

FORMED BY THE WORD OF GOD

Church of the Ascension  
EMMAUS II LENT '88 ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

with Paul Flanagan and Bob Schihl

Title: Introduction to Reading and Studying the Bible for Catholics

Week One: Background to Approaching the Bible

Content:

- I God Speaking: Revelation  
God Inspiring Authors: Inspiration  
God Meaning: Hermeneutics
- II History and Origin of the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament  
Two Old Testament Lists: Protestant and Catholic
- III History of the Apostolic Age and the Writing of the Gospels and Other New Testament Works
- IV The History and Development of the Canon of the Bible

Week Two: Fitting the Old Testament Together: A Walk Through the Old Testament

Content:

- I The Books of the Hebrew Scriptures
- II The Pentateuch: Torah
- III The Historical Books
- IV The Prophetical Books
- V The Poetical Books

Week Three: The Apostolic Church Remembers Jesus, His Life and Teachings

Content:

- I The Gospels of the New Testament
- II The Synoptics: Mark, Matthew and Luke (Part I)
- III John: Gospel, Letters, Revelation

Week Four: The History of Evangelism: Acts of the Apostles and Paul

Content:

- I Luke, Part II: the Acts of the Early Church
- II The Person, Life and Travels of Paul of Tarsus
- III The Communities to Whom Paul Wrote: Who, Why and What
- IV The Persons to Whom Paul Wrote: Who, Why and What





Emmaus II Lenten '88 Adult Education  
Introduction to Reading and Studying the Bible for Catholics

SUGGESTED READING MATERIALS AND BOOK PURCHASES

1. Kodell, Jerome, O.S.B. (1985). The Catholic Bible Study Handbook: A Popular Introduction to Studying Scripture. Servant Books: Ann Arbor, MI.  
Old and New Testament Backgrounds. Studying and praying the Bible. Quite fine. Paperback.
2. Martin, George (1982). Reading Scripture as the Word of God: Practical Approaches and Attitudes. Servant Books: Ann Arbor, MI  
About reading Scripture. Who is speaking; who is listening. Interpreting and understanding. The power of the Word. Good text.
3. Wijngaards, John (1979). Handbook to the Gospels: A Guide to the Gospel Writings and to the Life and Times of Jesus. Servant Books: Ann Arbor, MI.  
Concentrates on the New Testament only. Gospels only. Background to life, time, the land, Temple, politics, and language of the time of Christ and the Evangelists. Very good.
4. -- (1970). The New World Dictionary-Concordance to the New American Bible. World Bible Publishers (C. D. Stamley Enterprises, Inc.)  
This is a rather thorough dictionary of most words of interest to the reader of the Bible from the Bible itself. It is a concordance too -- where to find the words or terms in the Bible. The best for the money. Very interesting. Paperback.
5. Wright, Chris (1984). User's Guide to the Bible. Lion Publishing: Belleville, IL.  
Evangelical Christian authorship. Great popular and simple introduction to the whole Bible. Graphic and interesting. Relates to the world today. Paperback.
6. Brown, Raymond, S.S., Fitzmeyer, Joseph, S.J., & Murphy, Roland, O.Carm (1968). The Jerome Biblical Commentary. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ.  
This is an official Catholic Christian commentary on the whole of Sacred Scripture. Contains a word for word/sentence-by-sentence explanation for every book of the Bible. Many scholarly articles on all facets of the Bible, its origin and development. Expensive, voluminous, hardbound but probably the best available.

7. The Bible Today, published bimonthly by The Liturgical Press, Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota 56321. One year: \$14.00.

A regular diet of excellent Biblical literature. Good investment. Intermediate Bible study articles.

8. God's Word Today, published monthly by Servant Publications. God's Word Today, P.O. Box 7705, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107. One year: \$10.00.

Structured daily reading guide for Catholics with devotional suggestions. Three or four short articles on biblical topics, the Bible and the Church, and Biblical doctrine. Good start for getting into the Bible on a regular basis.



## Divine Revelation "by letter" (2 Thess 2:15): the Bible

---

### Revelation

---

Revelation is defined literally as the uncovering or disclosure of something that is hidden.

The Roman Catholic Church, through her teaching arm, the Second Vatican Council also defined what is meant by revelation:

In his goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of his will by which, through Christ the Word made flesh, people have access to the Father in the Holy Spirit and come to share in the divine nature. Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God out of the abundance of his love speaks to his people as friends and lives among them, so that he may invite them into fellowship with Himself. (Constitution on Divine Revelation, No. 2)

The Bible itself also addresses the meaning of revelation.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Heb 1:1    | In times past, God spoke in fragmentary and varied ways to our fathers through the prophets; in this, the final age, he has spoken to us through his Son, whom he has made heir of all things and through whom he first created the universe. (NAB) |
| 1 Cor 2:9  | Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love him. Yet God has revealed this wisdom to us through the Spirit. (NAB)   |
| Mt 16:17   | Jesus replied, "Blest are you, Simon son of Jonah! No mere man has revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father." (NAB)   |
| Mt 11:27   | Everything has been given over to me by the Father. No one knows the Son but the Father, and no one knows the Father but the Son--and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him. (NAB)  |
| 2 Pet 1:21 | Prophecy has never been put forward by man's willing it. It is rather that men impelled by the Holy Spirit have spoken under God's influence. (NAB)   |
| Rom 1:19   | In fact, whatever can be known about God is clear to them; he made it so. (NAB)   |

---

Books of the Old Testament Bible

---

It will serve now to list in comparable columns the canons of the Old Testament as accepted by both Roman Catholics and Protestant Evangelicals. Jews have the same canon as Protestants. The lists are divided into the groups as taught by the respective faith groups. The books with asterisks are those of the Roman Catholic canon which are considered canonical, but are labeled apocraphal by Protestants.

The Hebrew Scriptures

The Palestinian  
Canon

## The Law

Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy

## The Prophets

## Earlier Prophets

Joshua  
Judges

1 Samuel  
2 Samuel  
1 Kings  
2 Kings

## Later Prophets

Isaiah  
Jeremiah  
Ezekiel  
Hosea  
Joel  
Amos  
Obediah  
Jonah  
Micah  
Nahum  
Habakkuk  
Zephaniah  
Haggai  
Zechariah  
Malachi

The Roman Catholic  
Old Testament

The Alexandrian Canon  
or The Septuagint (LXX)

## The Pentateuch

Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy

## The Historical Books

Joshua  
Judges  
Ruth  
1 Samuel  
2 Samuel  
1 Kings  
2 Kings  
1 Chronicles  
2 Chronicles  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
\* Tobit  
\* Judith  
Esther  
\* 1 Maccabees  
\* 2 Maccabees

## The Wisdom Books

Job  
Psalms  
Proverbs  
Ecclesiastes  
Song of Songs  
\* Wisdom  
\* Sirach

The Protestant  
Old Testament

The Palestinian  
Canon

## The Pentateuch

Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy

## The Historical Books

Joshua  
Judges  
Ruth  
1 Samuel  
2 Samuel  
1 Kings  
2 Kings  
1 Chronicles  
2 Chronicles  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
Esther

## The Poetical Books

Job  
Psalms  
Proverbs  
Ecclesiastes  
Song of Songs

The Hebrew Scriptures**The Writings**

Psalms  
 Proverbs  
 Job  
 Song of Songs  
 Ruth  
 Lamentations  
 Ecclesiastes  
 Esther  
 Daniel  
 Ezra  
 Nehemiah  
 1 Chronicles  
 2 Chronicles

The Roman Catholic  
Old Testament**The Prophetical Books**

Isaiah  
 Jeremiah  
 Lamentations  
 \* Baruch  
 Ezekiel  
 Daniel  
 Hosea  
 Joel  
 Amos  
 Obediah  
 Jonah  
 Micah  
 Nahum  
 Habakkuk  
 Zephaniah  
 Haggai  
 Zechariah  
 Malachi

The Protestant  
Old Testament**The Prophetical Books**

Isaiah  
 Jeremiah  
 Lamentations  
 Ezekiel  
 Daniel  
 Hosea  
 Joel  
 Amos  
 Obediah  
 Jonah  
 Micah  
 Nahum  
 Habakkuk  
 Zephaniah  
 Haggai  
 Zechariah  
 Malachi



---

Historical and Geographical Background for the Development  
of the Old Testament Canons

---

The development of two Old Testament canons raises questions which are rooted both in history and geography.

- [1] The roots of the double Old Testament canon in history center around the beginning of the Diaspora or dispersion of the Jewish communities outside Israel about 600 BC. This occurred at the time of the Babylonian Captivity--the conquering of the Israelites by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar about 605 BC and the Jews being taken to Babylon as captives.

2 Kings 24:12            Then Jehoiakin, king of Judah ... surrendered to the king of Babylon, who, in the eighth year of his reign, took him captive. (NAB)

2 Kings 25:1            In the tenth month of the ninth years of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon ... advanced against Jerusalem ... the king was therefore arrested ... (Nebuchadnezzar) blinded Zedekiah, bound him with fetters, and had him brought to Babylon. (NAB)

- [2] The Israelites and their king were taken into captivity.

2 Chr 36:20            Those who escaped the sword he carried to Babylon, where they became his and his son's servants until the kingdom of the Persians came to power. (NAB)

Jer 52:28              This is the number of the people whom Nebuchadnezzar led away captive: in his seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three people of Judah; in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, eight hundred and thirty-two persons from Jerusalem; in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar ... exiled seven hundred and forty-five people of Judah: four thousand six hundred persons in all. (NAB)

- [3] A "remnant", a few, remained in Israel.

2 Kings 25:12           But some of the country's poor, Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, left behind as vinedressers and farmers. (NAB)

2 Kings 25:22           As for the people whom he had allowed to remain in the land of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, appointed as their governor,

Jer 40:11 ... the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah ... (NAB)

Eze 33:27 Thus the word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, they who live in the ruins on the land of Israel reason thus: ... Tell them this: Thus says the Lord God: As I live, those who are in the ruins I swear shall fall by the sword; ... (NAB)

[4] Not all Israelites went into captivity in Babylon. A number of Israelites went to Egypt.

2 Kings 25:26 Then all the people, great and small, left with the army commanders and went to Egypt ... (NAB)

Jer 42:14 ... we will go to Egypt, where we will see no more war, hear the trumpet alarm no longer, nor hunger for bread; there we will live. (NAB)

Jer 43:7 Against the Lord's command they went to Egypt and arrived at Tahpanhes ... (NAB)

[5] While in captivity, Babylon was captured by Cyrus of Persia.

2 Chr 36:20 ... the Persians came to power. (NAB)

2 Chr 36:23 Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia: "All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord, the God of heaven, has given to me, and he has also charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever, therefore, among you belongs to any part of his people, let him go up, and may his God be with him!" (NAB)

With Cyrus' proclamation, the captivity of the Israelites came to an end. The Jews began their return to Israel.

Ezra 1:5 Then the family heads of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and Levites--everyone, that is, whom God has inspired to do so--prepared to go up to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. (NAB)

[6] Ezra and Nehemiah recorded the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem.

Ezra 7:28 I herefore took courage and with the hand of the Lord, my God, upon me, I gathered together Israelite family heads to make the



2-6

return journey with me. (NAB)

Neh 2:11

When I had arrived in Jerusalem, I rested there for three days. (NAB)

- [7] Many Israelites went on to Egypt from Babylon instead of returning to Israel. History records a substantial Hebrew population in northern Egypt.

The roots of the double Old Testament canon in geography center around the fact that a great number of Israelites departing Babylon fled to northern Egypt. They became part of the city of Alexandria after Alexander the Great conquered the region and founded the city. There were ultimately more Jews in Alexandria at the time of Christ than lived in Palestine--as there are more Jews in New York City today than in Israel.

1 Mc 1:1

After Alexander the Macedonian, Philip's son, who came from the land of Kittim, had defeated Darius, king of the Persians and Medes, he became in his place, having first ruled Greece. ... He collected a very strong army and conquered provinces, and rulers, and they became his tributaries. (NAB)  
(Considered to be intertestamental Apocrapha by some Protestants; missing from the NAS and NIV translations)

Alexander founded the city of Alexandria in 332 BC. He wanted to make the city the finest port in the ancient world. The city numbered chiefly Greeks, Jews, and Egyptians. It was the capital of Egypt. Most notable among the boasts of the city was the Library--the greatest collection of books in the ancient world in 3rd century BC.

- [8] In Palestine, with the return of Ezra from exile (458 BC) and Nehemiah (445 BC), and the prophecy of Malachi (433 BC) there is established biblical silence--no further known divine revelation.

As the first semblance of a Hebrew canon is collected, the language is a dying language such that it was considered dead by 135 AD. It was dying sufficiently by the time of Christ that Jesus and his contemporaries used Aramaic, a Hebrew dialect.

- [9] In Alexandria, Demetrius of Phaleron is the librarian of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC); he wanted copies of the Jewish Law for the Library of Alexandria. Such is perhaps the beginning of a Greek translation of the Torah. Historians do know that the compilation of a full translation of the Torah was made in the early 3rd century BC.

The term "septuagint", Latin for the number 70 (LXX), may represent the number of translators. The term stands for



not only the Pentateuch in Greek, but the entire body of Hebrew scripture translations and compositions dating from possibly before 300 BC.

There is no biblical silence in the Greek Septuagint: the Septuagint conveys the original text of some books (Wisdom, 2 Maccabees) and the basic canonical form of others, either in part (Esther, Daniel, Sirach) or as a whole (Tobit, Judith, Baruch, and 1 Maccabees).

- [10] While the Septuagint was a collection of the books of the Old Testament and an attempt at a canon, it was not a fixed canon in the first century. It was a popular translation of scripture because Greek was the common language of the entire Mediterranean world by the time of the Apostolic Church.

It is not surprising that this is the translation--and canon--used by Christ and the New Testament writers: 300 of 350 quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament are from the Septuagint. The remainder are often paraphrases of either the Hebrew or the Greek only.

