 2:8-9 which says, **“If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law, according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’ you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.”** Often mental sins become overt actions that can be seen.

### 2. Sins of the Tongue

The second category of personal sin concerns what one says. The Book of James contains a lengthy paragraph on the evils of the tongue (3:1-10). Sins of the tongue are clearly addressed in the 9th Commandment which says **“you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor”** (Exodus 20:16). Satan (meaning the “adversary”), who is the Devil (meaning “slanderer”), is the master of harming others by means of speech. The chief characteristic of a sin of the tongue is that which is spoken is not spoken in love for God or one another.

### 3. Overt Sins

The third and final category of personal sins concerns what one does. These are the actions that man actually performs. Three clear examples of this category of sins are found in the 6th, 7th and 8th Commandments:

- 1) **“you shall not commit murder,”**
- 2) **“you shall not commit adultery,”**
- 3) **and “you shall not steal.”**

James 4:17 says, **“to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.”**

It is important to note that some sins can involve all three types just mentioned. Jesus clearly taught that murder could be accomplished in the mind and with the tongue as well as the act of taking someone's life (Matthew 5:21-23).

Jesus Christ did not commit any type of personal sin (1 Peter 2:22).

## For Personal Study: Chapter 7, Section 2

1. Read Romans 4:15 and 5:13. What must there be for sin to occur?
2. Read Romans 5:12 and 5:18-19. What is the result of Adam's original sin and why?
3. Read Romans 7:16-18. Where does the Sin Nature reside?
4. Read Galatians 5:19-21. What are personal sins called?
5. Read Matthew 5:28. What type of sin does this describe?
6. Read James 3:1-10. What type of sin does this passage describe?
7. Read Exodus 20:13-15. What type of sins do these verses describe?

- 8. The various sins listed in Galatians 5:19-21 are given. Identify whether they are primarily mental, verbal or overt. Some may be more than one. Additional explanations of the words are given in parenthesis where needed.**
- a. Immorality
  - b. Impurity (defilement by ritualism)
  - c. Sensuality (abnormal sexual perversion)
  - d. Idolatry
  - e. Sorcery
  - f. Enmities (hidden quests for power)
  - g. Strife (arguments)
  - h. Jealousy (misdirected zeal for personal possessions)
  - i. Outbursts of Anger
  - j. Disputes (self-seeking ambition)
  - k. Dissensions (invalid division)
  - l. Factions (division by false doctrine)
  - m. Envying (misdirected zeal for another's possessions)
  - n. Drunkenness
  - o. Carousing (drunken parties)

## **Section 3**

# **The Solution: Salvation (Soteriology)**

### **A. Introduction**

Since sin is a problem for all of mankind with the exception of Jesus Christ, all of mankind needs to be saved from its effects. God in His Sovereignty and Omniscience designed a plan by which a person could be saved. The plan had a cost which was the life of Jesus. Jesus satisfied the Righteousness and Justice of the Father by paying a price that no other human being could pay. It was the price for sin. Mankind is invited to partake of the sacrifice of Jesus through faith (2 Corinthians 8:9).

### **B. The Gospel**

The word Gospel means "good news." Simply stated, the good news is that salvation is by "faith alone in Christ alone." In Acts 16:30, a Roman jailor asked the Apostle Paul, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved" (16:31). Faith in Jesus Christ is clearly stated to be the only thing necessary to be saved (John 3:16, 18, 36). There is no other name given to men which will save any person (Acts 4:12).

God desires all mankind to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9), and thus, Jesus Christ paid for the sins of the entire world (1 John 2:2) so that He may draw all men to Himself (John 12:32). The Holy Spirit convicts the world concerning the problem of sin and discloses that Jesus Christ is the solution (John 16:7-15).

The basic facts that any person must accept about Jesus Christ include that He was God who became man (John 1:1, 14), He died to pay for his sins, He was buried (indicating that He really died) and that He was bodily raised from the dead on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3-5).

### **C. Grace**

Grace means that we were given something that we did not earn or deserve. If we earn something, it is viewed as a "wage," and we have deserved it based on our work. The grace we receive in salvation is a gift from God. The Scripture says, **"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast"** (Ephesians 2:8-9). God's grace offered the gift of salvation that we accept by faith. The gospel is described as God's grace (Acts 20:24).

Jesus Christ Himself was the model of grace to mankind (John 1:14-17).

### **D. Faith**

Faith is trust. The merit is not found in the one having faith but in the object of faith. Salvation thus involves an acceptance of Jesus Christ. Faith is not a work.

As human beings, we desire to earn our salvation and many people mistakenly believe they must work to be saved instead of simply accepting this gift from the grace of God. It is true that God did **"create us for good works"** (Ephesians 2:10), but we are to do good as a result of our salvation, not to try to earn it.

One time during Christ's ministry He had been teaching about eternal life and that it was a gift He could give (John 6:26-27). The people asked Jesus, **"What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"** (John 6:28). He finally said to them, **"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent"** (John 6:29). He was saying that if you believe you have to work to be saved, then call that belief a work. If our faith was a "work" (and it's not), then that "work" would be so overpowered by God's work of salvation that it would be truly insignificant anyway.

God gives to every person the ability to have faith, the ability to choose. This is part of what it means to be **"created in the image of God"** (Genesis 1:26-27). Although man has been given the perfect ability to choose, it does not mean that he will choose perfectly every time. The ability to make choices makes each individual responsible for his or her decisions. Since each and every human being is free to choose, those who have not chosen for Christ have chosen against Him (Matthew 12:30; John 3:18). Choosing for Christ brings salvation and eternal life in heaven. Choosing against Christ brings damnation and eternal life in hell (John 3:36).

## **E. Repentance**

Repentance means to “change the mind.” It means that one belief has changed to another belief. The Lord desires every unbeliever to change their mind about Jesus Christ so they will not perish (2 Peter 3:9; Acts 20:21). This includes a realization that they cannot pay for their own sins, but that Jesus paid the debt for sin for them (Luke 24:45-47). This “change of mind” is the foundation of the Christian’s new life (Hebrews 6:1).

Believers will also have to change their mind at times when they find out that something they believed to be true was not true (2 Timothy 2:24-25) or that something they did not realize to be sin, was sin (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). These sins (and all others) should be confessed to God (1 John 1:9).

## **F. Justification**

Justification means to declare one righteous. Man, being a sinner, is not righteous nor can he attain the righteousness that is necessary to fellowship with a holy God (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:20). This poses a serious problem to mankind: How does one become righteous enough to enter into God’s presence? The answers are found in this doctrine.

The key passage found in Romans 3:19–4:5, declares that: (1) no one can be justified by works of the Law (3:20 cf. Galatians 2:16; 3:24); (2) justification is a gift of grace given because Christ paid the debt for sin (redeemed) which satisfied (propitiated) the demands of God’s righteousness and justice (3:24); and (3) justification is by faith in Jesus (3:26). The person who has faith in Jesus Christ is given His righteousness and, therefore, declared righteous.

This justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ grants us peace with God (Romans 5:1) and thus delivers us from His wrath which happens as a result of His righteousness and justice (Romans 5:9). It also frees us from the condemnation we possess because of the Sin Nature (Romans 6:7) and grants us an inheritance with Christ (Titus 3:4-7).

## **G. Sanctification**

Sanctification means that we have been set apart as holy. Holiness is measured by the righteousness and justice of God. When a person is justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, that person has also been sanctified by Christ (Acts 26:18; Hebrews 2:11) through His one offering for all time (Hebrews 10:10-14; 13:12) and also by the Holy Spirit (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). Once we become Believers, we are to share this sanctification with every person (Hebrews 12:14).

This initial sanctification does not guarantee that the Believer’s life will be without sin. The church at Corinth had made mistakes in almost every area of life, and yet they had been sanctified in Christ and were “saints” (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:9-12).

Believers are to set Christ apart as the standard of holiness for their life (1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4, 7; Ephesians 5:25-26; 1 Peter 3:15). This involves a process of sanctification that follows the sanctification which occurs at the instant of salvation (Romans 6:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:23). This process is accomplished by believing the truth of God’s Word (John 17:17-19) and then submitting one’s life to the Master for purification so as to be useful for every good work (2 Timothy 2:21). The Believer’s offerings are then set apart to Christ by the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:15-16). Those who do not do this have insulted grace and will face extreme discipline from the Lord (Hebrews 10:29).

## **H. Forgiveness**

Forgiveness means to “send away.” It comes from the Greek word “APHIEMI” which is often translated to “leave” (Matthew 4:20, 22; 5:24). As one leaves behind one place to move to another, so sins are left behind. They are no longer a burden to be carried (Hebrews 12:2). Prior to the cross of Jesus Christ, sins and trespasses were said to be “covered over” meaning that they were still there but the judgment for them was withheld (Psalm 32:1 cf. Romans 4:7). The word Atonement means to “cover over.” With Christ’s sacrifice on the cross came the “sending away” of sins or forgiveness (Matthew 26:27-28). Forgiveness was an essential part of the message of both John the Baptist (Luke 3:3-4) and Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18-19; Acts 5:31). Forgiveness can be from things owed us (Matthew 6:12-15), sins (Matthew 9:2-6) or intentions of the heart (Acts 8:22).

Forgiveness of sins is essential to salvation (Luke 1:77). Christ’s sacrifice, which paid the debt sinners had incurred with God, was the basis of His forgiveness (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-14; Hebrews 9:22).

When a person believes in Christ they are forgiven of their sins (Acts 10:43; 26:18). Since Christ paid the debt incurred by sin, there is no longer a sacrificial offering that will atone for or “cover” sin (Hebrews 10:17-18).

While forgiveness is an act of grace that lets us leave behind our sins, God does something even more magnificent. We all know if we leave something behind, like a garment, we might return at some time to retrieve it. God not only left behind our sins, He erased them! We are told that, **“when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out (the Greek word means “erased”) the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross”** (Colossians 2:13-14). The fact that our sins are not only “left behind” but no longer remain should lead us to refreshment in the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19).

Believers are to become like God (Ephesians 5:1) and Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1), which clearly teaches the need for a forgiving spirit (Matthew 18:21-22). It is important that Christians become forgiving people since the forgiveness of sins is part of the great commission (Luke 24:46-47; Acts 10:43; 13:38). We must be willing to live what we teach.

When Believers sin, it is essential that they confess those sins to God for forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:6-10) so that one may continue to have maximum growth in the Christian Life. Jesus paid for all sins at the cross; therefore, we are already forgiven. When a Believer confesses his sin(s), he is recognizing that his debt has already been paid.

#### **I. The Unforgivable Sin (Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit)**

One sin exists that cannot be forgiven: blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31-32). To blaspheme God is to claim that He is something that He is not. When a person attacks any part of God’s Essence and claims that it is not true, that is blasphemy. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17), reveals Jesus as the Messiah (John 14:6; 16:13). When a person rejects Jesus as the Messiah, he is claiming that God is lying about Jesus (1 John 5:10). Hopefully, you have come to realize that, as long as a person has physical life, the opportunity to accept Jesus as Messiah exists. If we consider all the facts, we must conclude that “blasphemy of the Holy Spirit” is calling the Holy Spirit a liar about Jesus Christ until one dies. It is not an act of vulgar language directed towards God (cf. Peter’s denials of Christ in Matthew 26:74), but is the sin of unbelief that lasts for a lifetime. This sin is a stubborn refusal to accept the work of Jesus Christ as Savior and carries the eternal consequence of Hell.

### **For Personal Study: Chapter 7, Section 3**

- 1. Read John 3:16, 18 and 36. What is necessary for salvation?**
- 2. Read John 1:1, 14 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-5. What must one believe about Jesus Christ?**
- 3. Read 1 Timothy 2:4 and 2 Peter 3:9. What is God’s desire for man’s salvation?**
- 4. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. How is man saved?**
- 5. What is faith and in what is the merit?**
- 6. Read 2 Timothy 2:24-25. What is necessary to change incorrect thinking?**
- 7. Read Romans 3:20 and Galatians 2:16 and 3:24. What declares us righteous (justifies) us before God, and what does not?**
- 8. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13 and 1 Peter 1:2. Who sanctifies those who believe in Christ?**
- 9. Read Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:13-14. Why is the Believer forgiven?**
- 10. Read Matthew 12:31-32; John 14:17; John 16:13 and 1 John 5:10. What is “blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?”**

## **Section 4**

# **The Security: The Promises of God**

### **A. Introduction**

Once a person has been saved through faith in Jesus Christ, several questions would naturally arise such as, Can we become unsaved? What if we sin after we are saved, do we have to be saved again? How do we live the Christian life—in God's secure love or in fear of losing our salvation? How can we know for certain that we have eternal life (1 John 5:13)? This portion of our study will explore the facts concerning our salvation in order that the Believer may answer these questions.

### **B. Foreknowledge and Predestination**

Foreknowledge means to "know beforehand." Jesus was foreknown before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20). Predestination comes from the Greek word "PROORIDZO" which means to "mark out beforehand" in the sense of establishing boundaries.

It is clear from God's Word that His foreknowledge is related to His predetermination of events (Romans 8:29-30; 1 Peter 1:1-2). God's Omniscience knew not only every decision that would be made and event that could happen, but He also knew every possibility. God's greatness is clearly seen in that He devised a plan within which He would give to His human and angelic creation the ability to decide and still bring His plan to pass.

The prophecies found in God's Word are designed to reveal some of His foreknowledge (2 Peter 3:17). We can know in advance some of the events that will take place, so we may be able to decide whether or not to be on God's side or Satan's side of history.

### **C. Covenants**

Principle 8 of the "Basic Principles of Interpretation," considered the nine different covenants or contracts that God has made with man. Some of them were conditional in that they were based on man's obedience. Others were unconditional based solely on God's integrity. These covenants contain promises from God that provide security for the Believer in time and eternity. The student should review the information given on the covenants and consider the security we have based on God's promises.

### **D. Eternal Security**

Eternal Security means that salvation cannot be lost. We will proceed to prove this statement by using the principles that we have studied. Let us remember the importance of deductive reasoning as we consider this topic. If we find in God's Word universal statements that tell us we cannot lose our eternal salvation, then we must accept those statements as true, unless we find exceptions made by Scripture. It makes sense that if the Bible makes the statement, only the Bible has the authority to make an exception. For example, the Scripture says, "***all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God***" (Romans 3:23). The only exception made in Scripture is for the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we would expect, "***who committed no sin***" (1 Peter 2:22). This approach which reasons from the whole to the part is known as deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning leads to valid conclusions such as, "if all have sinned except Jesus Christ, then that means that I have sinned." Inductive reasoning, on the other hand, reasons from the part to the whole (since I have sinned, then all have sinned). This inductive reasoning is almost correct, but the exception found in Jesus Christ shows its clear limitations. A major error can occur if any part of the whole is left out.

Our proof of eternal security will utilize four different approaches:

#### **1. The Logical Approach**

Now, let us consider three examples of a Logical Approach to Eternal Security. First, since salvation is by grace through faith and not works, then salvation cannot be lost through works such as sin (Ephesians 2:8-9). Second, since the "new birth" makes us "sons of God," then our failures cannot change whom our Father is (John 1:12-13; 2 Timothy 2:13). Third, since God did the most for us while we were His enemies by saving us, He would not do less for us now that we are saved by casting us off (Romans 5:9-10).

#### **2. The Positional Approach**

The Positional Approach to Eternal Security is based on the fact that the Believer is said to be "in" Jesus Christ and that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). In Christ, the love of the Father for the Believer is equal to the Father's love for His Son, especially since we are now

also His sons (John 1:12-13; Romans 8:38-39; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:5-8). In fact, we already share Christ's resurrection, which is not subject to death (Ephesians 2:6). Another important consideration is that the "Head" cannot remove members of His body and have a complete body (1 Corinthians 12:13). We will always be a part of Him.

### **3. The Protective Approach**

The Protective Approach to Eternal Security is based on Christ's present session at the right hand of the Father where He is our defense attorney who battles Satan (1 John 2:1-2; Revelation 12:10). He was the Mediator ("man-in-the-middle") between God and man who gained for man a better covenant (Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). Now He intercedes for His elect so as to secure and protect them (Romans 8:31-39). Anyone who tries to "snatch His sheep from His hand" is attacking the Omnipotence of the Father and Son (John 10:27-29). (Author's note: that seems secure to me!)