- A group, perhaps a school, of Jewish rabbis, unsaved by Christian standards, collected a Hebrew canon at Jamnia, in Palestine, by the end of the first century. It is believed they may have been equally pressured to this canon by the demands of the Christian Church of the time. They collected a still unfixed canon of between 22 and 24 books.

- [11] Historians place the fixed canon for both the Alexandrian and Palestinian translations at the end of the second century. Bishop Melito of Sardis recorded the first known list of the Septuagint canon in 170 AD. The Septuagint canon contained 45/46 books (Lamentation was once considered a part of Jeremiah); the Palestinian canon contained 39 books.

- [12] The first translation of the Bible from Greek to Latin, now the common language (the vulgar or "Vulgate") of the Mediterranean world, was made by Jerome, in Rome, in 383-383 AD. He based his translation on the Hebrew text of the Palestinian canon, but translated from the Greek Septuagint canon those books not found in the Palestinian canon. Jerome's Old Testament canon for the Latin Vulgate contained the books of the Alexandrian canon, 46 books.

- [13] Two church councils, local and hence not ecumenical or worldwide councils, Hippo (in north Africa), 393 AD, and Carthage (also in north Africa), 397 AD, from which Protestant and Evangelicals take as the authority for their canon of the New Testament, 27 books, approved the Alexandrian canon of the Greek Septuagint, 46 books, as the canon for the Old Testament.

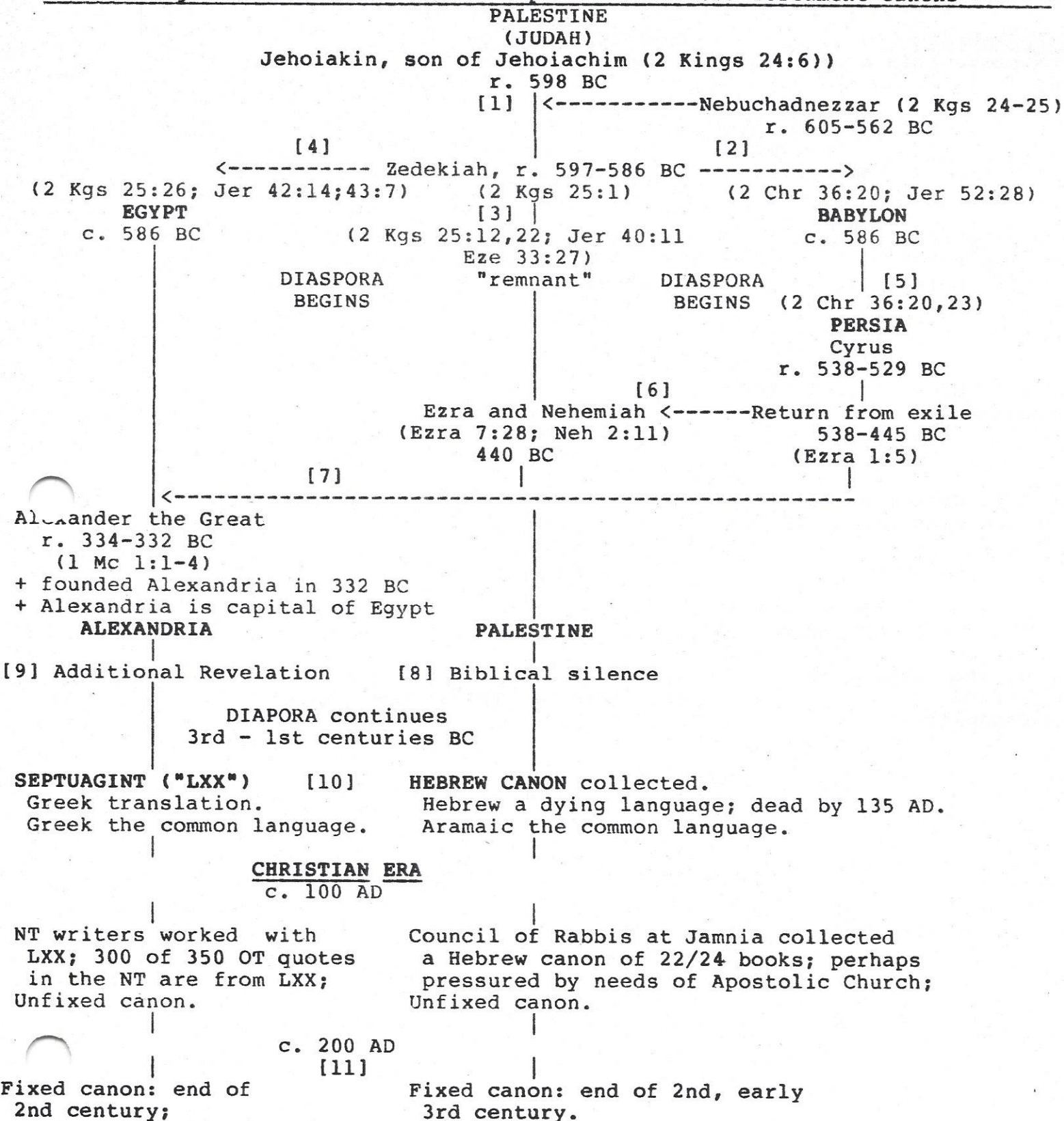
It is interesting to note that the Gutenberg Bible, the first printed Bible, was the Latin Vulgate Bible with the Alexandrian canon, 46 books, of the Greek Septuagint.

- [14] Roman Catholics accepted the canon of the Bible--the Alexandrian canon of the Old Testament--as a matter of uncontested faith. Since it was not a matter of controversy for sixteen centuries, there was no need to define the canon as infallible truth.

When Martin Luther proposed the Palestinian canon, 39 books, in Hebrew in 1529 as the Old Testament canon, the Catholic Church, following the model of refuting error and defining unrevealed truth set in Acts 15--accepting the Holy Spirit as revealing authority--defined, at the Council of Trent, 1563, the Old Testament canon of 46 books following the Alexandrian Greek Septuagint.



# Background Chart for the Development of the Old Testament Canons



Melito of Sardis,  
c. 170 AD

**ALEXANDRIAN CANON**

45/46 books (Lam a part  
of Jer)

**PALESTINIAN CANON**

39 books

[12]

Latin the common language

383-384 AD

**LATIN VULGATE OT**

Rome

St. Jerome

+ supplied from the  
Greek the parts no  
included in the Jewish  
canon.

+ based directly on the Hebrew  
text of the OT as preserved by  
the Jews.

[13]

393 AD

Council of Hippo (No. Africa)

+ approved list of OT and NT  
Canon;

[14]

397 AD

Council of Carthage (No. Africa)

+ approved list of OT and NT  
canon;

[15]

1452-1455 AD

**GUTENBERG BIBLE**

Canon of the Council of  
Trent, 1563  
Roman Catholic

Canon of Martin Luther and the  
Protestant Reformers, 1529-1537

---

Chronology of the Apostolic Age  
and the Development of the New Testament Canon

---

A chronology is now appropriate in order to present a sequence of events both biblical and extra-biblical which effect the canon of the Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament.

It is said that no two scripture scholars will agree on one apostolic chronology. Hence what is presented here is acceptable to some but not universally. It serves to give points of reference for the events that took place and their consequences.

EVENT	DATE	WORK
The Descent of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost	30	
Stephen is stoned to death.	32/33	
The conversion of Paul	33/34	
Paul's silent years	35-43	
Paul's trip to Antioch	43	
Paul's first missionary journey	47/48	
Paul at Antioch	48/49	Galatians written
Council of Jerusalem	49	
Paul's second missionary journey	49/51	
	50/51	1 and 2 Thessalonians written
Paul's third missionary journey	52-56	
	54-55	1 and 2 Corinthians written
	55	Romans written
Paul's arrest	56	
Paul's appearance before Felix and Drusilla	57	
Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea		
Paul's trial before Festus	58/59	
Paul's trial before Agrippa	59	
The voyage to Rome	59/60	



Paul's first Roman imprisonment	60-62	
	60	Philemon written
	60	Colossians written
		Ephesians written
	61	Philippians written
Paul's release from prison	62	
Paul's possible trip to Spain		James written
Peter in Rome		Mark written
The Apostle James is martyred		
Paul in Macedonia		1 Timothy written
Paul's trip to Crete		Titus written
	63	1 Peter written
Paul taken to Rome	63/64	2 Timothy written
		2 Peter written
Paul's second imprisonment and death	64	
Peter's death; Linus is Bishop of Rome	60s	Hebrews written
The destruction of Jerusalem	70/72	
	70s	Matthew written; Luke and Acts written
Anacletus is Bishop of Rome	78	
	60s/70s	Jude written
	80s/90s	John written
		1, 2, and 3 John written
		Revelation written
Clement is Bishop of Rome	92-101	1 Clement written
John's death at Ephesus	98	

	70-110	Didache written
Council of Rabbis at Jamnia: Palestinian Canon in Hebrew	99-100	
First Christian Canon of the Old Testament: Alexandrian Canon in Greek	c. 100	
Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons	185	Developed a New Testament Canon (without 3 John, James, or 2 Peter)
	c. 200	Muratorian Fragment contained a Canon similar to Trent
Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea	c. 325	<u>History of the Church</u> written; referred to James, Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John as "disputed, yet similar to most."
Council of Hippo (No. Africa)	393	Approved a list of OT and NT Canon (same as later Trent)
Council of Carthage (No. Africa)	397	Approved a list of OT and NT Canon (same as later Trent)



---

### The Canon of the Bible

---

All Christians realize that if God has revealed Himself by communicating His will to man, man must be able to know with assurance where that revelation lies. Hence the need for a list (i.e., canon) of books of the Bible. In other words, man needs to know without error (i.e., infallibly) what the books of the Bible are. There must be an authority which will make that decision.

The canon of the Bible refers to the definitive list of the books which are considered to be divine revelation and included therein. A canon distinguishes what is revealed and divine from what is not revealed and human.

"canon" (Gk kanon) means a reed; a straight rod or bar; a measuring stick; something serving to determine, rule, or measure.

Since God did not explicitly reveal the inspired books of the Bible, title by title, to anyone, we must look to His guidance in discovering the canon of the Bible.

Jesus has told us that he has not revealed all truths to us.

Jo 16:12                    I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. When he comes, however, being the Spirit of Truth he will guide you to all truth. (NAB)

Jesus then told us how he was planning to assist us in knowing other truths.

Jo 14:16-17                I will ask the Father and he will give you another Paraclete to be with you always: the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot accept, since it neither sees him nor recognizes him; but he remains with you and will be within you. (NAB)

Jo 15:26                    When the Paraclete comes, the Spirit of Truth who comes from the Father - and whom I myself will send from the Father - he will bear witness on my behalf. (NAB)

The New Testament writers sensed how they handled truth-bearing under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth.

1 Cor 15:3-4                I hand on (paredoka) to you first of all what I myself received ... (NAB)

2-15

2 Tim 2:2

The things which you have heard from me through many witnesses you must hand on (parathou) to trustworthy men who will be able to teach others. (NAB)

There was a constant history of trustworthy men from Paul's time through the Apostolic and Post Apostolic Church.

Mileto, bishop of Sardis, an ancient city of Asia Minor (see Rev 3), c. 170 AD created the earliest list of books identical to the Roman Catholic canon today.

The Council of Laodicea, c. 360, produced a list of books similar to today's canon. This was one of the Church's earliest decisions on a canon.

Pope Damasus, 366-384, in his Decree, listed the books of today's canon.

The Council of Rome, 382, was the forum which prompted Pope Damasus' Decree.

Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse wrote to Pope Innocent I in 405 requesting a list of canonical books. Pope Innocent listed the present canon.

The Council of Hippo, a local north Africa council of bishops created the list of the Old and New Testament books in 393 which is the same as the Roman Catholic list today.

The Council of Carthage, a local north Africa council of bishops created the same list of canonical books in 397. This is the council which many Protestant and Evangelical Christians take as the authority for the New Testament canon of books. The Old Testament canon from the same council is identical to Roman Catholic canon today.

Another Council of Carthage in 419 offered the same list of canonical books.

Since the Roman Catholic Church does not define truths unless errors abound on the matter, Roman Catholic Christians look to the Council of Florence, an ecumenical council in 1441 for the first definitive list of canonical books.

The final infallible definition of canonical books for Roman Catholic Christians came from the Council of Trent in 1556 in the face of the errors of the Reformers who rejected seven Old Testament books from the canon of scripture to that time.

There was no canon of scripture in the early Church; there was no Bible. The Bible is the book of the Church; she is not the Church of the Bible. It was the Church--her leadership, trustworthy men--guided by the authority of the Spirit of Truth which discovered the books inspired by God in their writing. The Church did not create the canon. Fixed canons of the Old and New Testaments, hence the Bible, were not known much before the end of the 2nd and early 3rd century.



Catholic Christians together with Protestant and Evangelical Christians hold the same canon of the New Testament, 27 books, all having been originally written in the Greek language.

Catholic Christians accept the longer Old Testament canon, 46 books, from the Greek Septuagint (LXX) translation of the Alexandrian Canon.

Protestant and Evangelical Christians, from the Reformers onward, accept the shorter Old Testament canon, 39 books, from the Hebrew Palestinian Canon. Jews have the same canon as Protestants.

Canonical books are those books which have been acknowledged as belonging to the list of books the Church considers to be inspired and to contain a rule of faith and morals. Some criteria used to determine canonicity were (1) special relation to God, i.e., inspiration; (2) apostolic origin; (3) used in Church services, i.e., used by the community of believers guided by the Holy Spirit.

Other terms for canonical books should be distinguished: the protocanonicals books, deuterocanonicals books, and the apocryphal books.

The protocanonical (from the Greek "proto" meaning first) books are those books of the Bible that were admitted into the canon of the Bible with little or no debate (e.g., The Pentateuch of the Old Testament and the Gospels of the New Testament).

The deuterocanonical (from the Greek "deutero" meaning second) books are those books of the Bible that were under discussion for a while until doubts about their canonicity were resolved (e.g., Sirach and Baruch of the Old Testament, and the Johannine epistles of the New Testament).