### **4. The Spiritual Approach**

The Spiritual Approach to Eternal Security is based on our relationship to the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit takes unsaved mankind, born in the flesh of "corruptible seed," and at the point of faith in Jesus Christ causes them to be born of "incorruptible seed." Thus, we cannot again die (1 Corinthians 15:42, 52; 1 Peter 1:22-25; John 11:25-26). There are also several gifts given to us at the instant of salvation that are presented as complete and irrevocable, which come from the Holy Spirit (Romans 11:29). The Holy Spirit indwells the Believer at the point of salvation and is the down payment on the Believer's resurrection body (Romans 8:9; 1 John 2:27; 2 Corinthians 1:22). The Holy Spirit also baptizes those who believe into union with Christ (Romans 8:9; 1 John 2:27) and seals the Believer with respect to the day of redemption (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:13, 14; 4:30).

### **E. Adoption**

Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (John 3:16). When we are entered into union with Christ through faith, we are viewed as an "adopted" son of God. This adoption was designed for all of Israel, but most rejected their Messiah (Romans 9:3-4).

The Believer now has the opportunity to have an intimate relationship with the Father as His child, knowing that he is an heir with Christ (Romans 8:15-17; Galatians 4:4-7). One day, we will fully realize the blessings of this adoption (Romans 8:22-23).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 7, Section 4**

- 1. Read 1 John 5:13. Can a person know for sure they are saved?**
- 2. Read Romans 8:29-30 and 1 Peter 1:1-2. What is an essential element of God's predetermination of events?**
- 3. Read John 10:27-29. What are Jesus' "sheep" promised?**
- 4. Read Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 11:29. Since salvation is a gift, will God take it back?**
- 5. Read John 1:12-13 and 2 Timothy 2:13. If a Believer became faithless, will he stop being a child of God?**
- 6. Read Romans 5:9-10 and Luke 6:31-36. Did God save us when we were His enemies? What takes the greatest display of love?**
- 7. Would it make any sense that, since He saved us as enemies and made us His children, He would now cast us off?**
- 8. Read Romans 8:1. Based on our position in Christ, what no longer exists?**
- 9. Read Romans 8:35-39. What can separate the Believer from Christ's love?**
- 10. Read 1 Peter 1:22-25. Since our new birth is from "incorruptible seed" given by the Holy Spirit, can we ever die again?**
- 11. Read Romans 8:15-17. What is the Believer's relationship to God?**

## **Section 5**

# **The Future: Prophecy (Eschatology)**

### **A. Introduction**

God in His grace has laid out a Plan for the ages. He has informed us of the major historical events that will take place. In some cases He has given us many details; in other cases, He has given us very few. We can have faith in the fact that our God holds tomorrow in His hands.

Prophecy is a major subject of God's Word. In fact, 271 of the 1,189 chapters in the Bible deal with prophecy. That is almost one-fourth of the Bible. There are many additional verses of prophecy found in other books; therefore, the study of prophecy is important.

As we study prophecy, what we need to first determine is the major events that have not yet happened. These will let us establish a framework that will guide our study. Remember, from Principle 15 in our study of "Basic Principles of Interpretation" in Chapter 4, that some prophecies have already been fulfilled and others are yet to be fulfilled.

At this point in our study, we need to understand several terms that are used to describe future events.

### **B. Dispensations**

Prophecy is connected to the study of Dispensations. It would be wise for the student to review Principle 13 of the "Basic Principles of Interpretation" which concerns Dispensations.

Dispensations are periods of history in which God establishes different responsibilities for His people. There is a change of the Priesthood and also a change of law to mark a dispensational change (Hebrews 7:12).

The Age of the Gentiles which lasted from the fall of Adam to the Exodus of Israel from Egypt is completed. The Age of Israel extends from the Exodus (with the giving of the Law) to the Day of Pentecost. It is completed except for a seven year period known as the "Tribulation" or "Daniel's 70th Week" (Daniel 9:24-27).

We are now in the Age of the Church which began on the Day of Pentecost and extends until the Rapture of the Church.

The Millennial Age will begin when Jesus Christ returns at the Second Advent to establish His 1,000 year reign and will end with the final rebellion of Satan.

### **C. The Rapture**

The word "Rapture" comes from the Latin word "RAPERE" which was used to translate the Greek word "HARPADZO" found in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, in the Latin translation of the Bible. The English translates it "caught up."

At the Rapture, the Lord will resurrect the Believers who have died, along with the Believers who are alive, and will bring them to Himself in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17). This transformation will be in an instant (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

The Rapture will end the Age of the Church and begin the period of time known as the Tribulation.

### **D. The Tribulation**

The word "Tribulation" comes from the Greek word (THLIPSIS), which means "pressure," such as when one crushes a grape with his feet. It is a time of intense soul and physical pressure such as the world has never before seen. The summary of events that will occur during the Tribulation are found in Revelation 6-19.

The Tribulation will be a seven-year period, which is also known as "Daniel's 70th Week" (Daniel 9:24-27). The prophet Daniel was given a revelation from God that told of 70 weeks of years that were prophesied for his people, the Jews. The first 69 weeks were fulfilled when Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem the week before the Cross. The 70th week will be the last seven years of the Age of Israel which will last from the Rapture to the Second Advent.

## **E. The Second Advent**

The Second Advent refers to the return of Christ immediately after the end of the seven-year Tribulation (Matthew 24:29). It is different from the Rapture in that here Jesus Christ sets foot again on the earth (Zechariah 14:1-6), where at the Rapture He comes in the clouds (Acts 1:11).

It is at this time that He will defeat all His enemies and begin the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 19:20–20:6). Christ will first set foot on the Mount of Olives, split it in half and deliver the remnant of Israel (Zechariah 14:1-6). He will speak and destroy the King of the West (2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:15). Next, He will bring down fire from heaven and destroy the King of the North (Ezekiel 38–39) who has already destroyed the King of the South (Daniel 11:40-44). He will then enter into hand-to-hand combat with the Kings of the East (Isaiah 63:1-6; Revelation 14:20).

## **F. The Millennial Kingdom**

The Millennial Kingdom refers to the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ on earth (Revelation 20:6). There are many passages that give the characteristics of this Kingdom.

The Millennial Kingdom will fulfill the Abrahamic, Davidic and New Covenant. It will also remove the Edenic curse (Genesis 3:17-19).

The physical characteristics of the Kingdom include: (1) an absence of war (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3), (2) no fierceness in animals (Isaiah 11:6-9; 35:9; 65:25), (3) sickness and deformity removed and longevity increased (Isaiah 29:17-19), (4) no social, economic or political oppression (Isaiah 14:3-6), (5) a population expansion (Jeremiah 30:20), (6) labor (Jeremiah 31:5; Isaiah 62:8-9; 65:21, 23), (7) economic prosperity (Isaiah 35:1, 2, 7) and (8) light from the Lord (Zechariah 14:6-7). The Millennial Kingdom will be inhabited by Jews and Gentiles who have survived the Tribulation as “sheep” (Matthew 25:31-46), so there will be human beings with Sin Natures during the Millennium. The children born to them will need to be saved.

The spiritual characteristics include: (1) righteousness (Malachi 4:2; Psalm 89:14), (2) full knowledge of the Lord (Isaiah 11:9), (3) fullness of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29), (4) happiness (Isaiah 9:3-4) and (5) justice (Isaiah 9:7; 11:5; 32:16; 42:1-4; 65:25).

Christ’s rule will be universal (Daniel 7:14; Micah 4:1-2; Zephaniah 3:9-10; Psalm 72:8) with a unified government (Ezekiel 37:24-28). Crime will be totally suppressed (Psalm 72:1-4; Revelation 19:15). Jerusalem will be the center of world government (Isaiah 2:2-4; Jeremiah 31:6; Micah 4:1; Zephaniah 2:10-11) and protected by the Omnipotence of God (Isaiah 11:9). It will be easily accessible (Isaiah 35:8-9) and greatly enlarged (Jeremiah 31:38-40; Ezekiel 48:30; Zechariah 14:10). Jerusalem will also be the center of worship (Jeremiah 30:16-21; 31:6, 23; Joel 3:17; Zechariah 8:8, 20), centered in the Millennial Temple (Ezekiel 40:1–46:24) and led by the Zadokite Priesthood (Ezekiel 43:19; 44:15).

## **G. The Great White Throne Judgment**

The Great White Throne Judgment occurs after the Millennium and after Satan has been released for a little while. He will be permitted to deceive the nations and lead the “Gog and Magog” rebellion (Revelation 20:7-8). Those inhabitants of the Millennial Kingdom who have not been saved will become his subjects. The Lord will end all of Satan’s attacks at this time by bringing down fire from heaven and placing Satan in the Lake of Fire with the Beast and False Prophet (Revelation 20:9-10).

After those events, unbelievers will be resurrected to face their final judgment at the “Great White Throne.” They will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

## **H. The Eternal State**

The Eternal State is called the “Day of God” (2 Peter 3:12). It begins after the Great White Throne Judgment with the destruction of the present heavens and earth and the creation of a New Heaven and Earth (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:12-13; Revelation 21:1). The New Earth will contain a New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2-5) that commemorates the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles. There will be no temple in the New Jerusalem, because Jesus Christ, the Lamb, will be its temple. Neither will there be a sun or moon, for its lamp is the Lamb. (Revelation 21:22-23). A river full of the “water of life” which will come out from the throne, and the “Tree of Life” will span the river and produce twelve different kinds of fruit, one each month (Revelation 22:1-2).

There will be no sin in the Eternal State (Revelation 21:24-27). Those who did not believe in Jesus Christ and receive forgiveness for their sins will not be permitted to enter into the New Jerusalem or the New Heavens and Earth. They will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 21:8). Only the one who “overcomes” will be permitted to join into the treasure of eternity with the Living God. Thanks be to God that ***“faith is the victory that overcomes the world!”*** (1 John 5:4-5).

Please note that it is not the sins described in Revelation 21:8 that keeps one out of heaven, but rather the failure to believe in Jesus Christ and be forgiven of them.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 7, Section 5**

1. Read Hebrews 7:12. What happens when a “Dispensation” changes?
2. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17. Where will Believers meet Christ at the Rapture?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. How fast will the Rapture of the Church occur?
4. Read John 14:1-3. Where will the church be after the Rapture?
5. Read Daniel 9:24-27. The 70th week consisting of 7 years has not been fulfilled. What is this time period called?
6. Read Revelation 19:11-16; Matthew 24:29-30 and Zechariah 14:1-6. What will Christ do after the Tribulation?
7. What is the major difference between the Rapture and Second Advent concerning the location?
8. Read Revelation 19:20 and 20:10. Who is placed in the “Lake of Fire” at the Second Advent?
9. Read Revelation 20:1-3. Who is thrown in the abyss at the Second Advent?
10. Read Revelation 20:4-6. How long will the Kingdom of Christ on earth last?
11. Read Revelation 20:7-10. After the Millennium, Satan will be released for a while, lead a rebellion, be defeated again and end up where?
12. Read Revelation 20:11-15. Those whose names are not found written in the “Book of Life” after the Great White Throne judgment will end up where?
13. Read 2 Peter 3:10-13 and Revelation 21:1. What will happen after the Great White Throne judgment?



## **Chapter 8**

# **Doctrines of God's Purpose**

# Section 1

## The Personal Christian Life (Hodology)

### A. Introduction

God's purpose for each individual is to be changed into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29). He has established three phases in the life of an individual in order to accomplish His purpose in their life through a series of changes. We will call these changes: Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Phase 1 occurs when an unbeliever becomes a Believer in Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31). This is the moment of that person's eternal salvation.

Phase 2 is a process that occurs within a person from the moment of salvation until either death or the Rapture of the Church.

Phase 3 begins at physical death or the Rapture of the Believer and continues throughout eternity.

The desired change into the image of Jesus Christ will not be fully accomplished until we enter Phase 3, but the Believer will begin to change at the moment of salvation (2 Corinthians 3:18). The image of Jesus Christ is a reference to having an attitude like His, one that is unselfish, humble and sacrificial (Philippians 2:5-8). This change is part of how we ***"walk in a manner worthy of our calling"*** (Ephesians 4:1-3).

The fact that there are phases in the life of the Believer is important to realize, because it will help the individual understand God's Word. When we ask the question "who," we need to determine if God is speaking to Believers or unbelievers in order to properly interpret the passage under consideration. Keep this point in mind as we consider the subject of spirituality.

### B. Thirteen Elements of the Christian Life

#### 1. Faith

Simply speaking, faith is trust in someone or something. It is belief that the person or thing will fulfill your needs or desires. The object of the faith is where the value of the faith is determined, not in the faith itself. One may think, and actually come to believe, that man could create another heaven and earth like the one we inhabit, but there is not sufficient power inside man to accomplish such a creation. That faith would be worthless.

When faith is in one who has the knowledge and ability to accomplish a given event, that faith has value. Our faith is in God who brought the heaven and earth into existence because He has the power, knowledge and desire. Scripture says, ***"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible"*** (Hebrews 11:1-3).

Faith in Jesus Christ is the basis for being justified (declared righteous) and is our introduction into the grace given to Christians (Romans 5:1-2). Faith is, therefore, essential for an unbeliever to become a Believer at Phase 1. This faith also begins our relationship with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:2-3, 14).

Faith is essential to the Christian life (Phase 2), for it is impossible to please God without it (Hebrews 11:6; 2 Corinthians 5:7). He rejoices when He finds it in us (Matthew 8:5-10). Faith is what overcomes the world, the system of Satan (1 John 5:4-5). The faith of a Christian will be tested to make us progress from a baby to an adult Believer (James 1:3). The consistency of our faith causes us to grow in our relationship with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:4-5). Faith is always foundational in the Christian life (2 Peter 1:5-9).

When we are with Christ forever in our resurrection bodies, there will no longer be a need for faith, for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

## 2. Spirituality

Spirituality is a term used to denote the depth of relationship that one has with God the Holy Spirit. It must, therefore, be based on the consistency of reliance upon the Holy Spirit in the life of the Believer. An unbeliever does not yet have a relationship with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14) and, therefore, has no degree of spirituality.

### a. Indwelling

The Church Age Believer is different from Believers in past ages in the sense that the Holy Spirit functioned upon Believers. He now functions inside Believers in accordance with the Word of Jesus Christ (John 14:17). The very presence of the Holy Spirit inside a Believer is proof of salvation (Romans 8:9).

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a gift which is given at salvation (Romans 5:5; Acts 11:16-17; 1 Corinthians 2:12) and, as a gift, cannot be revoked (Romans 11:29). Therefore, the Holy Spirit does not leave when a person sins. This is proven by the fact that even though there were Corinthians who were described as “fleshly” (1 Corinthians 3:3) and involved in sin (1 Corinthians 5:5), all still had the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19).

### b. Filling

While the term “Spirituality” refers to the degree of our relationship to the Holy Spirit, the “Filling of the Holy Spirit” is the beginning of our “Spirituality.” We should seek to be filled and, hence, empowered by the Holy Spirit at all times so that He may produce “fruit” through us (Galatians 5:22-23).

The Filling of the Holy Spirit was introduced in Scripture as a special empowering to carry out a specific task but is now shown to be a daily, consistent part of the Christian life. The importance of the Filling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life is first seen in Stephen who was selected to help serve the widows (Acts 6:5). This expansion of meaning is to be expected when we consider that the Church began as a “baby” and was then encouraged to mature (Ephesians 4:11-16).

The only mention of the Filling of the Holy Spirit outside of the Gospels and the Book of Acts is by Paul who gives a command to **“not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation (drunkenness), but be filled with the Spirit”** (Ephesians 5:18). This contrasting analogy seems to indicate that a process is involved in the filling of the Holy Spirit, because one does not get instantly drunk from wine. The concept of a process is also taught in Paul’s earlier uses of the word “fill” (PLEROO in the Greek) that are found in Ephesians 1:23, 3:19 and 4:10. The command from Paul carries the importance of the consistency of the Filling of the Holy Spirit, which involves a consistent recognition and confession of sin(s), believing that God has forgiven them. The importance of consistency also implies that it is directly related to our “Spirituality.”

True Spirituality involves grace and faith. We are told that, **“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude”** (Colossians 2:6-7). We received Him in grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). We are also clearly instructed that Spirituality, which leads to Christian maturity, is grounded in a walk of faith (Galatians 3:2-3), and without faith it is impossible to please the Lord (Hebrews 11:6).

In conclusion the Filling of the Holy Spirit empowers Believers so they may become more mature in Christ Jesus.

### c. Grieving and Quenching

When a Believer sins, it “grieves” or brings sorrow to the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). The longer this sin remains unconfessed in the life of the Believer, the more grief it causes the Holy Spirit. This word describes what happens in the individual life of the Believer.

When a Believer “quenches” the Holy Spirit, as one would put out a fire, it means to harm the spiritual life or fruit of himself or others (1 Thessalonians 5:19). We are not to attempt to stop the Holy Spirit’s working in other Believers.