The apocryphal (from the Greek "apokryphos" meaning hidden) books have multiple meanings: (1) a complimentary meaning - that the sacred books were too exalted for the general public; (2) pejorative meaning - that the orthodoxy of the books were questioned; (3) heretical meaning - that the books were forbidden to be read; and lastly (4) neutral meaning - simply noncanonical books, the meaning the word has today.

Another word, pseudepigrapha (from the Greek meaning false writing) is used for works clearly considered to be false.

Protestant Christian  
"apocryphal" books

Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)  
Baruch

Catholic Christian  
"deuterocanonical" books

Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)  
Baruch

2-17

Tobit  
Judith  
Gk Esther (Esther 10:4-10)  
Gk Daniel (Song of the Three Young  
Men, Dan 3:24-90; Susanna, Dan 13;  
Bel and the Dragon, Dan 14)  
1 Maccabees  
2 Maccabees  
1 Esdras  
2 Esdras  
Prayer of Manasseh

Tobit  
Judith  
Gk Esther  
Gk Daniel

1 Maccabees  
2 Maccabees

Protestant Christian  
"pseudepigrapha" books

Catholic Christian  
"apocryphal" books

#### Old Testament works

Enoch Literature; Esdras Literature (1-2 Esdras); Baruch Literature (2-3 Baruch); Psalms of Solomon; Testaments of the Twelve Apostles; Sibylline Oracles; Letter of Aristeus to Philocrates; Assumption of Moses; Maccabean Literature (3-4 Maccabees); Prayer of Manasseh

#### New Testament works

Didache; Apocalypses of Peter, Paul, Thomas; 1-2 Clement; Gospel of Thomas, Philip, Peter, Hebrews; Hermas; Acts of Pilate; Barnabas; Protoevangelium of James; To the Laodiceans; Various Papyruses; To Seneca; Epistola Apostolorum; Acts of John, Paul, Andrew, Thomas.





---

Inspiration of the Bible

---

2 Tim 3:16            All Scripture is inspired of God and is useful for teaching - for reproof, correction, and training in holiness ... (NAB)

A primary criterion for the canonicity of a book of the Bible was the belief that it was a work inspired by God.

By definition, to inspire literally means to breathe into, upon, or in.

Inspiration means any and all promptings of God's grace in and on the human psyche and specifically of the divine promptings at the origin of the books of the Bible.

The divine inspiration of Sacred Scripture denotes the special influence of God upon the human writers of the Bible, an influence of such a nature that God is said to be the author of the biblical books.

The Roman Catholic Church officially defined her meaning of inspiration in the Papal Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, Providentissimus Deus, in 1893.

By supernatural power God so moved and impelled the human authors to write - he so assisted them when writing - that the things he ordered and those only they first rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with infallible truth.

The internal testimony of the Bible itself attests to the fact of its divine inspiration.

Ex 17:14            Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this down in a document as something to be remembered ... " (NAB)

Ex 34:27            Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with them I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." (NAB)

Is 8:1                The Lord said to me: "Take a large cylinder-seal, and inscribe on it in ordinary letters ... " (NAB)

Is 30:8              Now come, write it on a tablet they can keep, inscribe it in a record; that it may be in future days an eternal witness. (NAB)

2-19

Is 34:16

Look in the book of the Lord and read: No one of these shall be lacking, for the mouth of the Lord has ordered it ... (NAB)

Jer 36:1

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord: Take a scroll and wrote on it all the words I have spoken to you ... (NAB)

Mt 5:18

Of this much I assure you: until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter of the law, not the smallest part of a letter, shall be done away with until it all comes true. (NAB)

Lk 24:44

Then he said to them, "Recall those words I spoke to you when I was still with you: everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and psalms had to be fulfilled." (NAB)

Jo 5:39

Search the Scriptures in which you think you have eternal life - they also testify on my behalf. (NAB)

Jo 10:35

If it calls those men gods to whom God's word was addressed - and Scripture cannot lose its force - for you claim that I blasphemed when, as he whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, I said, "I am God's Son"? (NAB)

Mt 4:4

Jesus replied, "Scripture has it: 'Not on bread alone is man to live but on every utterance that comes from the mouth of God.'" (NAB)

Acts 15:15

The words of the prophets agree with this, where it says in Scripture, "Hereafter I will return and rebuild the fallen hut of David ... " (NAB)

Rom 1:17

For in the gospel is revealed the justice of God which begins and ends with faith: as Scripture says, "The just man shall live by faith." (NAB)



---

### Hermeneutics: Understanding Revelation

---

As for all communication, the receiver must create meaning from the symbols (the message) used by the communicator.

All Christians must discover the meaning intended by the author(s) of the books of the Bible to understand what God is revealing. The process of discovering meaning from the Bible is called hermeneutics.

All Christians recognize that how we approach the Bible determines often what we take from it. Understanding what God would have us know from the Bible is made difficult by many factors:

- (1) The Bible contains some very ancient books;
- (2) It is not unusual to not even know who the author of a book really was;
- (3) Not knowing for certain who an author was is complicated by the period of time in which an author lived;
- (4) Since many authors were ancient Semites, their way of thinking and manner of expressing themselves differ from our own;
- (5) Since we do not possess any original manuscripts of the books of the Bible, we have to contend with copying and editing which occurred over time;
- (6) Then the issue of the multiplicity of human authors and editors complicates our understanding;
- (7) Finally, the fact of both a divine and a human author makes understanding a challenge.

Hermeneutics (from the Greek word "hermeneia" which means speech or interpretation) is used to cover a broad scope in the process of understanding. It refers to

- (1) interpretation by speech itself, as language interprets the mind;
- (2) the process of translation from an unintelligible language to an intelligible one (cf 1 Cor 12:10);
- (3) interpretation by commentary and explanation.

Roman Catholic Christians have often been accused of not being allowed to read the Bible on their own. This could not be further from the truth. When, in history, Catholics were forbidden to read the Bible it was a particular translation which usually was unauthorized and highly illiterate in its fidelity to original sources--simply a bad translation.

It is often said Roman Catholics cannot interpret the Bible on their own. The Papal Encyclical (Divino Afflante Spiritu) of Pope Pius XII in 1943 attempted to counteract this error by stating that there are but few texts whose understanding has been determined by the teaching authority of the Church and Catholics do indeed have freedom to interpret the Scriptures.

2-21

The Catholic Church has been solicitous over the way in which the Bible is interpreted. Experience teaches us that it is easy to find even contradictory meanings from the same Scripture with an unbridled approach to reading and interpreting the Bible.

The Catholic Church teaches that the first principle of hermeneutics is the literal meaning of the text.

Spiritus Paraclitus (Benedict XV, September 15, 1920)

As Jerome insisted, all biblical interpretation rests upon the literal sense ...

Divino Afflante Spiritu (Pius XII, September 30, 1943)

... discern and define that sense of the biblical words which is called literal ... so that the mind of the author may be made clear.

... the exegete must be principally concerned with the literal sense of the Scriptures.

I. The first sense then for understanding the Bible is the literal sense.

Definition: the literal sense of Scripture is the meaning which the human author directly intended and the author's words convey.

Criteria to understand the literal sense:

1) The literary form that the author used is the first aid in determining what the author meant. If the author wrote poetry instead of history, then the literary form of poetry assists in determining the meaning intended by the author.

Some other literary forms of the Bible include history, law, songs, love stories, stories (parables), etc.

2) The literary history of the biblical book or section of the Bible that contains the book also aids in determining the meaning intended by the author.

Literary history of a book includes what is known about the author, his background, his historical period of Israel's history, etc.

An example of the Church using the literal sense of a scripture passage in order to understand what meaning we should get from it is the 6th chapter of the Gospel according to John.

Literary Form of John 6:25-69:

Most scripture scholars today affirm that John's gospel is historical in nature. Hence we believe that John strove to



preserve both the words and actions of Jesus. Unlike the Synoptics, John wrote through the eyes of the faith of the late Apostolic Church in light of the way that faith translated into practice and worship.

Where John is clearly biographical, the literal meaning is emphasized by linguistic psychology: multiple repetition of the message in different words. Where literalness is intended, intended meaning is reinforced by recording the reaction to literal meaning by the hearers without the speaker's correction.

#### Literary History of John 6:25-69:

The apostle John was an eyewitness to the life and teachings of Jesus. He was one of the Twelve. He was also the last of the Apostles to write and to die. He refers to himself as the "disciple whom Jesus loved."

#### Interpretation of John 6:25-69:

Following the details of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes--biographical, Jesus walking on the sea--biographical, Jesus reacts to the crowds' need for signs. Jesus takes them from manna, bread from heaven, to "real heavenly bread (v. 32)" ... "I myself (v. 35)." "I am the bread that came down from heaven (v. 41)." This is God saying this: "I am the bread that came down from heaven." If He was not really the bread that came down from heaven, His omnipotent and creative Word would then have made it so.

Five times in different verbal expressions, Jesus confirmed the reality of the meaning he intended.

Jo 6:51 If anyone eats this bread he shall live forever; the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world. (NAB)

Jo 6:53 If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you have no life in you. (NAB)

Jo 6:54 He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. (NAB)

Jo 6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood real drink. (NAB)

Jo 6:56 The man who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. (NAB)

The best way a person can make a clear literal point is repetition of the same message in different ways. Jesus did this. Those around him clearly understood what he was saying--cannibalism and the drinking of blood--both forbidden by Mosaic Law.

Jo 6:60 After hearing his words, many of his disciples remarked, "This sort of talk is hard to endure! How can anyone take it seriously?" ... From this time on, many of his disciples broke away and would not remain in his company any longer. (NAB)

Had these disciples mistaken the meaning of Jesus' words, Jesus, knowing their thoughts and their error, would surely have known and corrected them. He didn't. They had clearly understood his meaning--Jesus' flesh was to be really eaten; his blood to be really drunk.

II. But the Bible has God, a divine author, besides the human author. The Church teaches that there exists a more-than-literal meaning for understanding the Bible: a fuller sense.

Definition:

The fuller sense is the deeper meaning intended by God as divine author. The fuller sense of Scripture, since it is the meaning intended by God, may not have been clearly known and intended by the human author.

Criteria to establish the fuller sense:

1) Because the Catholic Church holds that there are two revealing authorities of Divine Revelation, the Bible and the Holy Spirit, the fuller sense of the Bible can be found in the authoritative interpretation of those revealing authorities.

Some of these authorities are the New Testament itself, the Fathers of the Church, the Church in Council (cf Acts 15 model), the "trustworthy men" faithful to what was handed down to them, etc. The Spirit of Truth is entrusted to trustworthy men as an authority in the Church.

2) The fuller sense of any Scripture text has to be in agreement with the literal sense of the words. This fuller sense must be a consequential development of what the human author of the text intended to say.

An example of the fuller sense in the interpretation of Scripture is found by looking at the New Testament.

In the Gospel according to Matthew, Chapter 1, verse 23, Matthew says that the conception of Jesus by Mary was a virginal conception and took place so that the words of the prophet Isaiah (7:14) might be fulfilled.

Isaiah gives no evidence that the prophet had Jesus' conception in the womb of Mary in mind. Isaiah does not speak of a virgin in the strict sense--merely an unmarried



woman. Isaiah is not clear that he is even speaking to a distant future conception. The whole meaning of Isaiah's chapter appears to imply that the birth he prophesies will take place about 735 B.C. during the reign of King Ahaz the father of the future King Hezekiah.

The words of Isaiah may have literally meant the conception of the future King Hezekiah. At the time of Isaiah's words in chapter 7, the mother of the future King Hezekiah would have been unmarried.

Matthew, on the other hand, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, creates an interpretation of Isaiah which is definitely not literal. Matthew clearly interprets Isaiah in a fuller sense: the unmarried woman is the virgin Mary, and God-with-us is Jesus.

III. Following the lead of Paul himself (Cf Rom 5:14) there is another way for creating meaning in the Bible: the typical sense.

#### Definition:

The typical sense of Bible texts is the deeper meaning that some elements (persons, places, things and events) of the Bible have because God, the divine author of the Bible, intended that these elements foreshadow/shadow further things.

#### Criteria to understanding the typical sense:

1) The typical sense of the Bible is created by continuing revelation or growth in the understanding the Word of God. Extra-biblical growth in understanding the Word of God is evidenced in the growth and development of the understanding of the Trinity, the Incarnation, etc. Types--the typical sense--are discovered in the New Testament, or in the agreement among "trustworthy men" faithful to what was handed down to them--the Fathers of the Church, in worship--the liturgy--and its development through the ages, in the documents of the Church, etc. The Catholic Church believes that the Holy Spirit is a revealing authority in the Church and reveals Himself to "trustworthy men" in all ages.

2) The other criterion for discovering the typical meaning of Scripture is understanding that any type found in the text of the Bible has to be related to the anti-type (e.g., Christ to Adam). This confirms that God planned the relationship of the type to the anti-type.

An example of the typical meaning in the Bible is in Paul's writings. Paul appears to delight in establishing types between the New Testament and the Old Testament. In 1 Cor 10:6 Paul typifies those events which occurred to the Israelites in the desert of Sinai throughout the Exodus to



2-25

those things that happen to Christians.

Another example of a type--the typical meaning in the Bible--is the bronze serpent raised by Moses in the desert. The evangelist John presents raising the bronze serpent as a type of Christ crucified (3:14).

# A CHRONOLOGICAL CHART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL	DATE	BIBLICAL FIGURE/BOOK(S)	
	B.C. 1800	Abraham	
	1700	Isaac	
	1600	Jacob	
	1500		
	1400		
	1300		
Exodus from Egypt		Moses	
Covenant at Sinai			
Invasion of Canaan	1200	Joshua	
Rule by Judges	1100	Gideon	
		Deborah	
		Samson	
Samuel			
Saul (1020 - 1000)	1000	Jonathan	
David (1000 - 962)		Nathan	Court History
Solomon (961 - 922)			2 Sam 9 - 20
			2 Kings 1 - 2
			Yahwist (J) Writing
Division of Kingdom 922			
<u>Judah</u>		<u>Israel</u>	
Rehoboam		Jeroboam I	
(922-915)		(922-901)	
Abijah		Nadab	
(915-913)		(901-900)	
Asa		Baasha	
(913-873)		(900-877)	900
Jehoshaphat		Elah	
(873-849)		(977-876)	
		Zimri	
		(876)	
		Omri	
		(876-869)	
		Ahab	Elijah
		(869-850)	Elohism (E) Writing
		Ahaziah	
		(850-849)	
Jehoram		Jehoram	
(849-842)		(849-842)	
Ahaziah			Elisha
(842)			
Athaliah		Jehu	Jehoiada
(842-837)		(842-815)	
Jehoash		Joahaz	
(837-800)		(815-801)	800
Amaziah		Jehoash	
(800-783)		(801-786)	
Uzziah		Jeroboam II	Amos
(783-742)		(786-746)	Amos
		Zechariah	Hosea
		(746-745)	Hosea

THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL	DATE	BIBLICAL FIGURE/BOOK(S)	
		Shallum (745)	
		Menahem (745-738)	
Jotham (742-735)		Pekaiah (738-737)	Isaiah Isaiah 1 - 39
Ahaz (735-715)		Pekah (737-732)	Micah Micah
		Hoshea (732-724)	
		Fall of Samaria (721)	
		Exile of Israel	
Hezekiah (715-687)	700		Deuteronomy 12 - 26
Manasseh (687-642)			
Amon (642-640)			
Josiah (640-609)		Zephaniah	Zephaniah
		Jeremiah	Jeremiah
		Nahum	Nahum
Jehoahaz (Shallum) (609)			
Jehoiakim (Eliakim) (609-598)	600	Habbakuk	Habbakuk
Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) (598-597)			
Zedekiah (Mattaniah) (597-587)			
Fall of Jerusalem			
Destruction of the Temple (587)			
Exile in Babylon (587-538)		Ezekiel 2nd Isaiah	Lamentations Ezekiel Isaiah 40 - 55 Basis of Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
			Edition of Deuteronomic History: Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, some Psalms
Sheshbazzar (538)		Joshua	
Zerubbabel (538-510)		Haggai	Haggai
Second Temple Destruction (515)		Zechariah	Zechariah 1 -
	500	Malachi	Malachi
Nehemiah (445-433, 431- ?)			Job



THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL	DATE	BIBLICAL FIGURE/BOOK(S)
Ezra (428-395)		Proverbs Psalms Song of Songs Ruth Isaiah 56 - 66 Obediah Joel Jonah Work of Chronicler: 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra Nehemiah Zechariah 9 - 14
Persian rule replaced by Greek rule Rule by Ptolemics of Egypt (323)	400	Obediah Joel
	300	Ecclesiastes Esther Tobit  Sirach Ecclesiasticus
Rule by Seleucids of Syria		
Persecution Maccabean revolt (167-164) Rededication of the Temple (164) Judas Maccabeus (166-160) Jonathan (160-143) Simon (143-134)		Mattathias Daniel
John Hyrcanus (134-104) Aristobulus I (104-103) Alexander Janneus (103-76) Salome Alexandra (76-67) Aristobulus II (67-63) Antipater (63-43), Procurator Hyrcanus II (47-40), Ethnarch	100	Judith 2 Maccabees  1 Maccabees  Baruch  Wisdom
Antigonus (40-37) Herod the Great (37-4)	4	Jesus' birth
Tetrarchs:	B.C. 1	
Archelaus (4 BC - 6 AD)	0	
Antipas (4 BC - 39 AD)	A.D. 1	
Philip (4 BC - 34 AD)		
Procurators of Judea (6-66) Pontius Pilate (26-36) Agrippa I (37-44)	29	Jesus' death
Antoninus Felix (52-60)		1-2 Thessalonians Galatians Philippians 1-2 Corinthians Romans Philemon Colossians
Porcius Festus (60-62) Luceius Albinus (62-64)		

# THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL

DATE

BIBLICAL FIGURE/BOOK(S)

Gessius Florus (64-66)  
The Jewish revolt (66-70)  
The Fall of Jerusalem (70)

Mark  
James, Jude  
Ephesians  
Titus, 1-2 Timothy  
Luke, Acts  
Matthew  
Hebrews  
1 Peter  
John  
Revelation  
1-2-3 John  
2 Peter

100

Second Jewish revolt (132-135)



# The Song of Solomon Illustrated

(for our literalist friends.)

"How beautiful you are, my darling,  
how beautiful you are!

...Your eyes are like doves behind  
your veil...

...Your hair is like a flock of goats...

...your teeth are like a flock of  
newly shorn ewes...

...Your lips are like a scarlet  
thread...

...Your temples are like a slice  
of pomegranate...

...Your neck is like the  
tower of David ... built  
with rows of stones  
on which are hung a  
thousand shields...

...Your two breasts are  
like two fawns,  
twins of a gazelle  
Which feed among the  
lilies...

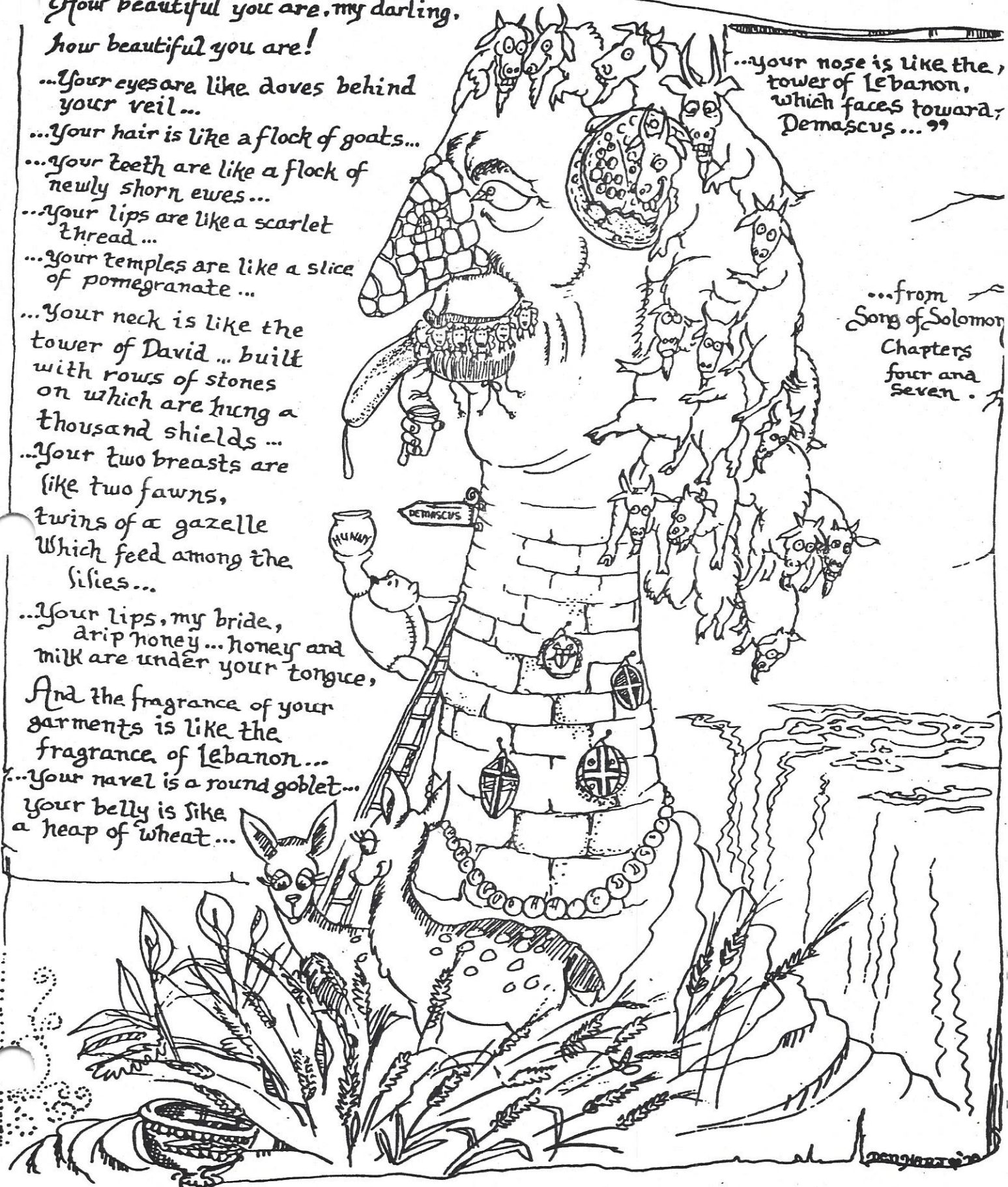
...Your lips, my bride,  
drip honey... honey and  
milk are under your tongue,

And the fragrance of your  
garments is like the  
fragrance of Lebanon...

...Your navel is a round goblet...  
Your belly is like  
a heap of wheat...

...your nose is like the,  
tower of Lebanon,  
which faces toward  
Damascus ..."

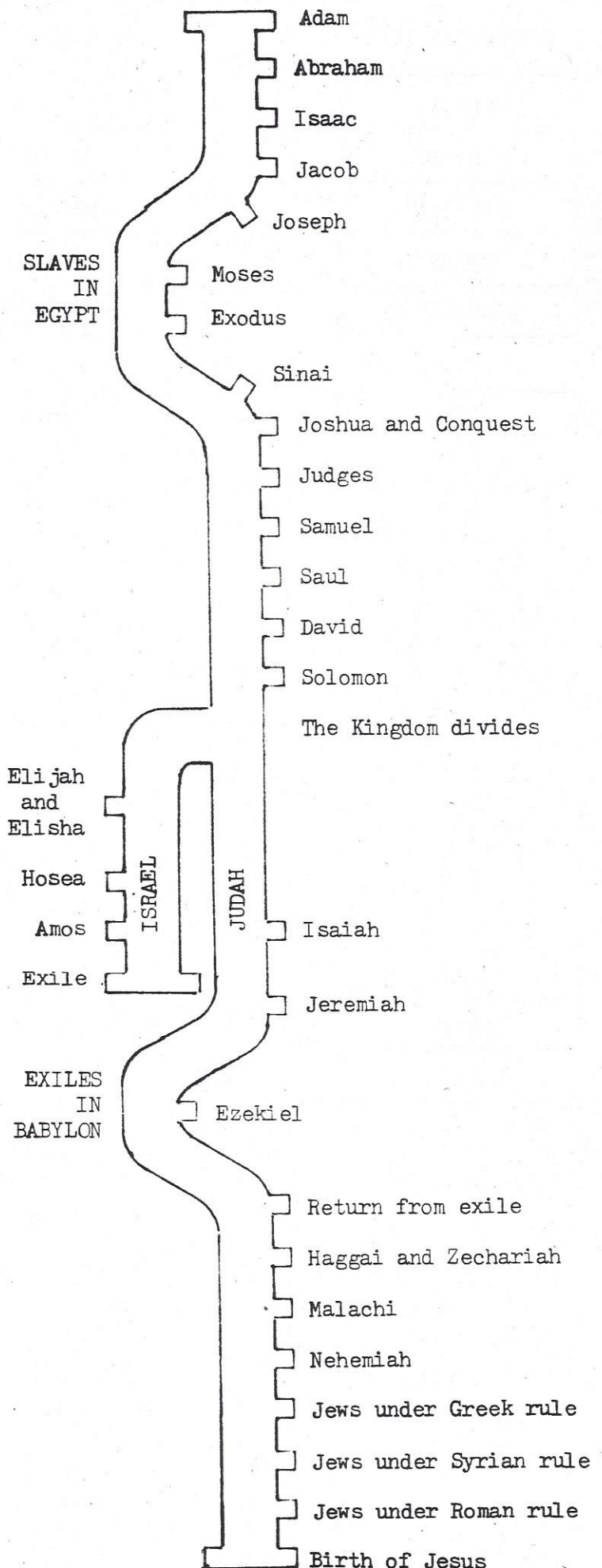
...from  
Song of Solomon  
Chapters  
four and  
seven.







# A Walk Thru the Old Testament





# CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN BIBLE CANON (46)

## HISTORICAL (21)

## WISDOM (7)

## PROPHETICAL (18)

PENTATEUCH (5)

GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY

JOB
PSALMS
PROVERBS
ECCLESIASTES
SONG OF SONGS
WISDOM
SIRACH

MAJOR (5)

ISAIAH
JEREMIAH
LAMENTATIONS
EZEKIEL
DANIEL

HISTORICAL (16)

JOSHUA
JUDGES
RUTH
FIRST SAMUEL
SECOND SAMUEL
FIRST KINGS
SECOND KINGS
FIRST CHRONICLES
SECOND CHRONICLES
EZRA
NEHEMIAH
TOBIT
JUDITH
ESTHER
FIRST MACCABEES
SECOND MACCABEES

MINOR (13)

BARUCH
HOSEA
JOEL
AMOS
OBEDIAH
JONAH
MICAH
NAHUM
HABAKKUK
ZEPHANIAH
HAGGAI
ZECHARIAH
MALACHI

Events

Past

God's Work

Narrative

Covenant People

Experience

Present

God's Ways

Poetry

Covenant Practice

Expectation

Future

God's Will

Prophecy

Covenant Preachers

## OLD TESTAMENT SUMMARY

### The Pentateuch

**GENESIS** - This book provides the foundation for the entire Bible in its history and theology. Its first eleven chapters give a sweeping survey of primeval events: God's work of creation, the fall of man, the judgment of the flood, and the spread of the nations. There is a sudden shift in chapter 12 as God singles out one man through whom He would bring salvation and bless all nations. The remainder of Genesis traces the story of Abraham and his descendants Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

**EXODUS** - Jacob's descendants have moved from Canaan to Egypt and are suffering under bondage of a new pharaoh. After a period of four hundred years they cry to God for deliverance. God responds by empowering Moses to stand before Pharaoh and create the ten devastating plagues. After their redemption in the Passover, the Israelites leave Egypt, cross the sea, and journey to Mount Sinai. There God reveals His covenant law and gives them the pattern for the building of the tabernacle.