### 3. Confession of Sin(s)

While it is clear from God's Word that when we are saved our sins have been forgiven, it is also clear that as Believers we will sin (Romans 7:14-25). Sin is no longer an issue for our salvation but is still an issue to our life as a Christian. Sin in the life of the Believer injures his relationship with God and others but does not sever it. Therefore, sin becomes an issue of fellowship.

Fellowship, in its simplest sense, refers to sharing with each other. The sharing could refer to people, events, things or time. Even unbelievers can have fellowship with each other if they join together in the pursuit of sin. When either an unbeliever or Believer breaks the rules of fellowship, they are out of harmony with one another. As Christians we are to have a fellowship with God and one another that is based on our new status as children of God. Therefore, it is a fellowship that is based on righteous standards that God has established.

The message of how to be restored to fellowship with God and other Christians is clearly stated in 1 John 1:5-10:

Verse 5 sets the standard for fellowship. It says, ***“and this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.”*** The standard is God's light which refers to His truth concerning sin.

Verse 6 sets the test for fellowship. It says, ***“If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.”*** This means that our thoughts, speech and actions (walk) are to be examined with God's light.

Verse 7 sets the condition for fellowship. It says, ***“but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*** Our thoughts, speech and actions which are Christ-like bring fellowship with one another and a continued cleansing from sin.

Verse 8 exposes the deception of sin. It says, ***“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”*** The “we” in this verse must include Believers because John has included himself in the group. When a person believes that they have reached sinless perfection, that person has been deceived.

Verse 9 gives the solution to sin. It says, ***“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*** The Greek word translated “confess” (HOMOLOGEO) means to acknowledge and, hence, to agree with God that the thought, speech or act is indeed a sin. Please note that this is not a “formula” to get God to forgive the sin when the heart is still unrepentant. God should not be mocked (Galatians 6:7). The reason one would confess sins to the living God is because the individual has faith that He can and will forgive. This verse is a promise from God that the Christian must know, believe and use.

Verse 10 describes those who do not recognize sin. It says, ***“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*** This verse says, if we do not recognize that sin exists in our life as a Christian, we have called God a liar and do not understand His word.

When we consider all these verses together, we find that spiritual fellowship with God (verse 6) and other Believers (verse 7) is injured by sin. This sin needs to be recognized before God (verse 9—God is faithful and just) so that forgiveness can occur, and fellowship can be restored.

Please note that the eternal consequences of sin are what has been forgiven. The Believer may still have to face the consequences of certain actions in time. Adam and Eve were forgiven but were still removed from the Garden of Eden.

### 4. Spiritual Gifts

A Spiritual gift is a God-given ability to excel in a different area of service within the Body of Christ. The term is derived from a Greek word which means “given as a result of grace” (CHARISMA). It is different from a talent or human ability which comes with natural birth in that Jesus Christ established the gifts (Ephesians 4:11), and the Holy Spirit sovereignly distributes them at the moment of salvation

(1 Corinthians 12:11, 18) to the entire Body of Christ (Ephesians 2:20). Each person has at least one gift (1 Peter 4:10), but not every gift (or else they would be a body to themselves, cf. 1 Corinthians 12).

It is important to realize that all gifts are to function in love (1 Corinthians 13) and that they are designed to serve others (1 Peter 4:10). The Apostle Paul made it clear in 1 Corinthians that, even though they are spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit, they can be used in a fleshly way to draw attention to oneself or to become arrogant (1 Corinthians 12). Spiritual gifts are to be used to build up the church not to cause divisions and confusion (1 Corinthians 14:12, 33).

There are five places in the New Testament where spiritual gifts are mentioned by name. In **1 Corinthians 12:8-10** we find the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, languages and the interpretation of languages. In **1 Corinthians 12:28** we find apostle, prophecy, teaching, miracles, healing, helps, administration and languages. In **Ephesians 4:11** we find apostle, prophecy, evangelism and pastor-teacher. In **1 Peter 4:11** communication and service are given as the two basic categories of spiritual gifts. **Romans 12:6-8** gives us a list of some of those specific gifts.

Please realize that spiritual gifts were given to the Church which began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Some gifts were designed to lay the foundation (Ephesians 2:20) so that the Church could begin, be built up and stabilized (1 Corinthians 14:40). These gifts were called “sign” gifts and were designed to evangelize the unbeliever and stabilize the new Believer (1 Corinthians 14:20-22) until Scripture for this new dispensation could be written. They were temporary and were not needed after they accomplished their necessary functions in the early church, so they disappeared (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).

The following chart shows the temporary spiritual gifts which no longer function as spiritual gifts in the church age:

| <b>Temporary Spiritual Gifts for the Church Age</b>                          |   |
|--|---|
| <b>The Word of Wisdom</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:8)                            | Supernatural instructions for the application of Church Age truth   |
| <b>The Gift of Faith</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:9)                             | Supernaturally great trust in the Lord in the face of seemingly impossible situations (1 Corinthians 13:2 cf. Acts 12:1-19)                               |
| <b>The Word of Knowledge</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:8)                         | The supernatural utterance of direct information for the Church, not of a prophetic nature, which was to guide them until the New Testament was completed |
| <b>Healing</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:9, 28)                                   | The supernatural, immediate and total physical healing of individuals from various medical conditions   |
| <b>Miracles</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:10, 28)                                 | The supernatural setting aside of the normal natural laws and was viewed in conjunction with healing and the casting out of demons (Acts 19:11-12)        |
| <b>Prophecy</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:10, 28;<br>Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:11) | The supernatural ability to foretell information in the Church concerning the near and distant future (Acts 11:27-28)                                     |
| <b>The Gift of Distinguishing of Spirits</b> (1 Corinthians 12:10)           | The primary supernatural gift used to evaluate false teachers and false prophets (1 Corinthians 14:32)  |
| <b>Tongues/Languages</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:10, 28)                        | The supernatural ability to speak a human language that had not been previously learned   |
| <b>Interpretation of Tongues/Languages</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:10)          | The supernatural ability to translate human languages that had not been previously learned  |
| <b>Apostle</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11)                      | A spiritual gift held by only twelve men (Revelation 21:14) who were handpicked by Christ Himself (Luke 6:13-16; Acts 9:15; Galatians 1:1)                |

We are told that the gifts of “Prophecy,” “Languages” and the “Word of Knowledge” will be done away when the “perfect” comes (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). Since those gifts will be done away, then “Distinguishing of Spirits,” and “Interpretation of Languages” will also disappear because they function in

union with the previously mentioned gifts. The Gift of Wisdom and Faith are also shown to function in union with other gifts that are said to be “done away.” Notice that all of these gifts concern communication. When the book of Revelation was written, prophecy was closed for the Church Age (Revelation 22:18-19). Therefore, the “perfect” must be the completed, God-breathed, inspired Word of God. No more new information was needed for the Church. The teaching gifts then focused on the communication of what had been revealed through the written Word that became the New Testament.

Revelation 21:14 indicates that there were only twelve apostles. While it is clear that other people held an office that was called “apostle,” it did not mean that they possessed the gift (Galatians 1:19; the Lord’s brother was not one of the original twelve). It is clear that this spiritual gift was also temporary.

The gifts of “Healing” and “Miracles” were also temporary gifts as evidenced by their historical usage in the New Testament. God still can and does heal people and perform miracles, but not through a spiritual gift given to an individual. The Lord still answers prayer (James 5:16), but the function of the gift was based on the decision of the one possessing it. Those with the gift of healing could call on the Lord, and healing would occur (Acts 3:6-8; 5:12-16; 9:34). The gifts were used in the early Church to draw attention and authenticate the message of the resurrected Christ (Acts 8:1-8, 39; 13:4-12; 14:1-4; 19:11-12). The Believers’ love for one another is the mature way of drawing attention to the message of Jesus Christ (John 13:34-35).

We know that the apostle Paul had the gift of healing (Acts 20:8-12; 28:8), and yet later in his life he was unable to heal his good friend Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-27) or himself (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). Since the gift had left the apostle, one of the key people of the early Church, it must have left everyone else as well.

Other gifts were designed for the function of the Church after it passed the “infancy” stage (1 Corinthians 13:10-13) and, therefore, are permanent. These involve gifts that communicate God’s Word and serve others (1 Peter 4:10-11).

The next chart shows the permanent spiritual gifts which continue to function today.

| <b>Permanent Spiritual Gifts for the Church Age</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Teaching</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:7) | The supernatural ability to excel in the communication of God’s Word to others   |
| <b>Helps</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:28)                 | A gift that supernaturally assists the gifts of others. It functions in many different areas. One example would be in the collection or preparation of food to nourish others so that others could more fully pursue their specific gifts (Acts 6:1-6) |
| <b>Administration</b><br>(1 Corinthians 12:28)        | The supernatural ability to organize and oversee the resources that God has given to His Church  |
| <b>Serving</b><br>(Romans 12:7; 1 Peter 4:11)         | The supernatural ability to carry out the physical functions of ministry in a practical manner   |
| <b>Instruction</b><br>(Romans 12:8)                   | The supernatural ability to recognize and meet the need for encouragement within the Body of Christ  |
| <b>Giving</b><br>(Romans 12:8)                        | The supernatural ability to share one’s resources with others in a higher proportion than would be normally expected. It is unselfishness measured by generosity, not by the specific amount that is given but by the willful sharing of resources     |
| <b>Leading</b><br>(Romans 12:8)                       | The supernatural ability to guide and direct individuals in the accomplishment of the service of the Church  |
| <b>Mercy</b><br>(Romans 12:8)                         | The supernatural ability to recognize and get help for those in spiritual or physical need   |
| <b>Evangelism</b><br>(Ephesians 4:11)                 | The supernatural ability to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to individuals or groups of people in ways they can clearly understand  |
| <b>Pastor-Teacher</b><br>(Ephesians 4:11)             | The supernatural ability to shepherd God’s flock through teaching and applying the Word.   |

## 5. Righteousness

In a previous section, we saw that God gave us His righteousness when we believed in Jesus Christ. That is called Justification. The new Believer then faces the challenge to let his life become fully based on God's standards of right and wrong. Righteousness in a Believer's life is based on his conformity to God's stated standards.

The two most important standards of righteousness are to love God with all of your being and to love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:29-31). Righteousness is not simply an absence of sins but a change of mind and attitudes that are in agreement with God (Philippians 2:5-8). For example, we are to ***“be merciful, just as your Father is merciful,”*** and we are to love even our enemies (Luke 6:36-40). We are to produce fruit from this righteousness by graciously helping the poor (2 Corinthians 9:8-10). Actions in line with God's will are also part of this righteousness (Hebrews 11:32-33).

The Believer's righteousness is to be pursued (1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22-23). All of God's Word is important to the understanding of this righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and, therefore, it is difficult for the new Believer to understand and accept (Hebrews 5:12-14).

Compliance with God's standards (righteousness) is not simply an overt obedience to His commands in order to impress men (Matthew 6:1). The Pharisees practiced their “righteousness” so that others would notice them. They also practiced their traditions, which they believed to be equal with Scripture (Mark 7:1-8). When one goes outside of God's Word and makes it a standard of righteousness, this is called “legalism” (which we have previously discussed) and is not the righteousness that God desires for us.

The Holy Spirit convicts every person of a lack of righteousness (John 16:8-10). To the unbeliever, the Holy Spirit reveals that a lack of righteousness will prevent him from relationship with a holy God. By faith in Jesus Christ, the unbeliever is saved (Ephesians 2:8-9), having been declared righteous so he may have fellowship with God. The Believer is convicted by the Holy Spirit concerning sin in his life and is pointed to the need for confession of that sin so fellowship can be restored (1 John 1:6-10). The righteousness the Believer should seek is brought about by the Holy Spirit and is an important part of living in the Kingdom of God (Romans 14:16-17). This righteousness is fruit from the light of Jesus Christ who perfectly lived Divine standards (Ephesians 5:6-10).

Jesus tells us if we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we will be blessed and receive it (Matthew 5:6). Righteousness is a desire we should have, because it honors the One who raised us from spiritual death (Romans 6:12-13). Unbelievers are spiritually dead until they accept Christ as their savior (Romans 6:23). As unbelievers we were all slaves to sin, but now as Believers we are to become slaves to righteousness (Romans 6:16-19).

Satan and his forces disguise themselves as servants of righteousness to try to confuse and deceive the Believer (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). One method they use is to persecute those who are truly living a righteous life (Matthew 5:10; 1 Peter 3:14). To become truly righteous in our life is a battle but one that will be eternally rewarded with a crown (2 Timothy 4:6-8). Let yourself be trained by the Lord during this battle and realize true peace in your soul (Hebrews 12:11).

## 6. Prayer

Prayer is communication to God. Simply knowing, thinking or studying about prayer is of no value if it is not practiced. Its value is only seen when one prays to God and then watches Him answer. Prayer is a privilege because it is an entry into the throne room of God (Hebrews 4:16).

Consistency in prayer is a characteristic of those who seek God's will in their life. This was illustrated in the early Church (Acts 2:42). When Jesus' first disciples saw the need to be taught how to pray (Luke 11:1), Jesus taught them “The Lord's Prayer” (Luke 11:2-4). Prayer is not to be a careful selection of words in an attempt to get God to do your will, but is a time to align with His will (1 John 5:14). Prayer is your most important tool in the Angelic Conflict (Ephesians 6:18).

God's Word tells us that prayer is to be to the Father (Ephesians 5:20; Matthew 6:9; 1 Peter 1:17), in the power of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:18) and should end in the Name of the Son (John 14:13; 15:16).

Prayer should normally include five key elements. The first element of prayer is confession of sins (Psalm 66:18-20; Isaiah 59:2; Matthew 6:14; 1 John 1:9). This lets us determine if there may be anything harming our fellowship with God. The second element is praise (Matthew 21:16; Luke 19:37; Romans 14:11; 15:11; Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14; Hebrews 13:15). Praise is a recognition and appreciation of what God is. The third element is thanksgiving, which is a recognition and appreciation of what He has done (Ephesians 5:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:18). The fourth element of prayer is called intercession, which means to pray for others (Ephesians 6:18; Hebrews 7:25), and the fifth element is petition, which means to pray for yourself (Hebrews 4:16).

You may confess your sins at any time (and should) without offering additional prayer. You may also thank or praise Him and offer up requests for yourself or someone else at any time you choose.

## 7. Growth

Just as we are born into this world as a baby, we are “born again” when we believe in Jesus Christ (John 3:1-16), and just as we grow from being a child into an adult, so are we to grow in our Christian life. We are called to become mature, and since the call is to a maturity like our heavenly Father’s (Matthew 5:48), it is never completed in this life (Philippians 3:12-15).

The first issue in our growth is whether or not we will present ourselves to Him as a “living and holy sacrifice,” meaning to place our life in service to Him (Romans 12:1-2). Our Father then brings various tests into our life to help us “grow up” (James 1:2-4). These are tests of our trust in Him. He also gave the church various spiritual gifts to help us during the maturing process (Ephesians 4:11-14).

Maturity is simply described as “**doing away with childish things**” (1 Corinthians 13:11). A mature person has grown up in his actions (Matthew 19:21), speech (James 3:1-2) and thoughts (1 Corinthians 14:20). We may evaluate our maturity based on our consistency in these areas. Are childish actions (such as selfishness), harmful speech (gossip) and sinful thoughts (pride) becoming more or less common? If they are becoming more common, then one is becoming more childish and less mature.

There are many qualities of maturity given in Scripture. Maturity is unselfish (Matthew 19:21), humble (Philippians 3:12-15) and evangelistic (Colossians 1:28). It intercedes for others (Colossians 4:12) and uses spiritual freedom honorably and not for selfish pursuits (James 1:25; Galatians 5:1, 13). Maturity indicates that one has grown in his appreciation of God’s standards of righteousness (Hebrews 5:12-14). The mature person has learned to rely on God’s grace (2 Corinthians 12:9), realizing that every good thing comes from it (James 1:17). The most revealing quality of how mature our life has become is based on the degree to which we have let our love relationship with God grow to the point where it removes fear from our life (1 John 4:17-19).

## 8. Love

Jesus Christ Himself said that love is the most important part of the Christian life. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and declared the greatest commandment. He said, “**The foremost is, ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength’**” (Mark 12:29-30). Jesus next quoted a part of Leviticus 19:18 and stated that it was the second greatest commandment. He said, “**The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these**” (Mark 12:31). We are to love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). If we truly love Him, we will love our brother (1 John 4:20-21). The love to which we are called is not the common love that human beings may have for one another but rather a love that comes from the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Neither is it a love motivated solely by emotions, although emotions may be involved.