**LEVITICUS** - Now that the people have been redeemed and delivered, they must be set apart to God to live holy lives. God gives them instructions for the sacrificial system and the priesthood. The remainder of Leviticus teaches the people how to become ceremonially and morally pure. The emphasis is on sanctification, service and obedience.

**NUMBERS** - Still at Mount Sinai, the people receive additional directions before proceeding to the promised land of Canaan. When they are on the verge of entering the land, their faith crumbles and God disciplines them by making them wander in the wilderness until the unbelieving generation dies out. The new generation then reaches Moab, the doorway to the land of Canaan. It is here that God begins to instruct the people who are about to inherit the land.

**DEUTERONOMY** - Moses is at the end of his life and Joshua has been appointed as his successor. In his farewell messages to the generation that grew up in the wilderness, Moses reminds them of God's dealings in the past, reviews the need for righteousness and integrity in the present, and reveals what will happen in the near and distant future. Moses then blesses the people and views the Promised Land from Mount Nebo before his death.

### The Historical Books

#### A) The Theocratic Books

These books cover the conquest and settlement of Canaan and life during the time of the judges. During these years these years, Israel was a nation ruled by God (a theocracy).

**JOSHUA** - The first half of Joshua describes the seven-year



conquest of the Land of Promise through faith and obedience on the part of Joshua and the people. After their spiritual and physical preparation, the Israelites took the land in three campaigns: central, southern, and northern. The last half of the book details the partitioning of the land among the twelve tribes and closes with Joshua's challenge to the people.

JUDGES - The disobedience in Judges stands in contrast to the faithful obedience found in Joshua. The Israelites did not drive out all the Canaanites and began to take part in their idolatry. Judges records seven cycles of foreign oppression, repentance, and deliverance. The people failed to learn from these cycles, and the book ends with two illustrations of idolatry and immorality.

RUTH - This little book shed a ray of light in an otherwise dark period. The story of Ruth occurred in the days of the judges, but it is a powerful illustration of righteousness, love, and faithfulness to the Lord.

#### B) The Monarchical Books

These books trace the history of Israel's monarchy from its inception to its destruction.

FIRST SAMUEL - the prophet Samuel carried Israel across the transition from the judges to the monarchy. The people clamored for a king and God told Samuel to anoint Saul. Saul began well but soon degenerated into an ungodly tyrant. David became God's king-elect but he was pursued by the jealous Saul who murderous intentions were checked only by death.

SECOND SAMUEL - Upon the demise of Saul, David reigned for seven years over Judah and another thirty-three years over the twelve reunited tribes. His reign was characterized by great blessing until he committed adultery and murder. From that point until his death, he was plagued by personal, family, and national struggles.

FIRST KINGS - Solomon brought the kingdom to its political and economic zenith, but this wisest of men played the fool in his multiple marriages with foreign women. After his death, the kingdom was tragically divided when the ten northern tribes of Israel set up their own king. Only the southern kingdom of Judah (two tribes) remained subject to the Davidic dynasty.

SECOND KINGS - The story of the divided kingdom continues in Second Kings as it carries Israel and Judah to their bitter ends.

None of the nineteen kings of Israel did what was right in the sight of God, and their corruption led to captivity at the hands of the Assyrians. Judah lasted longer because eight of its twenty rulers followed the Lord. But Judah also fell in judgment and was carried away by the Babylonians .



**FIRST CHRONICLES** - The Books of Chronicles gave a divine perspective on the history of Israel from the time of David to the two captivities. The first book begins with a nine-chapter genealogy from Adam to the family of Saul, followed by a spiritually oriented account of the life of David.

**SECOND CHRONICLES** - This book continues the narrative with the life of Solomon, and focuses on the construction and dedication of the temple. It then traces the history of the kings of Judah only, giving the spiritual and moral reasons for its ultimate downfall.

**TOBIT** - Tobit, an Israelite living in Nineveh from the northern kingdom of Israel (in 721 B.C.) begs God to let him die. Recalling money deposited in Media, he send his son Tobiah to get the money. In Media, Sarah also prays for death because she has lost seven husbands by the demon Asmodeus. God sends his angel Raphael in disguise to aid them both. Raphael makes the trip to Media with Tobiah. Tobiah meets and marries Sarah and with the help of "useful medicines" learned from Raphael, Asmodeus is driven away, Tobias is cured, Raphael reveals himself, Tobit utters a beautiful hymn of praise.

### C) The Restoration Books

The last historical books describe the return of a remnant of the Jews to their homeland after seventy years of captivity. They were led in that period by Zerubbabal, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

**JUDITH** - This book is a vivid story relating how, in a grave crisis the Jewish people through the instrumentality of a woman is delivered by God.

**EZRA** - Babylon was conquered by Persia and Cyrus issued a decree that allowed the jews to return to Palestine. Zerubbabel led about fifty thousand to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, and years later, Ezra the priest returned with almost two thousand Jews.

**NEHEMIAH** - The temple was built, but the wall of Jerusalem still lay in ruins. Nehemiah obtained permission, supplies, and money from the king of Persia to rebuild the walls. After the walls were built, Ezra and Nehemiah led the people in revival and reforms.

**ESTHER** - The story of Esther took place between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra. Most of the Jews chose to remain in Persia, but their lives were in danger because of a plot to exterminate them. God sovereignly intervened and used Esther and Mordecai to deliver the people.

**FIRST MACCABEES** - Contains accounts of events which accompanied the attempted suppression of Judaism in Palestine in the second century B.C. The vigorous reaction to this attempt established



for a time the religious and political independence of the Jews. In this book, one man, Judas, third son of the priest Mattathias was the first leader of the revolt against the Seleucid kings who persecuted the Jews. The book records the salvation of Israel which God worked through the family of Mattathias - especially through his three sons, Judas, Jonathan, and Simon and his grandson, John Hyrcanus.

SECOND MACCABEES - This book gives a theological interpretation to this period in Jewish history. God's intervention directs the course of events, both to punish the sacriligious and blasphemous pagans and to purify God's holy temple and restore it to his faithful people.

## OLD TESTAMENT SERIES

### HEBREW POETRY

The seven poetical books illustrate three kinds of poetry: (1) lyric poetry - originally accompanied by music on the lyre, this poetry often has strong emotional elements (e.g., most of the Psalms); (2) didactic poetry - teaches principles about life by means of maxims (e.g., Proverbs, Ecclesiastes); and (3) dramatic poetry - dialogue in poetic form (e.g. Job).

Hebrew poetry is not based on assonance (rhyme) or meter. It has some rhythm which is produced by tonal stress, but this is not prominent. The real key to this kind of poetry is parallelism, which involves the "rhyming" of ideas through careful arrangement of parallel thoughts. At least six kinds of parallelism have been distinguished in Hebrew poetry: (1) **Synonymous parallelism**. Here the second line reinforces the thought of the first by using similar words and concepts (see Job 38:7; Ps 3:1; 25:4; 49:1; Prov 11:7, 25; 12:28). (2) **Synthetic parallelism**. The second line adds to or completes the idea of the first line (see Ps 1:1-2; 23:1, 5; 95:3; Prov 4:23). (3) **Antithetic parallelism**. The thought of the first line is contrasted in the second line (see Ps 1:6; 18:27; Prov 10:1; 14:34; 15:1). (4) **Emblematic parallelism**. The first line uses a figure of speech to illuminate the main point conveyed by the second line (see Ps 42:1; Prov 11:22; 25:25; 27:17). (5) **Climactic parallelism**. The second line repeats the first with the exception of the last term (see Ps 29:1; Prov 31:4). (6) **Formal parallelism**. The lines are joined solely by metric considerations (see Ps 2:6). Parallelism is found not only in couplets (two lines), but also in triplets and quatrains (three or four lines), and sometimes in whole stanzas.

Hebrew poetry is also characterized by vivid figures of speech: (1) **Simile**. A comparison between two things that resemble one another in some way (see Ps 1:3-4; 5:12; 17:8; 131:2). (2) **Metaphor**. A comparison in which one thing is declared to be another (see Ps 23:1; 84:11; 91:4). (3) **Implication**. An implied comparison between two things in which the name of one thing is used in place of the other (see Ps 22:16; Jer 4:7). (4) **Hyperbole**. The use of exaggeration to emphasize a point (see Ps 6:6; 78:27; 107:26). (5) **Rhetorical question**. The use of a question to confirm or deny a fact (see Ps 35:10; 56:8; 94:6; 106:2). (6) **Metonymy**. One noun used in place of another because of some relationship between the two (see Ps 5:9; 18:2; 57:9; 73:9). (7) **Anthropomorphism**. Assign an appropriate part of the human body to God's Person to convey some truth about God (see Ps 11:4; 18:15; 31:2; 32:8). (8) **Zoomorphism**. Assigning an appropriate part of an animal to God's Person to convey some truth about God (see Ps 17:8; 36:6; 63:7; 91:4). (9) **Personification**. Assigning the characteristics of a human to lifeless objects (see Ps 35:10; 77:16; 96:11; 104:19). (10) **Apostrophe**. Addressing lifeless objects (see Ps 114:5). (11) **Synecdoche**. Representation of the whole by a part or a part by the whole (see Ps 91:5). Visual



imagery is clearly predominant in the poets.

Another technique in Hebrew poetry is the alphabet acrostic - the first Hebrew letter in a line is the first letter of the alphabet, the second is the second letter of the alphabet, and so on. There are several variations on this technique (e.g., Ps 119 and each chapter in Lamentations).

There are also five books of wisdom within the poets: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom and Sirach. These books are denoted as such by the content, not the form. It is likely that there were schools of wisdom in Israel (see 1 Sam 24:13; 1 King 4:29-34). These wise men were practical observers of life who gave right answers in critical situations.

## THE WISDOM (POETICAL) BOOKS

Until recently not many people realized that fully one-third of the Hebrew Scripture was written in poetry. The poetical-Wisdom - books do not advance the story of the nation Israel as the historical or prophetic books do. They do delve deeply into crucial questions about pain, God, wisdom, life, and love - all in the present tense.

**JOB** - Job was a righteous man who was suddenly embroiled in an intense ideal of every kind of suffering. He went through three cycles of debate with his friends who insisted that his misfortune must have been caused by sin. When God finally revealed Himself in His majesty and power to Job, it became obvious that the real issue was not Job's suffering but God's sovereignty. Job's questions were never answered but he willingly submitted to the wisdom and righteousness of God.

**PSALMS** - The five books of psalms span the centuries from Moses to the postexilic period and cover the full range of human emotions and experiences. The wide variety of Psalms (lament, thanksgiving, praise, enthronement, pilgrimage, etc.) suited them for service as the temple hymnal for the people of Israel. The psalms were set to music and focused on worship.

**PROVERBS** - The Book of Proverbs was designed to equip the reader in practical wisdom, discernment, discipline, and discretion. These maxims emphasize the development of skill in all the details of life so that beauty and righteousness will replace foolishness and evil as one walks in dependence upon God.

**ECCLESIASTES** - The Preacher of Ecclesiastes applied his great mind and considerable resources to the quest for purpose and satisfaction in life under the sun. He found that wisdom, wealth, works, pleasure, and power all led to futility and striving after wind. The problem was compounded by the injustices and uncertainties of life. The only source of ultimate meaning and fulfillment is God Himself. One should therefore acknowledge his ability to understand all the ways of God, trust and obey Him and enjoy His gifts.

**SONG OF SONGS (SOLOMON)** - This beautiful song portrays the intimate love relationship between Solomon and his Shulamite bride. It magnifies the virtues of physical and emotional love in marriage.

**WISDOM (OF SOLOMON)** - The first part of this book is a public address; the second half is an interpretation of Bible themes in homily form. The book is an attempt to edify fellow Jews with the most popular religious themes of the time: the splendor and worth of divine wisdom, the glorious events of the Exodus, God's mercy, the folly of idolatry, and the manner in which God's justice is vindicated in rewarding or punishing the individual soul.

**SIRACH (ECCLESIASTICUS)** - This book contains numerous maxims formulated with care, grouped by affinity, and dealing with a variety of subjects such as the individual, the family, and the community in their relations with one another and with God. It treats of friendship, education, poverty and wealth, the law, religious worship, and many other matters which reflect the religious and social customs of the time.



**SONG OF SONGS (SOLOMON)** - This beautiful song portrays the intimate love relationship between Solomon and his Shulamite bride. It magnifies the virtues of physical and emotional love in marriage.

**WISDOM (OF SOLOMON)** - The first part of this book is a public address; the second half is an interpretation of Bible themes in homily form. The book is an attempt to edify fellow Jews with the most popular religious themes of the time: the splendor and worth of divine wisdom, the glorious events of the Exodus, God's mercy, the folly of idolatry, and the manner in which God's justice is vindicated in rewarding or punishing the individual soul.

**SIRACH (ECCLESIASTICUS)** - This book contains numerous maxims formulated with care, grouped by affinity, and dealing with a variety of subjects such as the individual, the family, and the community in their relations with one another and with God. It treats of friendship, education, poverty and wealth, the law, religious worship, and many other matters which reflect the religious and social customs of the time.

## **THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS**

### **A) THE MAJOR PROPHETS**

The Prophetical Books comprise about one-fourth of Scripture and are crucial from a theological and historical point of view. Yet their message and meaning evade more people than any other section of the Bible, principally because of neglect.

**ISAIAH** - This pinnacle of the prophets has a two-fold message of condemnation (1 - 39) and consolation (40 - 66). Isaiah analyzes the sins of Judah and pronounces God's judgment on the nation. He broadens his scope to include judgment on the surrounding nations and moves to universal judgment followed by blessing. After a parenthesis concerning King Hezekiah, Isaiah consoles the people with a message of future salvation and restoration. Yahweh is sovereign Savior who will rescue His people.

**JEREMIAH** - Judah had reached the depths of moral and spiritual decay and Jeremiah was called to the heartbreaking and unpopular ministry of declaring the certain judgment of God against the nation. Jeremiah faithfully ministered in spite of rejection and persecution, and the dreaded day finally came. Judah's defiance of God's holiness led to her downfall, but God graciously promised to establish a new covenant with His people.

**LAMENTATIONS** - This beautifully structured series of five lament poems is Judah's funeral for the fallen city of Jerusalem. After his forty years of warning, Jeremiah's awful words came true. His sorrow is obvious in his vivid descriptions of the defeat, destruction, and desolation of Jerusalem.



**JONAH** - With a prophetic message of only one line, Jonah is the most biographical of all the prophets. The repentant response of the people of Nineveh to Jonah's terse oracle causes the God of mercy to spare the city. But the central teaching of the book is the lesson on compassion God has to teach His reluctant prophet. Jonah learns to look beyond his nation and trust the Creator of all people.

**MICAH** - The prophecy of Micah begins with a word of divine retribution against Israel and Judah because of the radical corruption on every level of society: rulers, prophets, priests, judges, businessmen, and landlords. But God's covenant promises will be fulfilled in the future kingdom of the Messiah. Judgment will ultimately be followed by forgiveness and restoration, and the book ends on a strong note of promise.

**NAHUM** - About 125 years after Nineveh repented under the preaching of Jonah, Micah predicted the imminent destruction of the same city. The people in the Assyrian capital have reverted to idolatry and brutality, and holiness and power. Nineveh will surely be destroyed in spite of its apparent invincibility.

**HABAKKUK** - Very close to the end of the kingdom of Judah, Habakkuk asks God why He is not dealing with the wickedness of his nation. When God tells him, He is about to use the Babylonians as His rod of judgment, Habakkuk asks a second question: How can He judge Judah with a nation that is even more wicked? After the Lord's second response, the prophet magnifies the name of God for His power and purposes.

**ZEPHANIAH** - In no uncertain terms, Zephaniah develops the theme of the coming day of the Lord as a day of awesome judgment followed by great blessing. Zephaniah begins with the coming judgment of Judah and broadens his scope to include the Gentiles as well. Because Judah refuses to seek the Lord, it stands condemned. But a Remnant will exult when God restores the fortunes of His people.

**HAGGAI** - After the Babylonian exile, the Jews began to rebuild the temple but allowed the work to stop while they rebuilt their own houses instead. Because of their failure to put God first, they were not enjoy His blessing in the land. Haggai urges the people to finish the temple because God's promise that it would be filled with glory. After chastening the people for their contamination, Haggai closes with a promise of future blessing.

**ZECHARIAH** - A contemporary of Haggai, Zechariah also exhorts the Jews to complete the construction of the temple. Zechariah's method of motivating them is one of encouragement - the temple is central to Israel's spiritual heritage, and is related to the coming of the Messiah. Zechariah's series of visions, messages, and burdens offer some of the clearest messianic prophecies in Scripture. God reveals that His program for his people is far



**EZEKIEL** - The prophet Ezekiel ministered to the Jewish captives in Babylon before and after the fall of Jerusalem. Like Jeremiah, he had to convince the people that the city was doomed and that the Captivity would not be brief. Ezekiel also described the fate of Judah's foes and ended with a great apocalyptic vision of Judah's future.

**DANIEL** - This crucial book abounds with detailed prophecies and visions of the future. It outlines God's sovereign plan for the gentile nations (2 - 7) and moves on to a portrait of Israel during the time of gentile domination (8 - 12). At a time when the Jews had little hope, Daniel provided encouragement by revealing God's power and plans for their future.

### **B) THE MINOR PROPHETS**

**BARUCH** - The well-known secretary of the prophet Jeremiah addresses the exiles in Babylonia. He reminds them in prose of the wisdom in the law of Moses. Two sections of the work consoles the captives in prophecy and prophecies the end of captivity. The work closes with a letter from the prophet Jeremiah warning the exiles of the danger of idolatry while in Babylon.

**HOSEA** - The unhappy story of Hosea and his faithless wife Gomer illustrates the loyal love of God and the spiritual adultery of Israel. Hosea exposes the sins of Israel and contrasts them to God's holiness. The nation must be judged for its sins but it will be restored in the future because of the love and faithfulness of God.

**JOEL** - This book looks back to a recent plague that decimated the land of Judah to illustrate the far more terrifying day of the Lord. The land will be invaded by a fearsome army that will make the locusts seem mild in comparison. Nevertheless, God appeals to the people to repent in order to divert the coming disaster. Because the people will not change, judgment will come, but it will be followed by great blessing.

**AMOS** - The northern kingdom was in its heyday when Amos warned the people of their coming doom. In eight pronouncements of judgment, Amos spirals around the surrounding countries before landing on Israel. He then delivers three sermons to list the sins of the house of Israel and call for repentance. The people reject Amos' warnings and their coming judgment is portrayed in a series of five visions. But Amos closes his book with a brief word of future hope.

**OBADIAH** - This obscure prophet of the southern kingdom directs his brief oracle to the nation of Edom that bordered Judah on the southeast. Edom (descended from Esau) refused to act as his brother's keeper toward Judah (descended from Jacob). Because they gloated when Jerusalem was invaded, their judgment would be nothing less than total destruction.



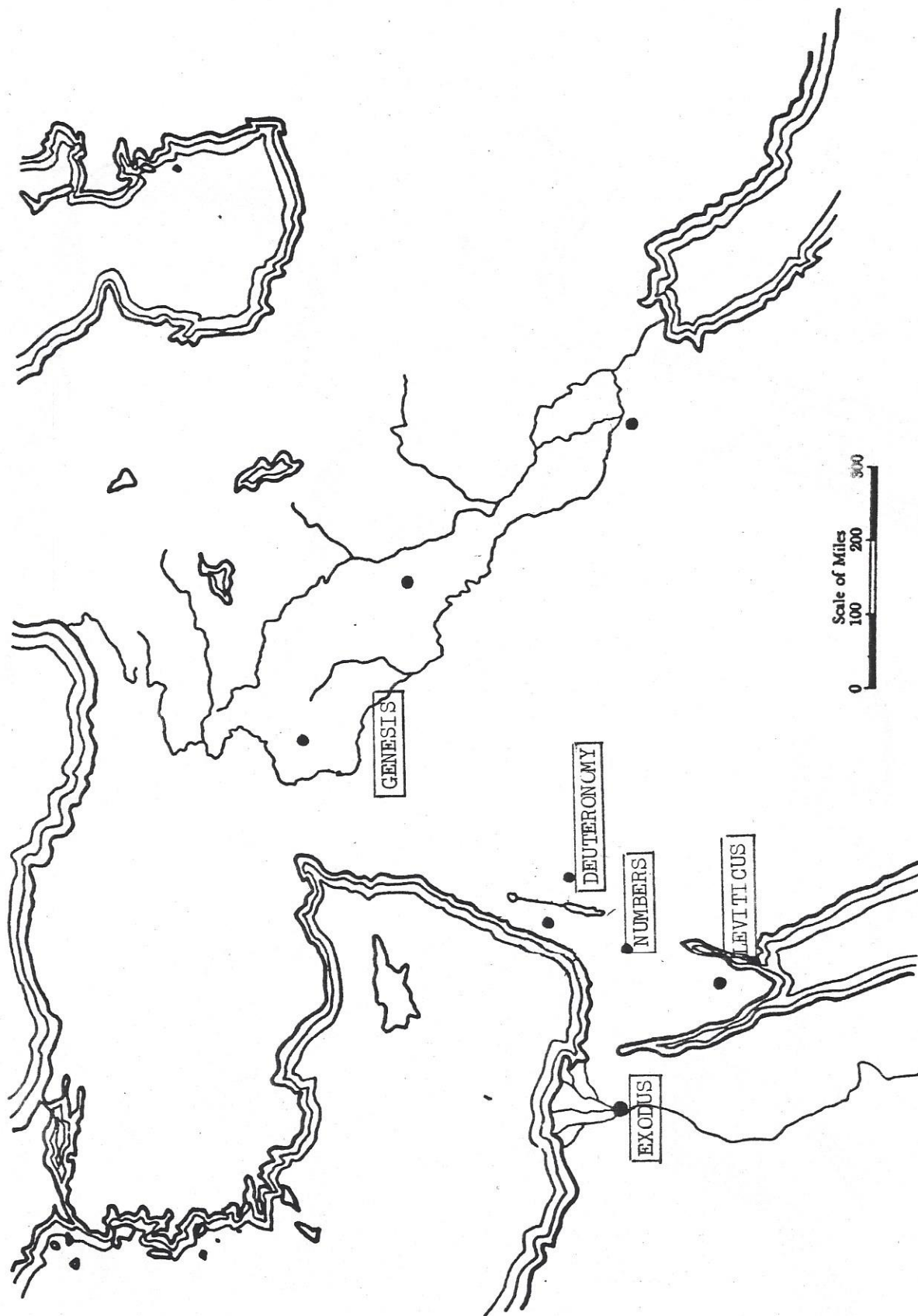
from completed.

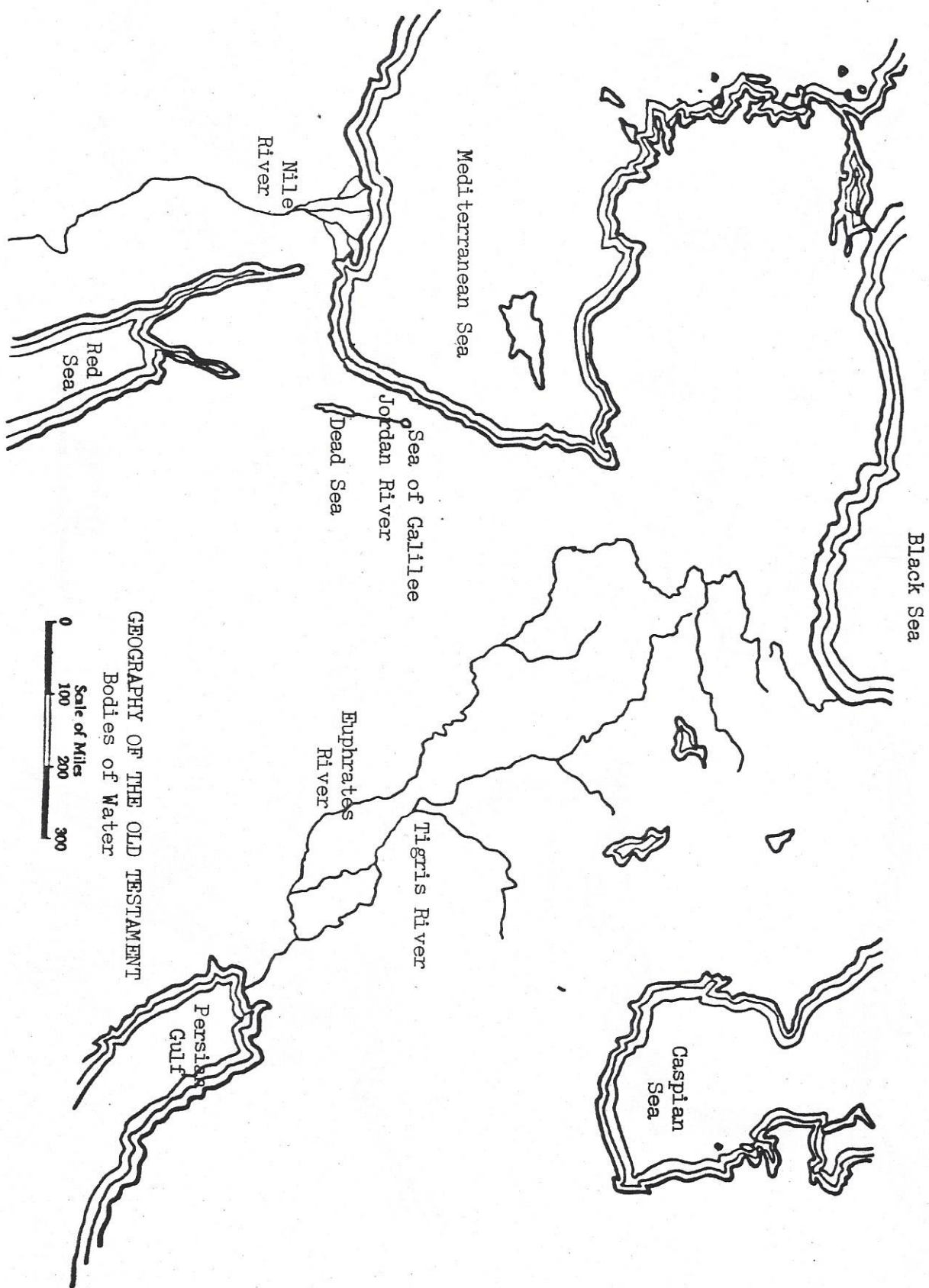
MALACHI - By the time of the last Old Testament prophet, the spiritual and moral climate of the people had grown cold. Their worship is meaningless and indifferent, and as they grow more distant from God, they become characterized by religious and social compromise. A terrible day of judgment is coming when "all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff" to be burned, "But for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings."