Love is described by God’s Word rather than defined. The marvelous passage on love found in 1 Corinthians 13 begins by teaching us its importance. No matter what spiritual gift we may have, act of good we may do or sacrifice we may give, if it is not done in love, we have missed the point of the Christian life (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). The apostle Paul then gives 16 descriptions of love (13:4-8). A good test of one’s love would be to ask the question “am I...?” along with each quality listed, such as, “Am I patient?” If the answer is “no,” then love is lacking in one’s life. Many other qualities and actions of love are listed in Romans 12:9-21.

The “world” is the enemy of the love that God desires from us. The “world” often refers to the things that Satan uses in his attempt to divert us from God’s will. When we love the things the world has to offer, we are not able to fully love God (1 John 2:15).

## **9. Suffering**

Suffering means to undergo pain. It can be both physical and mental. In Jesus Christ, we find the One who underwent the greatest suffering known to mankind, the payment for our sins upon the cross (1 Peter 2:21-24; 4:1; 5:1). He came for this very purpose (Luke 9:22; 22:15) and suffered at the hands of unjust men (1 Peter 2:21-24). Therefore, from Him we have an example of how to face unjust suffering (1 Peter 2:21).

Earlier we were introduced to the concept of maturity in the Christian life. Suffering unjustly is part of the testing we undergo to make us mature (1 Peter 5:10). God will eternally reward our witness and endurance (1 Peter 2:19-20; 2 Corinthians 4:17). Our witness is based on our trust in Him during times of undeserved suffering (1 Peter 4:19).

It is a blessing to suffer for the sake of righteousness, for doing what is right, realizing that Christ is indeed our Lord (1 Peter 3:14-17; 4:14). Unjust suffering often comes from those who are in positions of authority when they harm the Believer because he is a follower of Christ. It is part of what every Christian will undergo to one degree or another (Philippians 1:27-30).

The apostle Peter, who witnessed the sufferings of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 5:1), told us to rejoice to the degree that we share His sufferings (1 Peter 4:13-16). He is referring to the fact that since the world hates Jesus Christ it will also hate His followers (John 15:18-20; 1 Peter 4:12). Only Christ’s sufferings paid the price for sin, ours do not, but the sharing in His sufferings gives us the experience of knowing the pain He underwent on our behalf. We should not be ashamed of this kind of suffering (1 Peter 4:16) and realize that other Christians are enduring the pain (1 Peter 5:9) and are proving themselves worthy of the Kingdom of God (2 Thessalonians 1:5). We are not to fear this suffering (Revelation 2:10).

Peter also warned us that when we suffer for sin(s) we have committed, it is deserved suffering and is not desirable in the Christian life (1 Peter 4:15). Any sin is worthy of great suffering (Luke 13:1-5).

## **10. Discipline**

The word “discipline” (PAIDEUO in the Greek) includes the idea of enough pain to bring about the desired training. For example, it is used in Luke 23:16-22 to describe the beating of a prisoner so that they will change their ways (that “prisoner” happened to be the Lord Jesus Christ whom Pilate wanted to “discipline” and then release). It also includes the idea of education (Acts 7:22; 22:3). When the Lord puts the Church Age Believer in the position of training others, it is to be done with gentleness (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

Discipline is similar to suffering in that they both involve pain. While suffering contains more the idea of deserved or undeserved pain, discipline is concerned with the pain that is necessary for training. Our training could include undeserved suffering for the purpose of building character or deserved suffering for the purpose of getting us to change our mind or our sinful actions when we have gone astray (1 Timothy 1:18-20).

Godly discipline is for the purpose of building character as a father would train his child (Ephesians 6:4; Hebrews 12:7). It is designed to build a consistency of righteous action, and all of God’s Word is useful to that end (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is not a joy at that time to undergo discipline, but the results of it are valuable (Hebrews 12:11). The price that had to be paid for sin should lead us to realize the importance of this training (Titus 2:11-12).

Unlike earthly fathers who may administer discipline out of anger, our heavenly Father disciplines out of His love (Revelation 3:19). When He trains us, it is because of His love for us, so we are not to become discouraged when He corrects us (Hebrews 12:5). God’s purpose in discipline is that we not be identified with the world (1 Corinthians 11:31-32); therefore, the Believer should welcome the Lord’s correction (Hebrews 12:8).

## 11. Bible Study

The importance of studying God's Word cannot be overemphasized. It is the guidebook which God has given us to lead us to a relationship with Him (1 Corinthians 2:16). The entirety of this study has been based on the importance of God's Word, so we will not elaborate at length. It should be studied on a daily basis.

## 12. Worship

Worship is to be a celebration of Jesus Christ. It includes who He is and what He has done. It realizes and praises His worth. Jesus is the only One found truly worthy (Revelation 5:1-7), and heaven will be known for its worship of the Lord (Revelation 4:9-11).

Unbelieving mankind tends to worship and serve the created rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25). Satan himself wants to be worshipped (Luke 4:7), but God is the only One we are to worship (Luke 4:8). Some even worship angels, another of God's creation (Colossians 2:18). As a result of the desire of men to worship the created, they will also worship the commandments that they develop apart from God's Word (Mark 7:7). They will also worship the place of worship rather than the One who is worthy of worship (John 4:20-22).

True worship comes from the Holy Spirit working in our lives, revealing the worthiness of Jesus Christ (John 4:23-24; Philippians 3:2-3) so that we may praise Him. It is done by presenting our bodies to Him for service (Romans 12:1-2) and accepting by faith His Word (Hebrews 11:21).

While there are many forms in which to worship, the positions or actions one takes are not stated as commands in Scripture. To judge anyone's spirituality or maturity by the manner in which a person worships is, therefore, legalism.

## 13. Making Disciples

In the Great Commission, Jesus instructed His disciples to ***“go and make disciples of all the nations”*** (Matthew 28:18). A disciple is a student of the Word who has chosen to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The disciple is not just one who is saved but rather a Believer who is learning God's Word in order to live it (John 7:17).

# For Personal Study: Chapter 8, Section 1

### 1. Concerning the phases of the Christian life:

- a. Read Acts 16:30-31. What phase in a person's life occurs when they believe in Jesus Christ?
- b. Read 2 Corinthians 3:18. What phase in a person's life is the transformation of the Believer into the image of Christ?
- c. Read 1 John 3:2. What phase in a person's life occurs when we shall see Christ as He is?

### 2. Read Hebrews 11:6. What must the Believer possess to please God?

### 3. Read 1 Corinthians 2:14-15. What is necessary to understand spiritual things?

- a. Read John 14:17. Where does the Holy Spirit reside?
- b. Read Galatians 3:2-3. What is essential to spirituality?
- c. Read Ephesians 4:30 and 1 Thessalonians 5:19. Sin in the life of a Believer may cause what two things to happen?

### 4. Read 1 John 1:5-10. Will a Believer sin and, if so, what should be done?

### 5. Read 1 Peter 4:10. What does every Believer receive?

- a. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. What must be present for there to be personal value in the exercise of a spiritual gift?
- b. Read 1 Corinthians 13:8-11. What does it tell us will happen to some gifts?
- c. Read John 13:34-35 and 1 Peter 4:10. Compare the main purpose of "loving one another" with the reason we were given spiritual gifts.

### 6. Read Romans 6:16-19. To what are we to become slaves?

- 7. Concerning the five key elements of prayer:**
  - a. Read 1 John 1:9. What element is given here?
  - b. Read Romans 14:11 and 15:11. What element is given in these passages?
  - c. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18. What element is given here?
  - d. Read Ephesians 6:18. What element is given here?
  - e. Read Hebrews 4:16. What element is given here?
- 8. Read 1 Peter 2:2 and 2 Peter 3:18. What is the Christian to do after salvation?**
- 9. Read Mark 12:29-31. What are the two foremost commandments of God?**
- 10. Read 1 Peter 2:19-20 and 1 Peter 5:10. What will the Believer have to endure?**
- 11. Read Hebrews 12:6-7. How does God train us?**
- 12. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Is the study of God's Word profitable?**
- 13. Read John 4:23-24 and Philippians 3:2-3. How are we to worship God?**
- 14. Read Matthew 28:18-20. What are Christ's disciples to do?**

## Section 2

# The Corporate Christian Life (Ecclesiology)

### A. Teaching

When Jesus gave the Great Commission, part of His instructions were **“teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you”** (Matthew 28:20). Jesus was a teacher (Matthew 4:23; 5:2; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:54; 21:23; 22:16; 26:55; 28:15; Acts 1:1). His disciples did as He instructed them and began to teach also (Acts 4:2, 18; 5:21, 25, 28, 42; 11:26; 15:1, 35; 18:11, 25; 20:20; 21:21, 28).

Teaching gives the instruction while preaching gives the exhortation (Colossians 1:28; 3:16). They are both important to the church.

When the apostle Paul gave instructions to Timothy, he told him to teach others so that they could, in turn, teach others (1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2; 2 Timothy 2:2). This is how the Word of God is to be passed from generation to generation.

While some are gifted at being teachers (Romans 12:7), all Believers are called to teach (Hebrews 5:12-14).

### B. Fellowship

Fellowship was an important part of the early church (Acts 2:42). It means to share with someone else and includes not only physical things (Romans 15:26; 2 Corinthians 8:4; 9:13; Hebrews 13:16) but also spiritual things (1 John 1:3, 7). Fellowship includes corporate worship which was discussed for individuals in Section 1 of this chapter. Worshipping the Lord together is an outgrowth of individual worship.

Spiritual fellowship with other Believers (2 Corinthians 6:14) is based upon our fellowship with Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7) and is brought about through our fellowship with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14). It is built on faith (Philemon 1:6) and brings about unity within the Body of Christ (Philippians 2:1-2). We are called into this fellowship (1 Corinthians 1:9) which cannot be accomplished while we are walking in the darkness (1 John 1:6).

The foundation of our fellowship is portrayed in the Lord's Table, often called Communion, which reminds us of His person and work (1 Corinthians 10:16). It is built by a fellowship with His sufferings (Philippians 3:10).

As Believers we have fellowship after disagreements have been resolved (Galatians 2:9) and when we work together in the spread of the gospel (Philippians 1:5). Fellowship is the means by which loving relationships can be developed.

We saw earlier the importance of love in the Christian life. We are to love God and to love others. The New Testament gives the disciple a lot of information about what is involved in loving one's neighbor, which is required to love God (1 John 4:20). To love one's neighbor as oneself is called the "Royal Law" (James 2:8). It is actually the minimum that is expected from Believers, since we are also expected to love our enemies (Luke 6:35). We are to treat people as we would want to be treated (Matthew 7:12).

The following principles deal with our relationships with one another. They should begin with the marriage relationship and then extend to our family, our church family, God's family and even those who are not saved. There are numerous principles found in the New Testament that will build relationships. A Believer who is not mature will look at these principles and expect others to practice them, but will not consider his personal responsibility to do these things even if others do not. A mature Believer will do them because they are the right things to do and not try to use them in a selfish manner.

#### Let us now consider the "one another" principles:

- The command to **love** one another is found in many verses in the New Testament (John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 4:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11, 12; 2 John 1:5). This means that we are to live the principles found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and Romans 12:9-21.
- Recognize we are **members** of one another (Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:25) meaning that we already have a relationship because we are part of Christ's body.

- We are to be **devoted** to one another (Romans 12:10) which means that we are to develop a tender affection for each other that includes commitment to the well being of others.
- We are to **honor** one another meaning that we recognize the value of others before God (Romans 12:10).
- We are to **think the same** toward one another meaning that we recognize other people as fellow recipients of God's grace (Romans 12:16; 15:5).
- We are to **accept** one another just as Christ accepted us (Romans 15:7) as creatures in need of His grace.
- We are to **warn** one another when we see spiritual danger approaching (Romans 15:14).
- We are to **greet** one another (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Peter 5:14) with a "holy kiss." This means to acknowledge the presence of a person in a way that appreciates their value to God.
- We are to **serve** one another (John 13:14; Galatians 5:13), which is illustrated by the washing of another's feet.
- We are to **consider others more important** than ourselves (Philippians 2:3).
- We are to **bear the burdens** of one another (Galatians 6:2) which means to help them deal with sin in their life.
- We are to **bear with** one another which means to be patient with each other (Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13).
- We are to **submit** to one another which means that we recognize others needs first (Ephesians 5:21).
- We are to **encourage** one another which involves helping them when they are spiritually down (Romans 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:18; 5:11; Hebrews 3:13; 10:25).
- We are to **be at peace** with one another (Mark 9:50). This means that we are not to stir up trouble with our actions or opinions.
- We are to **confess our sins** to one another (James 5:16). This involves the people whom we have wronged and is done to bring peace to relationships that have been harmed.
- We are to **pray** for one another (James 5:16).
- We are to **forgive** one another just as the Lord forgave us (Colossians 3:13).
- We are to **seek good** for one another meaning that we desire each person to have a closer relationship with God (1 Thessalonians 5:15).
- We are to **stimulate one another to love and good deeds** (Hebrews 10:24). This involves thinking about how others may be helped and urging them to action.
- We are to **eagerly await** one another (1 Corinthians 11:33) which refers to a joy of association with other Believers.
- We are to **be kind** to one another which involves the removal of bitterness, anger and a desire to harm others (Ephesians 4:31-32).
- We are to **care** for one another (1 Corinthians 12:25) which means we are concerned for other members of the body of Christ.
- We are to **recognize** one another's service (Luke 7:32). We should not serve for the purpose of man's recognition, but honor within God's family recognizes each others' service.
- We are to **show hospitality** to one another (1 Peter 4:9). This means that we should welcome strangers into our assemblies.
- We are to be **humble** toward one another which refers to our attitude concerning each other (1 Peter 5:5).
- We should have **fellowship** with one another (1 John 1:7).
- We are to **build up** one another (Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11) which involves encouragement and instruction to others.

### C. Evangelism

Evangelism is the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is proclaiming the good news that Jesus Christ is God (John 1:1) who became man (John 1:14) in order to die to pay for the sins of the world (1 John 2:1-2) and then be resurrected (1 Corinthians 15:1-3) so that those who believe in Him shall have eternal life (John 3:16). It is not good news that we all are sinners (Romans 3:23). The good news is that the debt owed because of our sins (Romans 6:23) has been paid (Galatians 3:13).

The Church, both universal and local, should desire to bring others the good news. We should not hide the light and the truth that we have been given (Matthew 5:14; Romans 1:16).

God gives us freedom in method to present the gospel. It may be done from one person to another (Acts 8) or to groups (Acts 2). What is important is that the Church spread the Word of God, presenting His invitation to join His Kingdom. The most effective tool given to man for evangelism is a love for one another (John 13:34-35).

### D. Ministry

Ministry is service that realizes the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of others and then seeks to help them (Acts 11:29; 2 Corinthians 8:3-5). It is the function of being an ambassador for Jesus Christ and carrying the message of reconciliation to God to a lost and dying world (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). If a person can be reconciled to God, then a person can also be set free from the legalisms of this world. Therefore, ministry also carries the message of freedom (1 Timothy 4:4-6). We as Believers have been set free (Galatians 5:1) and are now using our freedom to serve others (Galatians 5:13).

Jesus Christ Himself set the example for us to follow (Matthew 20:28), so the minister follows the Leader (John 12:24-26). Christian servanthood, not one's position in the church, is the true mark of spiritual greatness (Matthew 20:26-28; 23:10-12). As Believers, we must constantly remember the mercy that God displayed to us at salvation, so we do not become arrogant or discouraged (2 Corinthians 4:1-2). God has promised that He will not forget even our smallest act of service to others (Hebrews 6:10-12).

Opportunities to minister are provided by the Lord (Acts 20:24; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6). Believers should accept these opportunities to use our God-given resources and gifts to serve one another. Ministry is, therefore, an essential part of the Christian life (1 Peter 4:10-11) in which we should consistently participate (Romans 12:7), being careful not to discredit the ministry and, thus, our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 6:3).

Ministries should learn to work together. The first election of deacons in the church was because of the need for more efficient ministry. The apostles realized that all of the needs of the church could not be physically met by them alone, so they asked the congregation to elect men to care for the widows (Acts 6:1-6). Different ministries working together helped fill the needs of the people.

The Lord established in the church leadership ministries that were designed to equip other people to become ministers. The apostle Paul wrote,

***And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ*** (Ephesians 4:11-13).

The responsibility of church leadership is to prepare Believers spiritually, physically and emotionally to minister to other people so that others may be evangelized and become mature through a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Ministry done in love is the most powerful evangelistic tool given to the Church (John 13:1-35).

## **E. Unity**

Individual churches should have the objective of unity within the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). Jesus Christ, the night before the cross, prayed that His followers would become one. He said,

***I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me (John 17:20-23).***

Since all Believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit the moment they believe in Jesus Christ, unity is first established by the fact that there is only one Spirit (Ephesians 4:4), and we are all indwelt by Him (see section on Indwelling of the Holy Spirit). The apostle Paul taught us this unity of the Holy Spirit is to be preserved by walking in a manner worthy of our calling (Ephesians 4:1-3). This means that our walk is full of grace and based on faith (Ephesians 8–9). While our position in Christ unifies us by means of a common salvation, we are to seek a oneness within the body of Christ that is based on love so that all of the unsaved will know we are disciples of Jesus Christ (John 13:34-35).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 8, Section 2**

- 1. Read 2 Timothy 2:2. What is important in the Church?**
- 2. Read 1 Timothy 6:3. How is sound teaching to be evaluated?**
- 3. Read Hebrews 5:12. What should people who have been Believers for a long time be able to do?**
- 4. Read 1 John 1:3 and 7. What is seen as important to the Church?**
- 5. What principles of fellowship are taught in the following passages?**
  - a. John 13:34-35
  - b. Romans 12:10
  - c. Romans 15:7
  - d. Galatians 5:13
  - e. Philippians 2:3
  - f. Galatians 6:2
  - g. Hebrews 3:13 and 10:25
  - h. Colossians 3:13
  - i. Ephesians 4:31-32
  - j. 1 Peter 4:9
  - k. Romans 14:19
- 6. Read Matthew 5:14 and Romans 1:16. What should the Church do?**
- 7. Read Galatians 5:1 and 5:13. For what reason have we been set free?**
- 8. Read Ephesians 4:13. What should be the objective of each local church?**
- 9. Read John 17:20-23. What is Christ's stated desire for His followers?**

## **Chapter 9**

# **Implementation**

## Introduction

This Section will introduce a practical method of preparing a Bible lesson. This method is based on principles that many teachers have used to effectively teach the Word of God. Although methods of preparation may vary, the basic principles of interpretation studied in Chapter 4 must be followed.

Consider first the importance of academic discipline as we prepare this lesson, and realize that academic discipline cannot and should not attempt to take the place of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Person of the Holy Spirit is He who will ***“lead us into all truth”*** (John 16:13). No method designed by man can validly make that guarantee.

We must always walk by faith, no matter how knowledgeable of God's Word we may become (Colossians 2:6). Christian maturity does not come by fleshly pursuit but instead by faith (Galatians 3:2-5). Satan will subtly attack us by trying to get us to trust our method and knowledge more than we trust the Holy Spirit (John 5:39-47). Knowledge without Christian love, however, will simply lead to arrogance, which is a characteristic of immaturity (1 Corinthians 8:1).

No matter what we seek to do in the Christian life, we must always begin with prayer including confession of sins (1 Corinthians 11:31; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9) and then continue to pray. We must pray for concentration, understanding and retention of what we learn before beginning any lesson.

# **Section 1**

## **Getting Familiar with the Book**

### **A. Introduction**

After selecting a book to study, we should first read it through several times casually, as if it were a newspaper article or just another book. This step is designed simply to acquaint us with the basic content of the book and is not designed to answer any deep theological questions.

Reading the book through quickly a few times will help us get some idea of the flow of the major topics and context. We must remember to interpret contextually, considering the Immediate, Intermediate and Remote Contexts. Going through a book verse-by-verse is the only way to understand the Immediate and Intermediate Contexts.

We also need to become familiar with the history and geography associated with the various books of the Bible. This study will consider 1 Thessalonians. To assist the student, we have provided some background information on the city of Thessalonica. This type of information must be obtained from extra-Biblical sources. Books called Bible Dictionaries and Bible Introductions are helpful sources of this information.

### **B. Thessalonica's Geography and History**

Thessalonica was a seaport located at the head of the Thermaic Gulf in the northwest corner of the Aegean Sea of modern day Greece. It was located in the Roman province of Macedonia and was noted for its hot springs and its shipyard, where large ships could dock. It was the largest and most prosperous city of Macedonia in its day.

Thessalonica was founded about 315 B.C. by Cassander, the son of Antipater, shortly after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. After Alexander's death, there was a tremendous power struggle. Antipater was loyal to the royal family, naming the city after his son Cassander's wife, Thessalonica, who was also the half-sister of Alexander the Great.

Thessalonica was a city of commerce made up primarily of Greeks but with an influential Jewish community. Today it is the Greek City of Salonika.

### **C. Historical Background of the Church: Acts 17:1-9**

The church was established on Paul's Second Missionary Journey as a result of his Macedonian vision (Acts 16:9). Paul was accompanied by Silas (which was his Hebrew name, Silvanus was his Roman name), Timothy and Luke. They were traveling along the Ignation Way which connected the East to the West. The group arrived in Thessalonica after visiting the cities of Philippi, Amphipolis and Apollonia (Acts 17:1).

Paul taught in the synagogue for three Sabbaths (Acts 17:2) with the message that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy and, therefore, was the Messiah (Acts 17:3). Many were converted as a result of this message (Acts 17:4).

Paul also spent an unspecified amount of time teaching new converts. As a result, the unbelieving Jews became jealous, formed a mob and went after the evangelistic team (Acts 17:5). The mob went to the house of Jason to get Paul, who was not there (Acts 17:6), so they dragged Jason before the magistrates and there distorted Paul's teaching about Jesus (Acts 17:7). Opposition became so fierce that Paul and his group had to flee to Berea (Acts 17:8-10).

### **D. The Time of Writing and the Reason:**

The Second Missionary Journey began in A.D. 49 after Paul had taught at Antioch. After leaving Thessalonica, Paul taught briefly at Berea and then Athens before going to Corinth where he stayed for 18 months (Acts 18:11). Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica for a progress report on the new church (1 Thessalonians 3:2). Timothy's report was favorable, and the result was this book. This indicates that Thessalonians was written about A.D. 50. It was the second of Paul's writings (the first was Galatians).

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 9, Section 1**

Read the information presented in Chapter 3 about 2 Thessalonians.

## **Section 2**

### **Make an Outline of the Book**

When we are ready to take a closer look at the book, we must begin by making an outline. What we need to do is start with the big picture, then analyze smaller and smaller pieces of that picture. The logic is obvious; the closer and longer we look at a very elaborate picture, the more detail we will be able to appreciate. God's Word is much the same way. The big picture is Jesus Christ Himself. The written Word is a revelation of the Living Word (John 5:39-47). As we look closer and closer, we can see more details of the person of Christ.

We must never get so entangled in the details that we fail to realize the context of the big picture. If we do, we will ***"strain out a gnat and swallow a camel"*** (Matthew 23:24), which means we will miss the truly important things.

When making an outline of the book, our first job is to determine how the text is organized into paragraph divisions. Many Bible translations have a way of noting these divisions in the text. Commonly, translations highlight the number of the first verse of a paragraph with bold print. Read the introduction to the translation you are using to see whether and how the translators have marked the paragraphs. If such divisions are not marked, proceed anyway, noting where topic changes happen.

For example, 1 Thessalonians paragraph divisions are as follows:

1. 1:1
2. 1:2-10
3. 2:1-12
4. 2:13-16
5. 2:17-20
6. 3:1-10
7. 3:11-13
8. 4:1-8
9. 4:9-12
10. 4:13-18
11. 5:1-11
12. 5:12-22
13. 5:23-28

Next, give each paragraph a title. As we study the book more deeply, our outline will probably change as we come to see more of the content. At this point, we won't dwell long on these titles. Our task is to be informative, yet be as simple as possible.

An outline of the paragraph divisions of 1 Thessalonians would look like this:

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 1. 1:1      | Greeting and Salutation                  |
| 2. 1:2-10   | Thanksgiving for Their Example           |
| 3. 2:1-12   | Paul's Position                          |
| 4. 2:13-16  | Thanksgiving for Their Diligence         |
| 5. 2:17-20  | Paul's Desire to See Them                |
| 6. 3:1-10   | Paul's Desire to Learn of Their Progress |
| 7. 3:11-13  | Paul's Hope for Their Spiritual Advance  |
| 8. 4:1-8    | Paul's Desire for Their Sanctification   |
| 9. 4:9-12   | Paul's Commendation for Their Love       |
| 10. 4:13-18 | The Dead in Christ                       |
| 11. 5:1-11  | The Day of the Lord                      |
| 12. 5:12-22 | Practical Instructions                   |
| 13. 5:23-28 | Farewell                                 |

## For Personal Study: Chapter 9, Section 2

Make an outline of the book of 2 Thessalonians based on the following verse divisions:

1. 1:1-2
2. 1:3-12
3. 2:1-17
  - a. 2:1-12
  - b. 2:13-15
  - c. 2:16-17
4. 3:1-15
  - a. 3:1-5
  - b. 3:6-13
  - c. 3:14-15

## **Section 3**

### **Narrow the Scope of Your Study**

This step begins to analyze the individual paragraphs. As an example, we will examine the first two paragraphs of Chapter one of 1 Thessalonians.

#### **A. Greeting and Salutation—1 Thessalonians 1:1**

**1:1 *Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.***

This opening verse answers some of the questions that we should seek to answer. Paul, Silvanus and Timothy are involved in the composition of this letter, so we have answered “who” is doing the writing. The recipients of the letter are the church members located in Thessalonica, so we have answered to “whom” the writing was addressed.

Notice that Paul is identifying the church as being located “in” the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This indicates that a close relationship exists between God and Believers.

Paul also has a short prayer for them. He desires that grace and peace will be given to them.

In order to help get us started, notice that three principles are taught in verse 1:

**Principle #1:** Great people of God desire that other people grow in their relationship with Him.

**Principle #2:** Great people of God can work together in encouraging others to grow.

**Principle #3:** Great people of God want to share what they have.

To further narrow the scope of our study, we will now consider the verses that form the second paragraph.

#### **B. Thanksgiving for Their Example—1 Thessalonians 1:2-10**

##### **1. First, read this second paragraph through several times:**

**1:2 *We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;***

**1:3 *constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,***

**1:4 *knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you;***

**1:5 *for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.***

**1:6 *You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,***

**1:7 *so that you became an example to all the Believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.***

**1:8 *For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.***

**1:9 *For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,***

**1:10 *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.***

**2. Then, give a title to each verse:**

- 1:2 Thanksgiving in Prayer  
***We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;***
- 1:3 Why the Thanksgiving—Faith, Hope and Love  
***constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,***
- 1:4 Living Out Their Call from God  
***knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you;***
- 1:5 Their Roots in the Gospel  
***for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.***
- 1:6 The Difference the Gospel Made  
***You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,***
- 1:7 The First Result of the Difference is Being an Example  
***So that you became an example to all the Believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.***
- 1:8 The Second Result of the Difference is Impact  
***For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.***
- 1:9 The Foundation of the Differences is Turning from Idols  
***For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,***
- 1:10 The Foundation of the Differences is Heavenly Living  
***and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.***

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 9, Section 3**

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12 several times.
2. Give a title to each verse.

## **Section 4**

### **Looking for the Relationships**

#### **A. Note patterns of subject matter that emerge:**

As we look at the titles of each verse in the second paragraph of 1 Thessalonians, we begin to see a pattern emerge.

- 1:2 Thanksgiving in Prayer
- 1:3 Why Thanksgiving—Faith, Hope and Love
- 1:4 Living Out Their Call from God
- 1:5 Their Roots in the Gospel
- 1:6 The Differences the Gospel Made
- 1:7 The First Result of the Difference—A Model
- 1:8 The Second Result of the Difference—Ongoing Impact
- 1:9 The Foundation of the Differences—Turning from Idols
- 1:10 The Foundation of the Differences—Heavenly Living

It is easy to see patterns of thanksgiving and differences that the gospel made in their lives.

#### **B. Look closer at the verses, noting observations:**

- 1:2 Thanksgiving in Prayer

***We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;***

In this verse, Paul tells us what he does (gives thanks) and how he does it (prayer).

- 1:3 Why the Thanksgiving—Faith, Hope and Love

***constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,***

This verse tells us three reasons why he gives thanks for them:

1. Their work of faith
2. Their labor of love
3. Their steadfastness of hope

Their faith, hope and love are based on three things as well:

1. Their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ
2. Their intimacy with the Father
3. Their call from God (v. 4)

- 1:4 Living Out Their Call from God

***knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you;***

- 1:5 Their Roots in the Gospel

***for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.***

They accepted the gospel, which came to them:

1. in word,
2. in power,
3. in the Holy Spirit,
4. with full conviction and
5. from men of character

1:6 The Difference the Gospel Made

***You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,***

The Gospel made a difference. Its hearers matured and they became imitators of Paul, his companions, even the Lord. They joyously received the Gospel in the midst of tribulation.

1:7 The First Result of the Difference is Being an Example

***so that you became an example to all the Believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.***

The first result of the difference that the gospel made was that the Thessalonians became an example to neighboring churches.

1:8 The Second Result of the Difference is Impact

***For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.***

The second result was that their faith had spread even beyond their neighbors.

1:9 The Foundation of the Differences is Turning from Idols

***For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,***

The first foundation of the differences was that the people turned from idols.

1:10 The Foundation of the Differences is Heavenly Living

***and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.***

The second foundation of the differences was that the Thessalonians were anxiously waiting for the Lord's return.

It is the Lord who was (1) raised from the dead and (2) will deliver us from the coming wrath.

**C. A more extended outline would look like this:**

**1. Thanksgiving v. 2**

**2. Why the Thanksgiving vs. 3-4**

- a. Work of Faith
- b. Labor of Love
- c. Steadfastness of Hope
  - 1) In our Lord Jesus Christ
  - 2) In the Presence of our God and Father
  - 3) Their Divine Call

**3. Their Acceptance of the Gospel v. 5**

- a. In Word
- b. In Power
- c. In the Holy Spirit
- d. With Full Conviction
- e. From Men of Character

- 4. Two Differences the Gospel Made v. 6**
  - a. Imitated Paul's Group and the Lord
  - b. Gave Spiritual Joy in the Midst of Tribulation
- 5. Two Results of the Differences vs. 7-8**
  - a. Became Examples to Neighboring Churches
  - b. Became More Widespread Examples of Faith
- 6. Two Foundations of the Differences vs. 9-10**
  - a. Turned from Idols
  - b. Awaiting the Lord's Return
    - 1) The One Raised from the Dead
    - 2) The One Who Will Deliver Us from the Coming Wrath

We notice that in this chapter Paul is giving a tremendous commendation to the church located at Thessalonica. They are in fact called an "example" or "model" church. Therefore, we can learn what is involved in being a "model" church today.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 9, Section 4**

- 1. Look at your verse titles and see a pattern of subject matter.**
- 2. Look closer at the verses, noting observations.**
- 3. Make an extended outline of 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12.**

## **Section 5**

### **Analyzing the Remote Context**

We now can begin to analyze the remote context, comparing Scripture with Scripture. The easiest way to do this is by using a concordance that lists all of the places where a given word is used. By tracing where these words are used, we are led to other places in the Bible where the same subject is considered.

Different concordances work in different ways. Becoming familiar with how one works is an important first step to studying the Remote Context. Two well-known and very helpful concordances are the Englishman's Greek Concordance and the Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance. These arrange references by the Greek or Hebrew words. Thus all the locations of a specific word such as KALOS, "good," would be found under that particular heading.

The most common concordance, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, arranges (by English) every instance of every word. For example, every passage containing the English word "good" is listed. There are, however, several different Greek and Hebrew words translated into English as "good," and each one generally qualified as "good," has its own nuance, or shade of meaning.

In our detailed study of the Bible, it is important to know which word, rendered "good", is being used. For this purpose Strong's has assigned a number to every Greek and Hebrew word in the Bible. For example, beside each passage containing the English word "good" is a number corresponding to the Greek or Hebrew word used in that instance (The particular Greek and Hebrew word is then referenced in the back of the concordance). It looks something like this:

GOOD:

Matthew 3:10 which bringeth not forth good fruit (2570)

Matthew 5:45 sun to rise on the evil and on the good (18)

The word for "good" used in Matthew 3:10 (reference #2570), is the Greek word KALOS, which means "intrinsically good," or, "good by nature." On the other hand, the word "good" used in Matthew 5:45 (reference #18), is the Greek word AGATHOS, which meant to the Greeks, "that which becomes good."

Descriptions of fuller meanings of the Greek and Hebrew words are also found in books called "Lexicons," which are dictionaries of meanings. Use of these books will be extremely helpful for detailed Bible study.