## PROPHETS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

Name	Date	Audience	Theme
Isaiah	c. 740-680	Pre-Exile: Judah	Salvation is of the Lord
Jeremiah	c. 627-580	Pre-Exile: Judah	Warning of coming judgment
Baruch	c. 597-538	Exile: Exiles in Babylon	Portrays a spirit of repentance
Ezekiel	c. 593-571	Exile: Exiles in Babylon	Glory of the Lord
Daniel	c. 605-535	Exile: Exiles in Babylon	Sovereignty of God over men and nations
Hosea	c. 755-715	Pre-Exile: Israel	Loyal Love of God
Joel	c. 835	Pre-Exile: Judah	Day of the Lord
Amos	c. 760-753	Pre-Exile: Israel	Judgment on Israel
Obadiah	c. 848-841	Pre-Exile: Edom	Doom on Edom
Jonah	c. 782-753	Pre-Exile: Assyria	Salvation to the Gentiles
Micah	c. 735-700	Pre-Exile: Judah	Injustice of Judah and Justice of God
Nahum	c. 664-654	Pre-Exile: Assyria	The Destruction of Ninevah
Habakkuk	c. 609-605	Pre-Exile: Judah	The Just Shall Live by Faith
Zephaniah	c. 632-628	Pre-Exile: Judah	Judgment and Blessing in the Day of the Lord
Haggai	c. 520	Post-Exile: Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonia	Rebuilding the Temple
Zechariah	c. 520-480	Post-Exile: Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonia	Future Blessing for Israel
Malachi	c. 432-424	Post-Exile: Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonia	Appeal to Backsliders



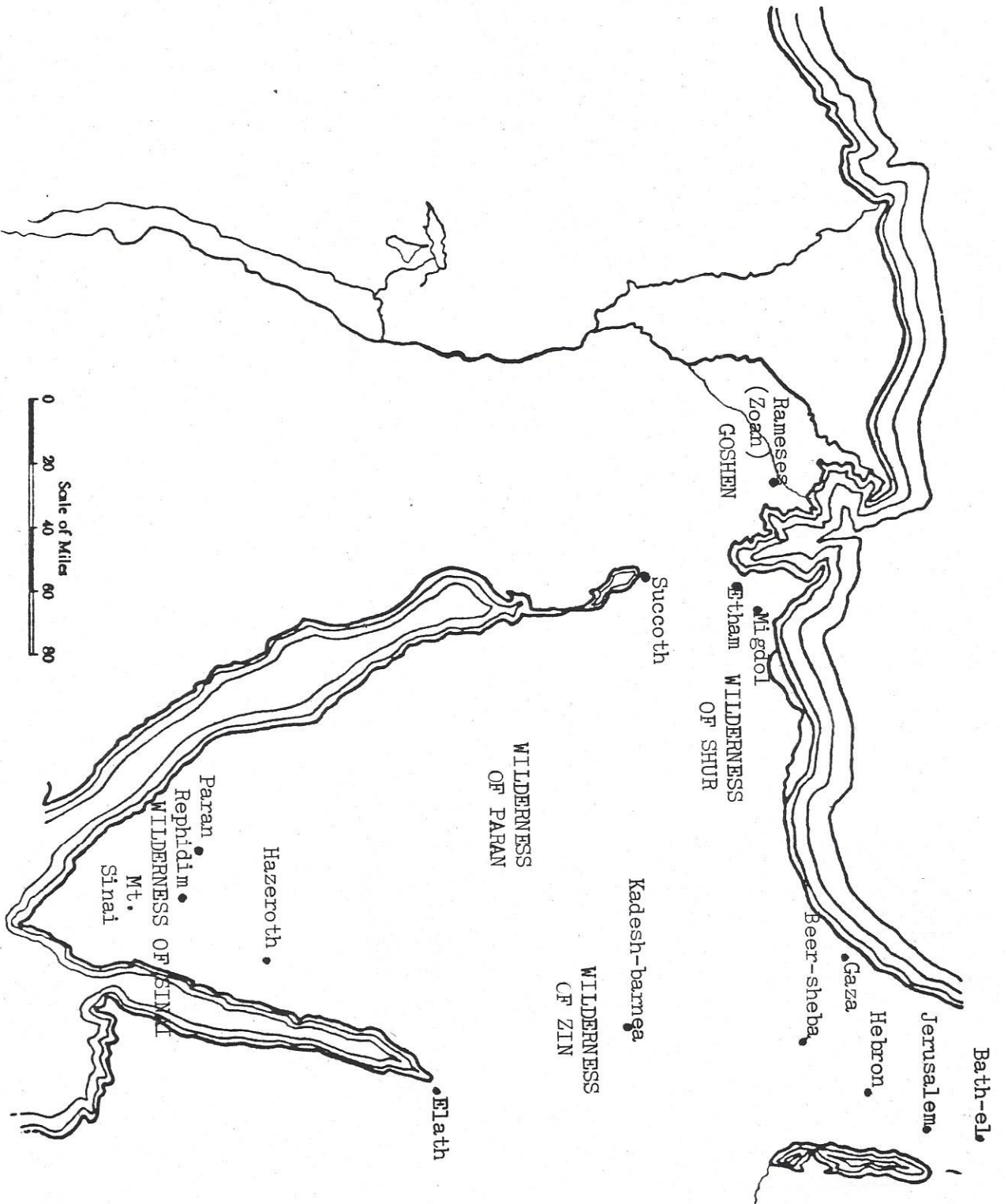


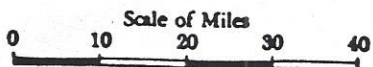
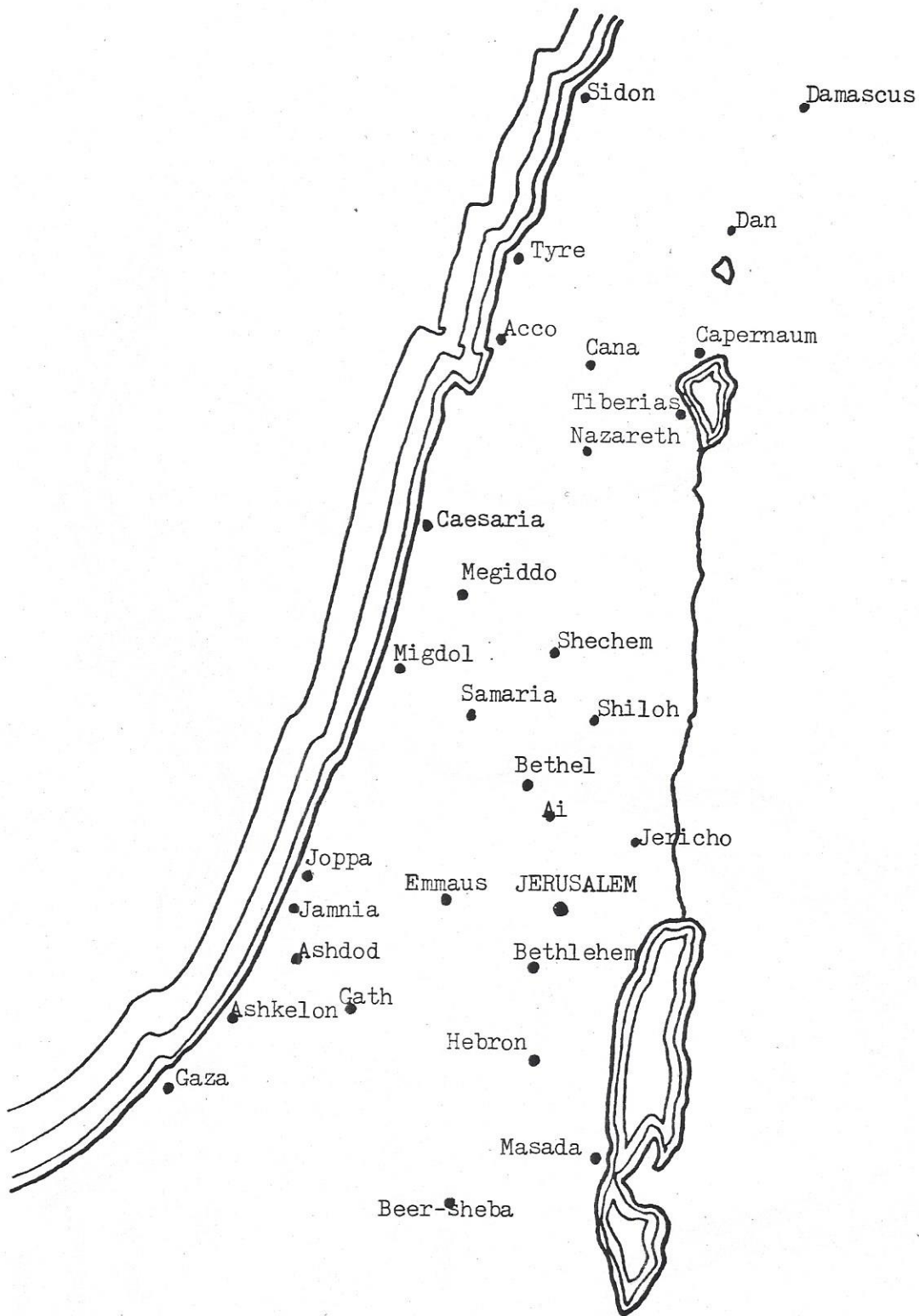


GEOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT  
Bodies of Water

0 100 200 300  
Scale of Miles

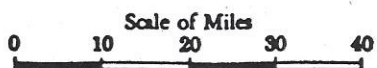
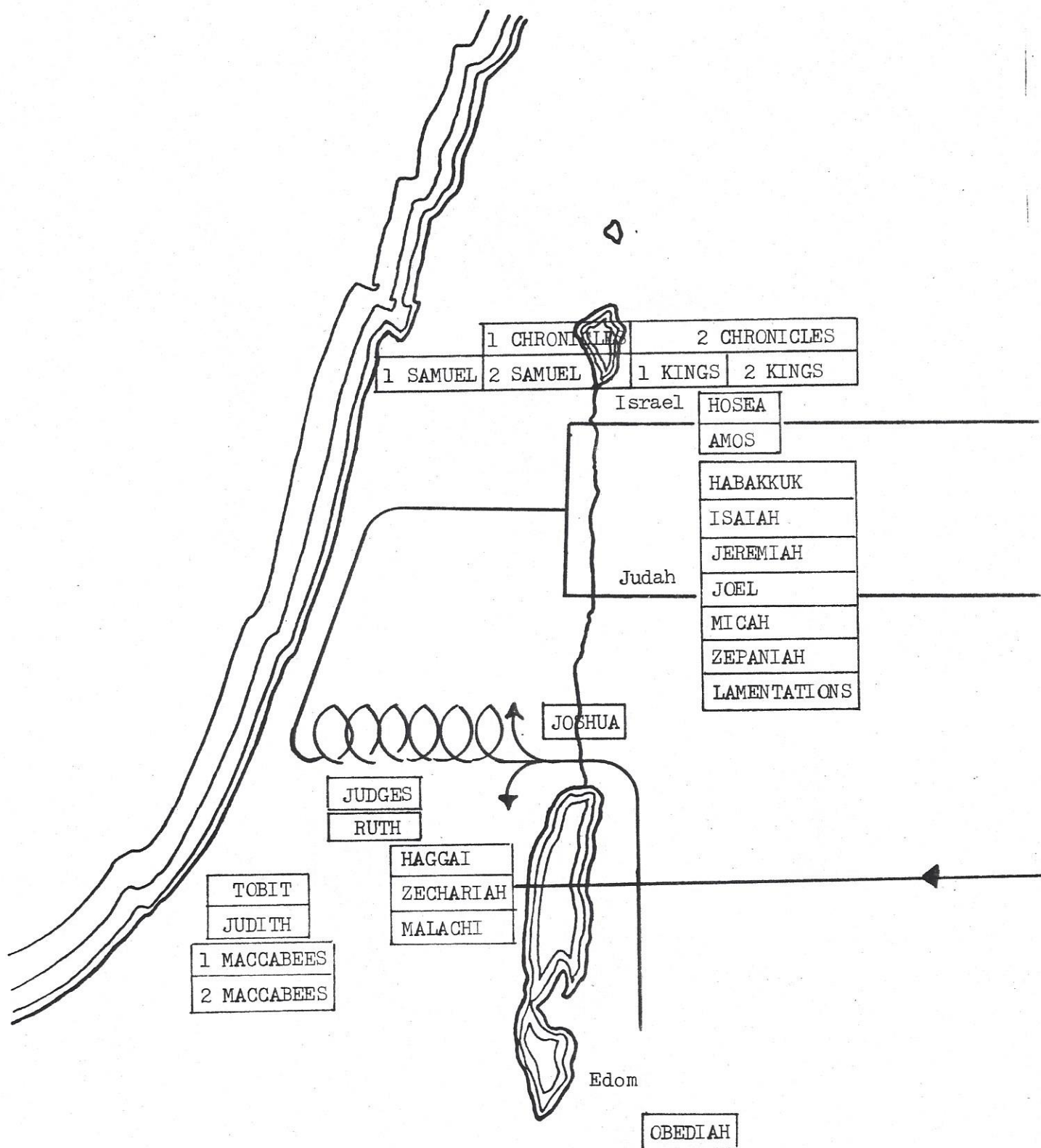