Now look at the word "imitator" which is found in 1 Thessalonians 1:6. Some English translations translate the Greek word "MIMETES" as "follower" (King James Version) instead of "imitator." The Greek word means to imitate or mimic, and is used six times in the New Testament. It is found in the following passages:

***1 Corinthians 4:16 "I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me."***

***1 Corinthians 11:1 "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ."***

***Ephesians 5:1 "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;"***

***1 Thessalonians 1:6 "You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,"***

***1 Thessalonians 2:14 "For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they {did} from the Jews,"***

***Hebrews 6:12 "that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."***

By studying a few passages where the word "imitate" is used, we can get a pretty clear understanding of the Remote Context on the subject of imitation. The major points would be:

- In 1 Corinthians 4:16 we read that Paul wants members of the Corinthian church to imitate him. In the Immediate Context of the verse (v. 14-15), we find this means they ought to behave the same as a child imitating his father.
- In 1 Corinthians 11:1, we discover that imitating Paul has a qualification: We are not to imitate his sins or bad habits (if we read Romans 7, we find out that even Paul had an ongoing battle with sin) but rather the way Paul imitated Jesus Christ.
- In Ephesians 5:1, we are told to imitate God as a child would his father.
- The Thessalonian church did imitate Paul and the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- The Thessalonian church also imitated the Judean churches in their endurance of suffering (1 Thessalonians 2:14). Note that this passage is within the same book, so we get a look at the Intermediate Context.
- An important part of this imitation is ministry. Hebrews 6:9-12

If we put all these passages together, we can see that we are encouraged by Scripture to do three things:

1. Imitate God, Jesus Christ and Paul
2. Imitate them like a child would his father, even in the midst of suffering
3. Imitate them by ministering to others

We can now validly expand the concept of imitation (in relationship to 1 Thessalonians 1:6), because we have determined what Scripture has to specifically say about it. We know that when Paul commended the Thessalonians on their imitation of him and his group, he was viewing that commendation in light of his own imitation of Jesus Christ, not in regard to his human weaknesses and frailties (compare Romans 7).

For purposes of application, we must determine a few of the qualities of the Father and Son that we are to imitate. For example, we can cite the importance of character, the significance of fulfilling a promise or the importance of living in truth (when we begin talking about the Lord, the possibilities are endless). The extent of what we yield and teach from God's Word must be a matter of ongoing, consistent prayer. As teachers of God's Word, we must realize that new and immature Believers can not and should not be expected to understand deep theology (Hebrews 5:11-14). We must be aware of the level of spiritual maturity of our audience and communicate to that level.

We must consistently return to the context from which we began so that we do not miss the main point of the chapter and paragraph. The Thessalonian church members imitated Paul and the Lord, and they became an example for every Believer to follow.

In looking at the Immediate Context, we find some qualities of a model church. Paul's thanksgiving to the Thessalonians (v. 2) was for three things:

1. Their work of faith
2. Their labor of love
3. Their steadfastness of hope

Throughout the New Testament, there are so many references to work (173), faith (246), labor (19), love (115), steadfastness (32) and hope (56) that one could spend weeks or months studying or teaching these topics. The numbers in parenthesis give the number of times the nouns are used. The related verbs are also used numerous times. These topics are extremely important in the understanding of what it means to be a model church.

## **For Personal Study: Chapter 9, Section 5**

**Sections 5 and 6 are combined. The student will need a concordance to do a complete study. Please look up each representative verse and relate it to the verse in 2 Thessalonians 1 under consideration.**

## **Section 6**

### **Expanding Your Study**

The depth to which a teacher should study before the presentation of God's Word depends largely upon the leading of the Holy Spirit and the maturity of the audience. However, personal study should seek the depths of God. As Christians with the Holy Spirit, we now have access to these treasures according to 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, which says:

***Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.***

The best way to present this point is by illustration, so we will expand 1 Thessalonians 1:3 to include key Greek words and their definitions. This verse says:

***constantly*** (ADIALEIPO = not going through a lack) ***bearing in mind*** (MNEMONEUW = remembering) ***your*** (plural) ***work*** (ERGOS = business, employment, that with which anyone is occupied) ***of faith*** (PISTIS = belief, trust) ***and labor*** (KOPOS = labor under adversity) ***of love*** (AGAPE = doing what is right even when you don't feel like it) ***and steadfastness*** (HUPOMONE = to abide under, patience toward circumstances) ***of hope*** (ELPIS = confident expectation) ***in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence*** (EMPROSTHEN = in the face of) ***of our God and Father,***

**Contextual Principle: Tell people why we give thanks to God for them (compare v. 2).**

**Major Point: Since this is a model church (verse 7), we see that a model church is evaluated by its faith, hope and love.**

#### **A. Some Observations:**

- 1. One or more of these qualities is always found as an important part of each New Testament epistle, no matter who the author is.**
- 2. Notice that a “working Faith” and a “laboring Love” and a “patient Hope” are in view.**
- 3. Thus, these three are interrelated and are active.**
- 4. All of these qualities can grow.**
  - a. Faith (2 Thessalonians 1:3)
  - b. Hope (Romans 15:13)
  - c. Love (2 Thessalonians 1:3)
- 5. They are qualities that are designed by God to be lived so as to be seen.**
  - a. Faith (Hebrews 11:1)
  - b. Hope (Romans 8:24)
  - c. Love (Ephesians 3:16-19)
- 6. If someone gets spiritually lukewarm or cold, the progress they have made can be destroyed. (Revelation 3:14-20)**
- 7. Paul told us that love was the greatest of these, and if you don't have it, you have nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13)**
- 8. If a church has none of these qualities, the result is either legalism, like the Galatians, or license, like the Corinthians, or a combination of legalism and license.**

**B. You might also expand your study to address the following:**

**1. Work of Faith**

- a. The work of faith means that faith has become your occupation, thus, your lifestyle is based on it.
- b. The Greek literally says, “the work of the faith,” which indicates a response to circumstances that proceeds from belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- c. Some view “the work of the faith” to be the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- d. The phrase, “the faith,” is often used in scripture to refer to the body of truth found in the written Word, but since this is only the third New Testament book (after James and Galatians) that has been written, it is doubtful that Paul is referring to this use.
- e. The “work of faith” does not provide the justification that saves. (Romans 3:27-28; Galatians 2:16)
- f. Faith, not works, justifies the ungodly. (Romans 4:5)
- g. A person who pursues salvation by works stumbles over the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 9:32)
- h. Great leaders in the faith view themselves as co-workers and not rulers. (2 Corinthians 1:24 )
- i. After one has been saved, justified by faith, an ongoing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ should produce works of grace. (2 Corinthians 8:7 )
- j. A Believer does not receive the Holy Spirit by works either, but works are an outgrowth of spirituality. (Galatians 3:2-5)
- k. Faith works through spiritual love because of hope. (Galatians 5:5-6)
- l. But Satan wants faith stopped and usually uses a manmade system such as legalism to attempt it. (Galatians 5:7,13)
- m. Our faith is not to be in ourselves but in God who is working in us. (Colossians 2:12; Philippians 2:12-16)
- n. We need to pray that other Believers will have a powerful work of faith. (2 Thessalonians 1:11; James 2:14-26)

**Principle: A model church has a faith that becomes visible through letting God do His work through them.**

**2. Labor of Love**

- a. This is the only place in the New Testament that the two words (labor and love) are used closely together.
- b. One of life’s rewards is that your toil may let you enjoy life with the spouse you love. (Ecclesiastes 9:9)
- c. This particular word for labor indicates a toil that will expend itself to exhaustion.
- d. This is a labor that is for the benefit of others. (John 4:37-38)
- e. This labor is a fellowship in God’s business of love. (1 Corinthians 3:6-9)
- f. The toil expended in the Lord’s work is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:58)
- g. One cannot legitimately claim credit for the toil of another. (2 Corinthians 10:14-1)
- h. Deceitful workers exaggerate their labors. (2 Corinthians 11:23-27)
- i. God’s workers must be willing to labor to the point of exhaustion if necessary so as to not burden new converts. (1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8)
- j. No one wants to see their labor be in vain. (1 Thessalonians 3:5)
- k. Labor without love can cost a local church its very existence. (Revelation 2:2-7)
- l. This love is AGAPE (Greek) love that means to do what is right and best, even if you don’t feel like it.
- m. Thus, a “labor of love” is a labor to the point of exhaustion that does what is right and best for others, even when one doesn’t feel like it.
- n. It is labor with a valid purpose behind it.
- o. It is presenting your body a living and holy sacrifice (Romans 12:1), considering others as more important than yourself (Philippians 2:3), with a motivation of fulfilling the two greatest commands (Mark 12:29-31).

**Principle: A model church is willing to go to the point of exhaustion out of love for God and others.**

**Principle: Notice that this is a characteristic of the church body and not just the pastor.**

### 3. Steadfastness (Patience) of Hope

- a. "Steadfastness of Hope" is a patience toward circumstances that is generated by hope.
- b. The Greek word ELPIS which is translated as "hope" means a confident expectation in the future.
- c. Hope is actually based in the person of Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 1:1 )
- d. The more Christ is formed in you, the more you will realize the riches of His glory. (Colossians 1:27)
- e. Faith, hope and love are intimately tied to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:20-22)
- f. A hope that is fixed on Jesus Christ leads to purification of the soul. (1 John 3:1-3)
- g. Those who patiently bear fruit manifest the greatness of the gospel. (Luke 8:15)
- h. Those who patiently continue doing good, will develop the sense of eternal life. (Romans 2:5-11)
- i. Patience is an important element in the development of hope. (Romans 5:1-5)
- j. Hope is not something that is presently manifested but with patience is eagerly anticipated. (Romans 8:23-26)
- k. Patience and encouragement from the Word of God are two elements that develop hope. (Romans 15:4)
- l. This patience and encouragement comes from God who expects it to positively affect our relationships with one another. (Romans 15:5-7)
- m. Patience and labor are qualities of being servants of God. (2 Corinthians 6:1-12)
- n. The knowledge of God's will is designed in part so that we may attain to patience. (Colossians 1:9-14)
- o. When a church displays patience, others in the church body will be touched. (2 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 3:5)
- p. Patience is a valid pursuit of a godly person. (1 Timothy 6:11-12)
- q. We all need models of patience. (2 Timothy 3:10-13)
- r. Older men are to be examples of patience. (Titus 2:2)
- s. Patience based in faith is important in receiving all that God has promised. (Hebrews 10:36-39)
- t. Patience is part of the race we run. (Hebrews 12:1-3)
- u. Patience is an element of the maturity of the Believer. (James 1:2-4)
- v. Patience is an element of fulfilling the two greatest commands. (2 Peter 1:5-7)
- w. A church that has patience but does not have love is in danger. (Revelation 2:2-4)
- x. A church that has love, faith, service and patience but tolerates evil is also in danger. (Revelation 2:19-20)
- y. The patience of Jesus Christ on the cross is the basis for deliverance of Believers from the tribulation. (Revelation 3:10-11)

## For Personal Study: Chapter 9, Section 6

This section is combined with Section 5.

## **Section 7**

### **Making the Points**

As a teacher of God's Word, you will have a lot more information than your audience will be able to understand and remember. Of course, you want others to understand the message and remember it. Too many facts, no matter how accurate, will often lead to confusion. It is best to keep the message simple and practical.

Focus on making one important point. One way to accomplish this principle is to use illustrations. For example, if we view the important point to be a nail that is being driven into a piece of wood, each stroke of a hammer drives the nail a little deeper until the objective is accomplished. Each illustration should make the same point to achieve the desired objective.

Notice the way we have approached the study of God's Word. We have sought to get the big picture first, then seek the details, and then decide how the details fit into the big picture.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:2, we saw Paul give thanks for others who were growing in the faith. One message might be ***"Give thanks for all things."*** Such a message is important because immature Believers often focus only on themselves and what they lack, rather than being thankful for what they have.

Once the Lord Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes and thanked the Father for them. Despite the apparent lack of enough food, He gave thanks for what they had rather than asking for more, and a miracle occurred.

We can read about that event in all four gospels (Matthew 14:15-21; Mark 6:37-44; Luke 9:13-17; John 6:5-13). In not one account does the Lord ask the Father to "multiply" the fish and loaves. Instead, in all four Gospels Jesus gives thanks. We might challenge the hearers with the question, "Do you spend more of your time in thanksgiving or complaints?" We might use examples of people we have known who have had very few material possessions but were thankful to God for what they had. People who receive that message should realize the importance of thanksgiving to God. Note that the Greek word for thanksgiving is EUCHARISTIA. It is made up of two Greek words: "EU" and "CHARIS." "EU" means "good." CHARIS means "grace." Thus, thanksgiving is recognition of the goodness of God's grace. Those who lack thanksgiving in their life probably don't appreciate grace.

Illustrations will be of great help in explaining Scripture. The best illustrations do not come from books but from observations of life. The communicator needs to become keenly aware of what God has done and is doing around him.

### **For Personal Study: Chapter 9, Section 7**

**Put together a sermon that deals with glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ based on the context of 2 Thessalonians 1.**

## Final Note

We would like to encourage you in your walk and work with our Lord Jesus Christ. Foundations has been a positive first step in your Biblical education, and we know you'll continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). We want to encourage you to take what you have learned in Foundations and begin applying it to your life and ministry. There is nothing more important than to develop that close, personal walk with Jesus Christ and to share that with others. Intimacy with Jesus can only come through an accurate understanding of the Bible and then making the Written Word reflect the Living Word in your life.

Foundations has provided you with the basic *tools* you need to be a good student and interpreter of the Word of God. We want to encourage you to take what you've learned and begin teaching and training other Christians. It's important for you to know that as you pursue truth, you will also be exposed to many false teachers—those who distort the truth and simplicity of Scripture with their incorrect interpretations and teachings (Philippians 3:2). To protect yourself, do as the Bereans did (Acts 17:11) and examine everything you hear or read and be slow to accept something as true until you've carefully considered what the Bible says.

It is our prayer that you continue on your journey of faith and ministry. We live in a big world, and although our efforts may seem small and insignificant, in the overall plan of God, everything we do builds His church. As members of the Body of Christ and being on the same ministry team, we understand that it's our responsibility to make disciples and share the message of faith which Jesus has given to us. When we all get to heaven, we can sit down together and rejoice in the many ways in which the Lord used all of us to His Glory. May God bless you in all that you do, and may you continue to ***“study to show yourself approved, a workman of God that needs not to be ashamed”*** (2 Timothy 2:15).

**Village Ministries International**

# ANSWERS

## Chapter 1

### Section 1

#### Personal Preparation

##### Chapter 1, Section 1

1. It refers to an unbeliever before salvation (1 Corinthians 15:44, 46). It is used to describe a person who is jealous, selfish, arrogant and a liar (James 3:14-15). It is used to describe the false teachers of the last days (Jude 1:18-19).
2. It is profitable for (1) teaching, (2) reproof, (3) correction and (4) training in righteousness. The objective is to be **“equipped for every good work.”**
3. God will give it to the one who asks.
4. Present ourselves approved to God as unashamed workmen. Our objective is to **“handle accurately the word of truth.”**
5. To forgive and cleanse
6. One must be willing to live it.
7. We are to walk in grace through faith. This means that we appreciate the grace given to us at salvation and are gracious to others. Also, since we trust God for our salvation (faith), we trust Him to provide for our life.
8. The objective is to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless. We are to grow in (1) grace and (2) knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9. (1) Walk in the Light and (2) Confess our sins
10. Satan and his forces are the real enemies. We are to fight by putting on the full armor of God.
11. (1) Attaining to the unity of the faith which is based on a true knowledge of the Son of God, (2) Christian maturity and (3) the measure of the stature belonging to the fullness of Christ.

### Section 2

#### The Bible

##### Chapter 1, Section 2

1. Perfect those who offer sacrifice (v. 1) and take away sins (v. 3)
2. Reveal the person of Jesus Christ
3. (1) Teaching, (2) Reproof, (3) Correction and (4) Training in Righteousness
4. (1) Lead the Believer to maturity and (2) Equip the Believer for good works
5. True knowledge of the Scripture will lead one to the person of Jesus Christ. He can and does give eternal life to those who believe. Scripture cannot give eternal life.
6. An offer has been made from one person to another, and the offer has been accepted. The offer contains promises that are to govern the relationship.
7. (1) Law, (2) History, (3) Poetry, (4) Major Prophets and (5) Minor Prophets
8. Yes. The designations are manmade.
9. (1) History, (2) Epistles and (3) Prophecy

### Section 3

#### An Historical Overview

##### Chapter 1, Section 3

1. The creation of the present heavens and earth, their destruction and the creation of a new heaven and earth.
2. His original sin was self-will (note the five “I will’s”) and his destiny is the Lake of Fire.

3. It will once again be made perfect.
4. The first man sinned. Jesus did not.
5. Satan and his forces are the real enemies. We fight him by putting on the "full armor of God."
6. All of mankind is judged at one time.
7. Religious apostasy is the first. Economics is the second.
8. In the New Heavens and Earth
9. At the First Advent, Jesus Christ was to suffer and die. At the Second Advent He will conquer His enemies.  
Notice that He had to be resurrected from the dead in order for the Second Advent to occur.
10. Jesus Christ came to serve all. The Antichrist will serve himself.
11. Make disciples of all the nations.

## **Section 4**

### **A Chronological Overview**

#### **Chapter 1, Section 4**

1. The Fall of Adam  
The Flood of Noah  
The Promise to Abraham  
The Exodus of Israel  
The Fourth Year of Solomon  
The Fall of the Northern Kingdom  
The Fall of the Southern Kingdom  
The Birth of Jesus Christ  
The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ  
The Last Book of the Bible
2. Genesis and Job
3. Exodus–Leviticus–Numbers–Deuteronomy–Joshua–Judges–Ruth–1 Samuel–2 Samuel–1 Kings1-5–Psalms–1 Chronicles
4. 1 Kings 6-22–2 Kings–2 Chronicles–Proverbs–Ecclesiastes–Song of Solomon–Obadiah–Joel–Jonah–Amos–Hosea–Micah–Isaiah–Nahum–Zephaniah–Habakkuk
5. Jeremiah–Lamentations–Ezekiel–Daniel–Ezra–Nehemiah–Zechariah–Haggai–Malachi
6. Matthew–Luke–Mark–John–Acts
7. James–Galatians–1 Thessalonians–2 Thessalonians–1 Corinthians–2 Corinthians–Romans–Philemon–Ephesians–Colossians–Philippians–1 Timothy–Titus–2 Timothy–Hebrews–1 Peter–2 Peter–Jude–1 John–2 John–3 John–Revelation

## **Section 5**

### **Preparing to Study the Bible**

#### **Chapter 1, Section 5**

1. Who = Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar and his army  
What = Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem and breached the city wall.  
When = Ninth year and tenth month of the reign of Zedekiah  
Where = Jerusalem  
Why = not answered in these verses but answered elsewhere (see 40:2-3).  
How = Nebuchadnezzar's army laid siege to Jerusalem.
2. All our heart, soul, mind and strength
3. Faith and Love for one another

## **Chapters 2 and 3**

**No answers are given for Chapters 2-3, because there are so many different ways to describe the verses that may be right.**

# Chapter 4

## Section 1 Rule One

### Chapter 4, Section 1A

1. This is for the student to do.
2. In verse 1 and 4, the word “Lord” indicates His authority which would refer to His Sovereignty. Also, the fact that He is on His throne in verse 4 is an indication of His Sovereignty. In verse 7, there is a direct statement that the Lord is Righteous. In verse 6, He judges the wicked indicating His Justice. In verse 1, He is the One in whom the psalmist can take refuge indicating His Love. In verse 4, being located in heaven indicates His Eternal Life. In verse 6, the fact that He can cause rain indicates His Omnipotence. In verse 4, the fact that He is both in heaven and beholding the sons of men who are on earth indicates His Omnipresence. In verse 4 and 5, the fact that His eyes behold the sons of men (which is general title for mankind) and can test both the righteous and wicked indicates His knowledge of the inner man thus denoting His Omniscience. In verse 7, the statement that “the Lord is righteous” indicates a quality which does not change, thus denoting His Immutability. In verse 1, the psalmist says that he can take refuge in the Lord indicating His trust for Him and, thus, believing that He is Truthful.

### Chapter 4, Section 1B

1. Jesus Christ is God who became man.
2. The blood of bulls and goats offered as ritual Sacrifices and Burnt Offerings under the Mosaic Law could not solve man’s problem of sin. Only Jesus Christ’s sacrifice could do that. The Offerings were the Shadow of the Reality who is Jesus Christ.
3. Jonah was sent by God to give the gospel to the Gentiles (Nineveh was an Assyrian city which was Gentile (Jonah 1:2), while Jesus was not only the gospel to the Jews but to the Gentiles. Jonah offered himself to save others (Jonah 1:12) as did Christ. Jonah was three days and nights in the stomach of the fish (Jonah 1:17), while Jesus was three days and nights in the earth. Jonah is a picture of the ministry, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
4. Jesus is God who would become a man when He was born in Bethlehem. (We are told that the coming Ruler of Israel is One whose “goings are from long ago, from the days of eternity,” which can only refer to God; Micah 5:2.) Jesus said that He was the “bread” that came down from heaven which sustains life (John 6). The “Bread” was born in the “house of Bread.”
5. The Table of Shewbread describes Jesus as the Sustainer of spiritual life. The Golden Lampstand describes Jesus as the “light of the world.”
6. Jesus was the “Lamb of God” who offered Himself one time for the sins of mankind.
7. This is for the student to do.

## Section 2 Rule Two

### Chapter 4, Section 2A

1. a. Seed of the woman—Genesis 3:15 and Matthew 1:23  
b. Seed of Abraham—Genesis 12:3 and Matthew 1:1  
c. Seed of Isaac—Genesis 21:12 and Matthew 1:2  
d. Seed of Jacob—Genesis 35:10-12 and Matthew 1:2  
e. Tribe of Judah—Genesis 49:8-11 and Matthew 1:2  
f. Line of Jesse—Isaiah 11:1 and Matthew 1:5-6  
g. House of David—2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Matthew 1:6  
h. Born at Bethlehem—Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:1  
i. God and man—Psalm 110:1 and John 1:1,14  
j. Called Immanuel—Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23

- k. A prophet—Deuteronomy 18:18 and John 7:40
  - l. A priest—Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews 5:9-10
  - m. A judge—Isaiah 33:22 and John 5:22
  - n. A king—Jeremiah 23:5 and Revelation 19:16
  - o. Special anointing of the Holy Spirit—Isaiah 11:2 and Matthew 3:16
  - p. Zeal for the house of God—Psalm 69:9 and John 2:17
2. That Jesus fulfilled the prophecies concerning the Messiah

### **Chapter 4, Section 2B**

- 1. a. Romans 8:35-39—Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
  - b. John 3:16—Those who believe in God's only Son will have eternal life.
  - c. John 3:18—Those who do not believe in God's only Son have already been judged.
  - d. John 3:36—Anyone who believes in the Son has eternal life, but those who do not believe face God's wrath.
  - e. Ephesians 2:8-10—Salvation is by grace through faith so that the Believer may then do good works.
  - f. 1 John 2:1-2—If a Believer sins, Jesus is the defense attorney who paid the debt for sins for the whole world.
  - g. Titus 3:5—We are not saved by our good works.
2. Look within

### **Chapter 4, Section 2C**

- 1. a. Abram was promised a nation, recognition by man and blessing in order to bless others.
  - b. God promises to bless those who bless Abram.
  - c. God promises to bless all the families of the earth.
2. a. Leave your country to go to a land that God would direct him to
- b. Leave your relatives
- c. Leave your father's house
3. Because his father, Abraham, was obedient to the Lord
4. Because he trusted Him (had faith)
5. No
6. No
7. Yes, through faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:26)

### **Chapter 4, Section 2D**

- 1. a. 15:1-11 The Resurrection of Christ is central to the gospel of salvation.
  - b. 15:12-19 The Literal Resurrection of Christ is essential to our salvation.
  - c. 15:20-28 The Resurrection of Believers will come in stages.
  - d. 15:29-34 The Resurrection is not a license to have selfish motives.
  - e. 15:35-49 The Resurrection is taught by nature.
  - f. 15:50-58 The Resurrection will occur quickly.
2. To believe that (1) Jesus died in fulfillment of the Scriptures, (2) that He was buried, (3) that He rose from the dead on the third day and (4) that He appeared to His disciples

### **Chapter 4, Section 2E**

- 1. Belief in the Son
- 2. Believe in the Son
- 3. Yes
- 4. They had the ability to choose, meaning they had volition.
- 5. Man has to decide whether or not to carry out the command, thus proving volition once again.

### **Chapter 4, Section 2F**

- 1. a. The Edenic Covenant
  - b. The Mosaic Covenant
  - c. The Palestinian Covenant
2. a. The Adamic Covenant
- b. The Noahic Covenant

- c. The Abrahamic Covenant
  - d. The Davidic Covenant
  - e. The New Covenant to Israel
  - f. The New Covenant to the Church
3. You may choose to give different descriptions.

## **Section 3**

### **Rule Three**

#### **Chapter 4. Section 3A**

1. His grace
2. Faith
3. Good works
4. No
5. Yes, as evidenced by John's use of "we" which would include himself
6. Confess them
7. God
8. (1) Praise to God and (2) sharing
9. (1) Put on heart of compassion, (2) kindness, (3) humility, (4) gentleness, (5) patience, (6) bear with one another, (7) forgive each other, (8) put on love, (9) let Christ's Word dwell within you, (10) teach one another, (11) admonish one another, (12) sing with thankfulness and (13) do all in the name of the Lord
10. Recompense

#### **Chapter 4. Section 3B**

1. Keep standing firm and do not become involved in legalism again (yoke of slavery)
2. To serve one another
3. By doing all things to the glory of God
4. Freedom
5. The law of liberty
6. As one who will be judged by the law of liberty
7. As servants of God
8. They promise freedom, but are themselves slaves of corruption.
9. Freedom is to be used to serve one another (Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 2:16) and do all things to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:28-31). Freedom is empowered by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17). It is a law (James 1:25) for which we will be judged (James 2:12). False teachers will promise it, but lie (2 Peter 2:1, 17-19).

#### **Chapter 4. Section 3C**

1. By faith in Jesus Christ
2. By grace through faith
3. Good works
4. It is useless (2:20) and dead (2:26)
5. No
6. Yes
7. The "someone," which can refer to any human being
8. No
9. Faith in Jesus Christ "saves" and "justifies" before God. Good works produced as a result of faith in Christ are seen by other human beings, thus, one is "saved" from being a poor witness and "justified" in the eyes of man which is a good witness.

#### **Chapter 4. Section 3D**

1. Yes
2. It cannot be lost.
3. Those involved in sin will not inherit the Kingdom of God.
4. Yes

5. The Believer's salvation is secured at the point of faith in Jesus Christ. There are varying rewards available to the Believer who produces good works. If a Believer stays involved in sin, rather than producing good works, then the "inheritance" or "rewards" will be lost.
6. Persevere under trial until death because of love for the Lord.
7. Shepherd eagerly, honestly, humbly and as an example to those placed under your authority.
8. Love Christ's appearing (includes His life and return)

### **Chapter 4, Section 3E**

1. Law
2. The leaders of the family
3. That which is written in their hearts
4. Aaron and his sons, who were of the tribe of Levi
5. The law given by God through Moses
6. Those who are Believers ("chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood")
7. The law of love
8. The sons of Zadok of the tribe of Levi
9. The law established by the Lord
10. It is a difference in forms and methods of sacrifice.

### **Chapter 4, Section 3F**

1. It is more certain.
2. It is not a matter of personal interpretation.
3. The Holy Spirit moved men.
4. Scripture (Isaiah) was being fulfilled—Messiah had come to (1) preach the gospel to the poor, (2) proclaim release to the captives, (3) recover sight to the blind, (4) set free the downtrodden and (5) proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.
5. Yes
6. Yes
7. No
8. No
9. No
10. The passage in 1 Thessalonians refers to the "Rapture" where the Church is caught up to Christ in the air. The passage in Zechariah refers to the time when the Lord again sets foot on the earth, which is the Second Advent. They are clearly different events.
11. (1) Lion of the Tribe of Judah, (2) Root of David and (3) the Lamb

## **Section 4**

### **Rule Four**

#### **Chapter 4, Section 4A**

1. (1) Above reproach, (2) husband of one wife, (3) temperate, (4) prudent, (5) respectable, (6) hospitable, (7) able to teach, (8) not addicted to wine, (9) not pugnacious {not a fighter}, (10) gentle, (11) uncontentious, (12) free from the love of money, (13) one who manages his household well, (14) keeps children under control with dignity, (15) not a new convert and (16) good reputation outside the church
2. Obviously, this answer will vary from person to person.

#### **Chapter 4, Section 4B**

1. Wisdom
2. Diligence in studying the Word
3. The overseer is to be above reproach.
4. Yes
5. Answers will vary for the individual student.
6. Answers will vary for the individual student.
7. Answers will vary for the individual student.

## **Chapter 4, Section 4C**

1. Jealousy and strife
2. Deeds of the flesh
3. One could use passages to try to prove their own point rather than seek the truth from God.
4. Our own understanding, because knowledge alone makes one arrogant
5. Yes
6. No, because it involves partiality.
7. Consistency
8. Self-evaluation and confession of sins
9. Wisdom
10. To remember the context of the passages under consideration
11. All of the Bible is God's Word
12. God's thoughts are higher than man's thoughts.
13. Jealousy, selfish ambition and arrogance

## **Chapter 4, Section 4D**

This is for the student to do.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Section 1**

### **The Trinity**

#### **Chapter 5, Section 1**

1. One
2. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit
3. He plans.
4. Do the works of the Father.
5. Reveal the Son.
6. Show from Scripture that each possess the same characteristics.
7. Yes
8. Yes
9. Yes
10. Yes
11. Yes
12. Yes
13. Yes
14. Yes
15. Yes
16. Yes

## **Section 2**

### **The Names of God**

#### **Chapter 5, Section 2**

1. a. GOD = ELOHIM (3)  
b. God Almighty = EL SHADDAI (5)  
c. God Most High = EL ELYON (8)  
d. Everlasting God = EL OLAM (7)  
e. LORD = YAHWEH (9)  
f. The LORD Will Provide = YAHWEH JIREH (10)  
g. The LORD is My Banner = YAHWEH NISSI (2)

- h. The LORD is Peace = YAHWEH SHALOM (6)
- i. The LORD of Hosts = YAHWEH SABBAOTH (1)
- j. LORD, MASTER, OWNER = ADONAI (4)
- 2. a. GOD = THEOS (3)
- b. LORD = KURIOS (1)
- c. MASTER = DESPOTES (2)

## **Section 3**

### **God the Father (Paterology)**

#### **Chapter 5, Section 3**

- 1. Personal
- 2. Corporate
- 3. a. Sovereignty: The “Father of glory”–The “God Most High”–The “God of glory”–The “God of gods”–The “God of peace”–The “God on high”–A “great and awesome God”–The “Great King above all gods”–The “King of glory”–The “Lord God Almighty”–“Peace”–The “LORD most high”–The “Lord our God”–The “Majestic Glory”–The “Majesty in the heavens/on high”–The “Majestic One”–The “Most High” – “My song”–The “True God”
- b. Righteousness: “Holy One”–A “jealous and avenging God”
- c. Justice: A “God of faithfulness...without injustice”–“Him who is to be feared”
- d. Love: The “faithful God”–The “Father of mercies”–“Jealous” “Love”–“Lovingkindness”
- e. Eternal Life: The “Ancient of days”–The “everlasting God”–The “God of the living”–A “living and true God”
- f. Omnipotence: The “Almighty”–A “great and mighty God”–The “Lord God almighty”
- g. Omnipresence: Everywhere
- h. Omniscience: The “only wise God”
- i. Immutability: The “only God”–“Perfect”
- j. Truthfulness: The “God of truth”
- 4. a. Authority: The “everlasting King”–“God over all the kingdoms of the earth”–The “God who relents concerning calamity”–The “King of heaven”–“Lord”–The “Lord of all the earth”–The “Lord of heaven and earth”–The “Lord of Kings”–“Our lawgiver”–The “possessor of heaven and earth”
- b. Creator: The “Architect”–The “Builder”–The “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”–“God my Maker”–The “God of all flesh”–“He who fashions the hearts of them all”–The “LORD our Maker”–“Your Maker”–The “Maker of all things”–The “Potter”
- c. Defender and Protector: The “defense for the helpless”–The “father of the fatherless”–The “God of recompense”–The God who executes vengeance for me”–A “judge for the widows”–The “Lord our shield”–“My Advocate”–“My hiding place”–“My refuge in the day of disaster”–“Our refuge and strength”–A “refuge for His people”–A “refuge from the storm”–A “sanctuary”–A “saving defense”– A “Stronghold for the oppressed”–A “stronghold in times of trouble”–A “very present help in trouble”
- d. Example: “Holy Father”–A “Master in heaven”–The “righteous Father”
- e. Giver: The “Father of lights”–The “Father of spirits”–The “fountain of living water”–The “God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”–The “God of all comfort”–The “God of my salvation”–“God our Strength”–The “God who gives perseverance and encouragement”–“Him who raised Jesus from the dead”–The “One who wipes out your transgression”–“Our redeemer”–The “strength of my heart”
- f. Judge: The “Judge of all the earth”–The “LORD who strikes the blow”–“Our judge”–The “righteous judge”
- g. Leader: “My light”–A “teacher”
- h. Lover: “Your Husband”–The “living Father”–“Your Redeemer”–The “one who hears prayers”–The “one who keeps His covenants and lovingkindness”–The “compassionate and gracious God”
- i. Producer and Provider: The “vinedresser”–“Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all we ask or think”–The “Father of mercies”–The “God of forgiveness”–The “God of my strength”–“God our father”–“God the father”–“He who declares to man what are His thoughts”–The “LORD who will provide”–The “LORD who sanctifies you”–A “strength”
- j. Stabilizer and Sustainer: The “glory of Israel”–“God my rock”–The “God of hope”–The “God of love and peace”–The “God of the spirits of all flesh”–The “God who sees”–The “helper of the orphan”–“He who comforts you”–“Holy one in your midst”–The “LORD my Banner”–The “LORD my rock”–The “LORD who heals you”–“My confidence”–“My help”–“My hope”–“My support”–“Our dwelling place”–The “rock in whom I take refuge”–The “rock of my strength”–The “Rock of our salvation”–A “shade from the heat”–The “strength of my salvation”–The “sustainer of my soul”

## **Section 4**

### **God the Son (Christology)**

#### **Chapter 5, Section 4**

1. He existed before He became flesh.
2. Messiah is both God and man.
3. He committed no sin.
4. Messiah is God (9:6) who would be born to a virgin (7:14) from the line of Jesse (11:1) whose human appearance would not be attractive in itself.
5.
  - a. Became a curse for us (a substitute)
  - b. Redeemed us (paid the price for sin)
  - c. Reconciled us to God
  - d. He Propitiated the Father's righteousness and justice.
6.
  - a. He was really dead, not just sleeping or in a coma. He was also placed in a tomb and guards were stationed at the entrance by the Jews.
  - b. The wrappings on His body were left almost intact which indicates that the body had simply withdrawn itself.
  - c. There were many eyewitnesses to the resurrected Christ.
  - d. Christ's resurrection is an essential part of the Gospel.
7. He ascended to the right hand of the Father.
8.
  - a. Acts as Intercessor
  - b. Acts as our Advocate (defense attorney)
  - c. Acts as our Mediator
  - d. Is our High Priest
9. The head or leader
10. A good one (John 10:11), a great one (Hebrews 13:20) and the chief one (1 Peter 5:4)
11.
  - a. His Pre-Existence: The "Alpha and the Omega"—The "Author and Perfector of our faith"—The "Author of salvation"—The "Beginning and the End"—The "blessed and only Sovereign"—The "Eternal Father"—The "Eternal Life"—The "First and the Last"—The "First-born of all creation"—"Your maker"
  - b. The God-Man Union: The "Beginning of the creation of God"—The "Branch of the LORD"—The "Christ of God"—The "Exact Representation of His nature"—The "Image of the invisible God"—"Immanuel"—A "man from heaven"—"Mighty God"—"One with the Father"—The "only God our savior"—"Our God and Savior"—The "radiance of His glory"—The "Son of the living God"—The "Son of the Most High God"
  - c. His Perfection: The "Amen"—The "Holy and Righteous one"—The "Holy One of God"—The "indescribable Gift"—"Lord of glory"—"Master"—"Our glorious Lord"—The "Righteous Judge"—The "Righteous One"—The "Son of God"—The "true Bread"—The "true Light"—The "true Vine"—The "Truth"—The One "who became to us righteousness, and sanctification and redemption"—The "Word of God"
  - d. His Birth and Life: The "Bread of life"—The "choice stone, a precious corner stone"—"Faithful and True"—The "faithful and true Witness"—The "Glory of thy people Israel"—"His only begotten Son"—The "holy Servant"—"Jesus of Nazareth"—The "last Adam"—The "Living One"—A "man attested to you by God"—A "man of sorrows"—A "Nazarene"—The "offspring of David"—The "only begotten from the Father"—The "root of David"—The "Testimony borne in its proper time"
  - e. His Death: The "fragrant Aroma"—"Him who loves us and released us from our sins"—The "Horn of salvation"—The "Lamb of God"—"Our Passover"—A "ransom for all"
  - f. His Resurrection: The "faithful Witness"—The "First-born from (of) the dead"—The "First-fruits of those who are asleep"—The "Resurrection and the Life"
  - g. His Ascension and Session: "Advocate"—The "God of all the earth"—The "God over all"—The "good Shepherd"—The "great High Priest"—"Heir of all things"
  - h. His Ministry: The "Anointed One"—The "Apostle"—The "bread of God"—The "bridegroom"—The "bright morning star"—The "Chief Shepherd"—"Christ Jesus my Lord"—"Christ Jesus our hope"—The "Commander of the host"—The "consolation of Israel"—A "covenant to the people"—The "Door"—The "everlasting Rock"—A "Friend of tax collectors and sinners"—The "great Light"—The "great Shepherd"—The "Guarantee of a better covenant"—The "Guardian of your souls"—The "Head"—"He who arises to rule over the Gentiles"—"He who sanctifies"—"He who searches minds and hearts"—"Head of the body"—"Head of the church"—"Head over all rule and authority"—"High priest"—

The "Hope of Israel"—"Judge of the living and the dead"—"KING OF KINGS"—"King of the nations"—The "Life"—A "life-giving Spirit"—A "Light of revelation to the Gentiles"—The "Light of life"—The "Light of men"—The "Light of the world"—The "Living Stone"—"Lord"—"Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"—"LORD OF LORDS"—"Lord of peace"—"Lord of the harvest"—"Lord of the Sabbath"—The "LORD our Righteousness"—The "Mediator of a new covenant"—A "Merciful and faithful High Priest"—The "Messenger of the covenant"—The "Messiah"—The "Morning Star"—"Our Life"—"Our Lord"—"Our only Master and Lord"—"Our Peace"—"Our Savior"—The "Physician"—"Prince and Savior"—The "Prince of life"—The "Prince of Peace"—The "Prince of princes"—The "Prophet"—The "Propitiation for our sins"—The "Purifier"—The "ruler of the Kings of the earth"—The "Savior of the world"—The "Shepherd"—The "Shepherd of your souls"—"A signal for the peoples"—The "Source of eternal salvation"—The "stability of your times"—A "stone"—The "stone the builders rejected"—"Teacher"—A "tested stone"—The "Way"—A "wealth of salvation"—"Wisdom"—The One "who became to us wisdom from God"—A "witness to the peoples"—"Wonderful Counselor"—The "Word"—The "Word of life"—"Your husband"—"Your Redeemer"—"Your Salvation"

## **Section 5**

### **The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)**

#### **Chapter 5, Section 5**

1. Intelligence, feeling and will
  - a. He has intelligence.
  - b. He has feelings.
  - c. He has a will.
2.
  - a. He has a role in the creation of mankind.
  - b. He has a role in revelation to mankind.
  - c. He has a role in our understanding.
  - d. He has a role in the inspiration of Scripture.
  - e. He has a role in miracles.
  - f. He had a role in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.
  - g. He convicts the world of sin.
  - h. He regenerates (causes a new birth) when a person is saved.
  - i. He baptizes the Believer.
  - j. He seals us.
  - k. He will indwell Believers.
  - l. He will fill Believers.
  - m. He is important to prayer.
  - n. He assures us.
  - o. He intercedes for us.
  - p. He gives us gifts.
  - q. He teaches us.
  - r. He produces fruit through us.
  - s. He produces joy in us.
  - t. He brings love and hope to the Believer.
  - u. He brings righteousness, peace and joy.
  - v. He brings the power to have hope.
  - w. He sanctifies ministries.
  - x. He establishes fellowship between Believers.
3.
  - a. His Role: "Another Helper"—The "Gift" The "Helper"—A "pledge"—"Promised"—The "Spirit of adoption"—The "Spirit of Christ"—The "Spirit of counsel and strength"—The "Spirit of faith"—The "Spirit of grace and supplication"—The "Spirit of His Son"—The "Spirit of judgment"—The "Spirit of justice"—The "Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord"—The "Spirit of life"—The "Spirit of the Lord"—The "Spirit of truth"—The "Spirit of wisdom and understanding"—The "Spirit of wisdom and revelation"—The "Voice of the Almighty"—The "Voice of the Lord"
  - b. His Person: The "Breath of the Almighty"—The "Spirit of judgment and burning"—The "Spirit of glory"—The "Spirit of God"—A "Divine Spirit"—The "Spirit of holiness"—The "Spirit of our God"—The "Spirit of the living God"—The "Spirit of the LORD God"

# Chapter 6

## Section 1

### Creation (Cosmology)

#### Chapter 6, Section 1

1. God
2. He spoke and created things seen from things that were not seen.
3. Light and Darkness–Verses 3-5  
An expanse–Verses 6-8  
Dry Land and Seas–Verses 9-10  
Vegetation–Verses 11-13  
Sun, Moon, Stars–Verses 14-18  
Sea Creatures, Birds–Verses 19-23  
Land Creatures, Man–Verses 24-31
4. A New Heavens and Earth

## Section 2

### Angels (Angelology)

#### Chapter 6, Section 2

1. a.. Intellect  
b. Feelings  
c. Ability to choose
2. Yes
3. Lower
4. The Lord
5. No
6. Yes
7. Michael
8. Cherubim
9. To minister to Believers
10. The leader of the angels who oppose God
11. The Lake of Fire
12. Self-will that chose against and challenged God
13. The one who opposes
14. Slanderer
15. He is crafty and deceitful
16. Disguises
17. Blind the minds of unbelievers (those without faith)
18. Demons and Unclean Spirits
19. The message brought about Jesus Christ
20. Against Satan's forces

## **Section 3**

### **Man (Anthropology)**

#### **Chapter 6, Section 3**

1. God's
2. A living soul (being)
3. It was not good for the man to be alone.
4. Reason
5. Do not eat from the "Tree of the knowledge of good and evil."
6. Death
7. They hid from God instead of meeting with Him (3:8, 10). They were ashamed of their nakedness (3:10). They blamed others for their decisions (3:12-13). Hostility existed (3:14-15). There would be pain for the woman in childbirth (3:16). Hard work would be required so a person could eat (3:17-19).
8.
  - a. Body and soul
  - b. The (human) spirit
  - c. The Heart
  - d. The Conscience
  - e. The Mind
  - f. The Flesh
  - g. The Sin Nature from Adam
  - h. The Will

## **Section 4**

### **The Angelic Conflict**

#### **Chapter 6, Section 4**

1. Self-will
2. He was guardian of the throne room of God.
3. For the devil and his angels
4. After the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ
5. He has been judged.
6. He has appealed the sentence.
7. It occurred before Adam and Eve.
8. We have something to do with the appeal of Satan.
9. Put on the full armor of God.

## **Chapter 7**

## **Section 1**

### **The Revelation: The Bible (Bibliology)**

#### **Chapter 7, Section 1**

1. His invisible attributes
2. To let something be known
3. God's arousal of men to write down His revelation of Himself
4. Our authority
5. Our guide
6. The Bible or Canon of Scripture
7. The Truth
8. There is no specific answer sought here.

## **Section 2**

### **The Problem: Sin (Harmartiology)**

#### **Chapter 7, Section 2**

1. A violation of God's law
2. Condemnation to all men, because his sin was passed down to his offspring
3. In our flesh
4. Deeds of the flesh
5. Mental Attitude Sins
6. Sins of the Tongue
7. Overt Sins
8.
  - a. Immorality–Mental and Overt
  - b. Impurity–Overt
  - c. Sensuality–Mental and Overt
  - d. Idolatry–Mental and Overt
  - e. Sorcery–Mental and Overt
  - f. Enmities–Mental
  - g. Strife–Verbal
  - h. Jealousy–Mental
  - i. Outbursts of Anger–Mental and Verbal
  - j. Disputes–Mental
  - k. Dissensions–Mental, Verbal, Overt
  - l. Factions–Mental
  - m. Envy–Mental
  - n. Drunkenness–Overt
  - o. Carousing–Overt

## **Section 3**

### **The Solution: Salvation (Soteriology)**

#### **Chapter 7, Section 3**

1. Belief in Jesus Christ
2. That He is God who became man; that He died for our sins, was buried and rose on the third day
3. To be saved and come to a full knowledge of the truth; to repent and not perish
4. By grace through faith (in Jesus Christ)
5. Faith is trust, and the merit is in the object of the faith.
6. A change of mind which is called repentance
7. Faith in Christ justifies us; works of the Law do not.
8. The Holy Spirit
9. Because our sins have been paid and, thus, we have been redeemed
10. Rejection of the message of the Holy Spirit that Jesus is the Messiah. Since man has the possibility of repentance at any time before his death, the sin involves dying while still rejecting Jesus Christ as savior.

## **Section 4**

### **The Security: The Promises of God**

#### **Chapter 7, Section 4**

1. Yes
2. His foreknowledge
3. That no one can take them from Him or His Father
4. No
5. No

6. Yes, He saved us when we were His enemies which is His greatest display of love
7. No
8. Condemnation
9. Nothing
10. No
11. An adopted son

## **Section 5**

### **The Future: Prophecy (Eschatology)**

#### **Chapter 7, Section 5**

1. The priesthood and law changes
2. In the air
3. In the twinkling of an eye
4. With Christ in His Father's house
5. The Tribulation
6. He will return and set foot on the Mount of Olives.
7. At the Rapture, Christ does not set foot on earth but brings us to meet Him in the air. At the Second Advent, He sets foot on earth.
8. The Beast and False Prophet
9. Satan
10. 1,000 years
11. In the Lake of Fire
12. In the Lake of Fire
13. God will create a new heavens and earth

## **Chapter 8**

### **Section 1**

#### **The Personal Christian Life (Hodology)**

##### **Chapter 8, Section 1**

1.
  - a. Phase One—salvation
  - b. Phase Two—the process of maturity
  - c. Phase Three—eternity
2. Faith
3. Spirituality
  - a. Inside the Believer
  - b. Faith
  - c. The Holy Spirit may be “grieved” or “quenched.”
4. Yes. The Believer should confess the sin(s).
5. A Spiritual Gift
  - a. Love
  - b. They will cease
  - c. “Loving one another” presents Christ to the unbelieving world. Spiritual gifts are to be used to serve one another. Note that the temporary gifts were initially used to present Christ to the unbelieving world while the church was learning to love one another.
6. Righteousness
7.
  - a. Confession of sins
  - b. Praise
  - c. Thanksgiving
  - d. Petition for all the saints which is intercession
  - e. Prayer for oneself which is petition

8. Grow, in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.
9. Love God and Love One Another.
10. Unjust suffering
11. Through discipline
12. Yes
13. In Spirit and in truth
14. Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptize them and teach them.

## **Section 2**

### **The Corporate Christian Life (Ecclesiology)**

#### **Chapter 8, Section 2**

1. Teaching others to teach others
2. By the standard of the words of Jesus Christ
3. Teach
4. Fellowship with God and one another
5.
  - a. Love one another
  - b. Be devoted to and honor one another
  - c. Accept one another
  - d. Serve one another
  - e. Consider others more important than ourself
  - f. Bear one another's burdens
  - g. Encourage one another
  - h. Forgive one another
  - i. Be kind to one another
  - j. Show hospitality to one another
  - k. Build up one another
6. Spread the light, the gospel of Jesus Christ to all mankind.
7. To serve (minister to) others
8. Unity of the faith
9. That they be one, like He and the Father are One

## **Chapter 9**

### **Sections 1-7**

The answers in these sections vary so much that we have not supplied them. You have been equipped to do these yourself.

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## End Notes

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- <sup>2</sup> Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Old Testament*, Vol. I, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983, p. 39
- <sup>3</sup> Some of the ideas for this chart were drawn from *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*, by Norman L. Geisler, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1977, p. 83 and *Talk Thru The Bible* by Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1983, p. 47-49
- <sup>4</sup> Wilkinson and Boa, p. 59
- <sup>5</sup> Notes from the *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, 1985, electronic version
- <sup>6</sup> Wilkinson and Boa, p. 72
- <sup>7</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition*, Moody, electronic media
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- <sup>9</sup> Wilkinson and Boa, p. 84
- <sup>10</sup> Irving L. Jensen, *2 Kings with Chronicles, A Self-Study Guide*, Moody, p. 20
- <sup>11</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition*, Moody, Chicago, electronic media
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid
- <sup>13</sup> Wilkinson and Boa, p. 100
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 101
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- <sup>17</sup> Walvoord/Zuck, electronic media
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- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 181
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- <sup>31</sup> Ryrie, p. 1032
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