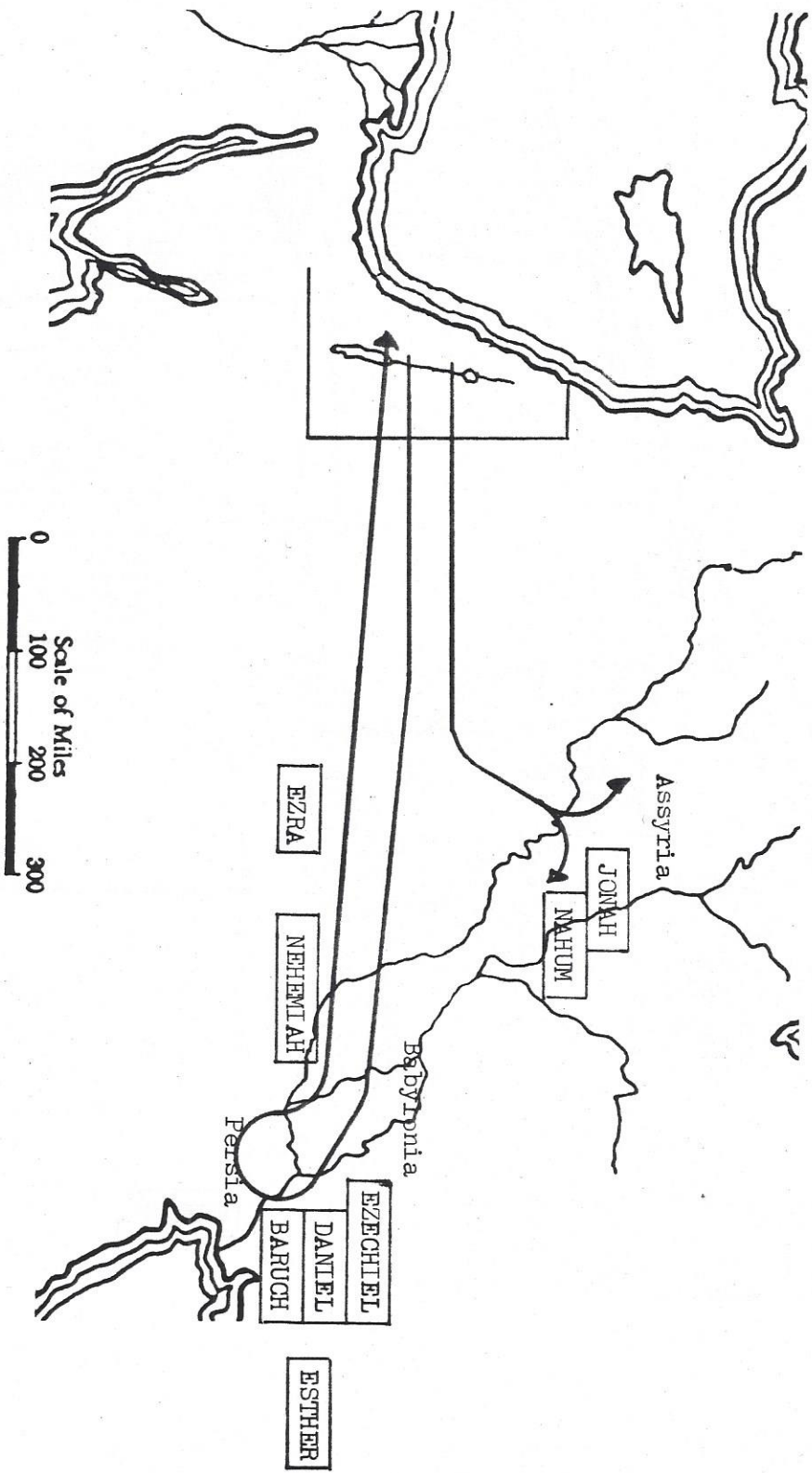




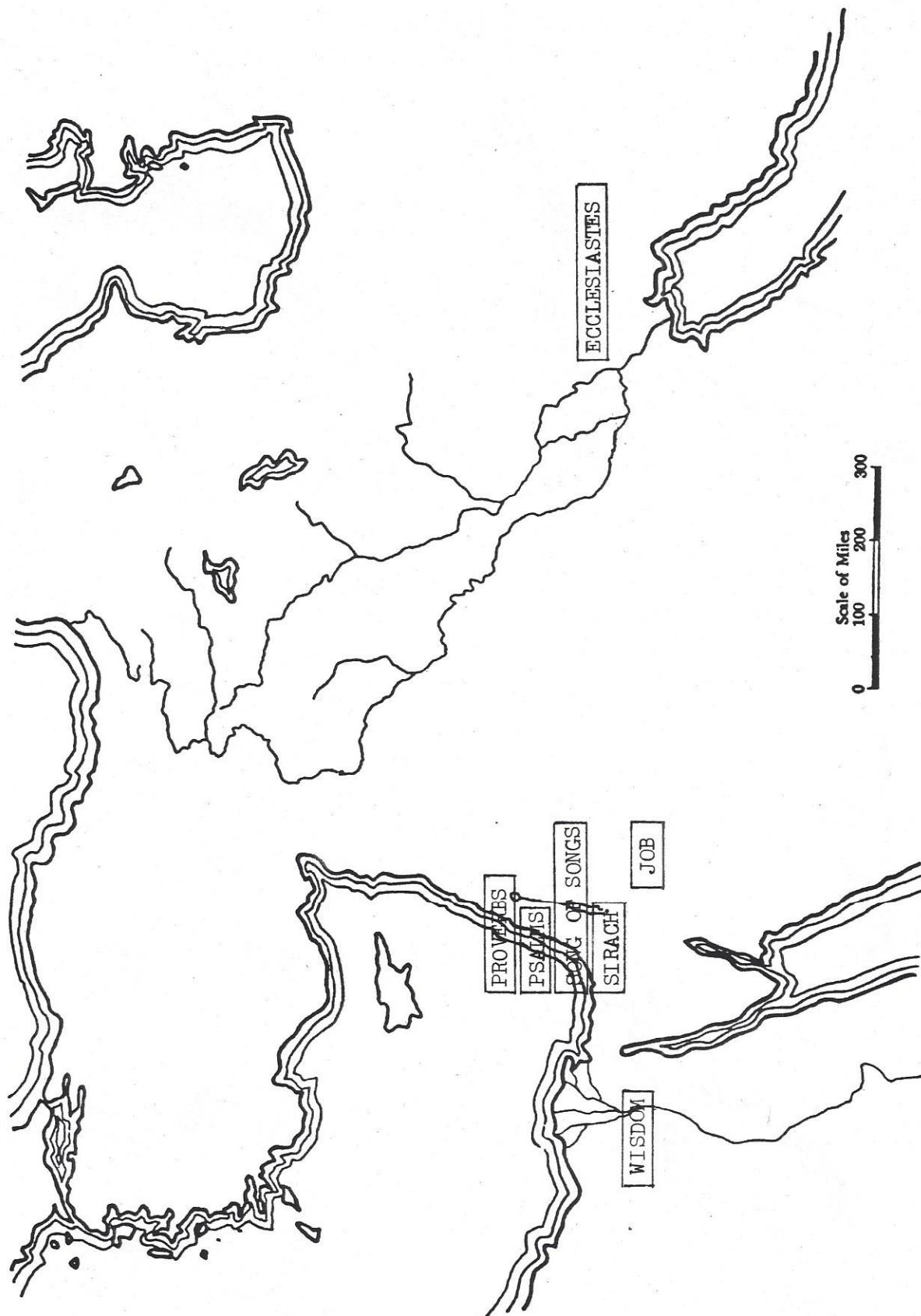
SOME BIBLE CITIES

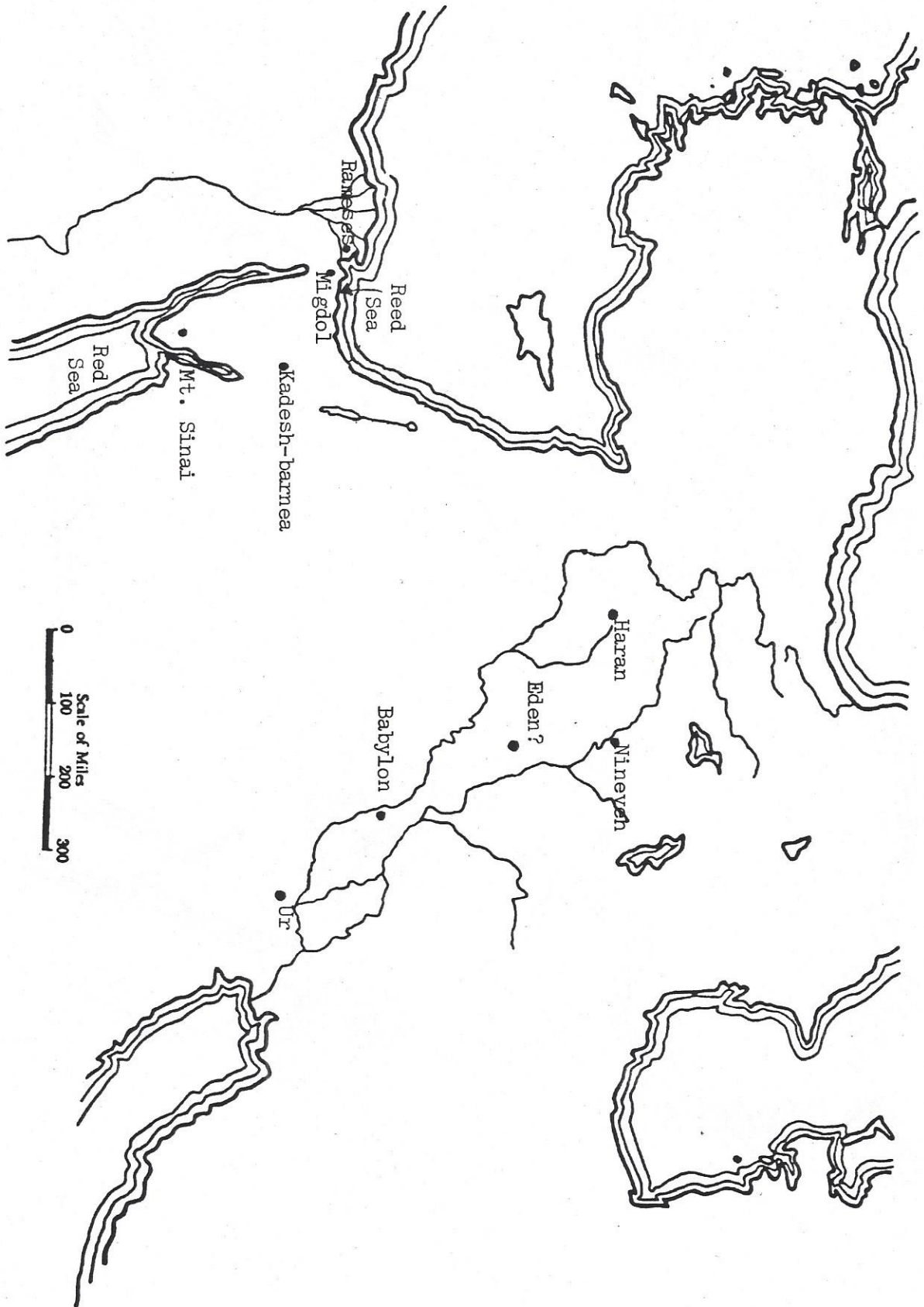




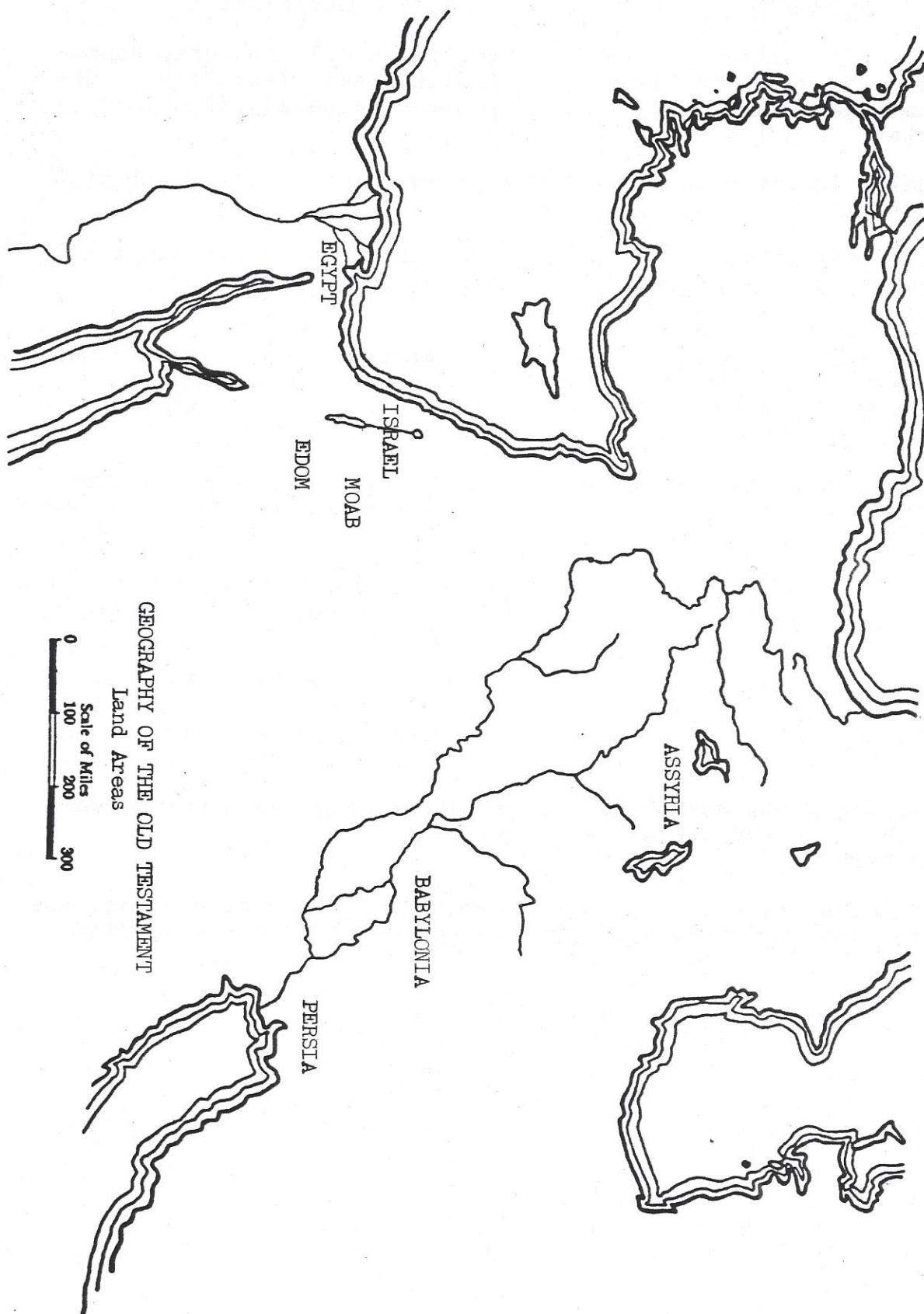












## PROPHETS

Men of action, rising to the to the needs of their times by spontaneous, eloquent preaching.

Personally involved in Palestinian politics.

Presented their message as a judgment upon individual events.

Crusaded for the rule of Yahweh over his people, Israel, and championed the cause of the Davidic royal family.

Spoke bluntly about religious and were seldom misunderstood.

Insisted upon a day of the Lord, sweeping darkness upon the wicked, bringing victory to the elect.

This struggle was mostly between the good and the wicked within Israel.

Saw the present, sorrowful moment leading to future victory.

## APOCALYPTISTS

Men of the written word, communicating their message with deliberate, studied effect.

Reached out to a cosmic mission.

Developed a religious explanation of universal history.

Envisaged a world-wide domain for Yahweh and gave less and less and finally no attention to Davidic messianism.

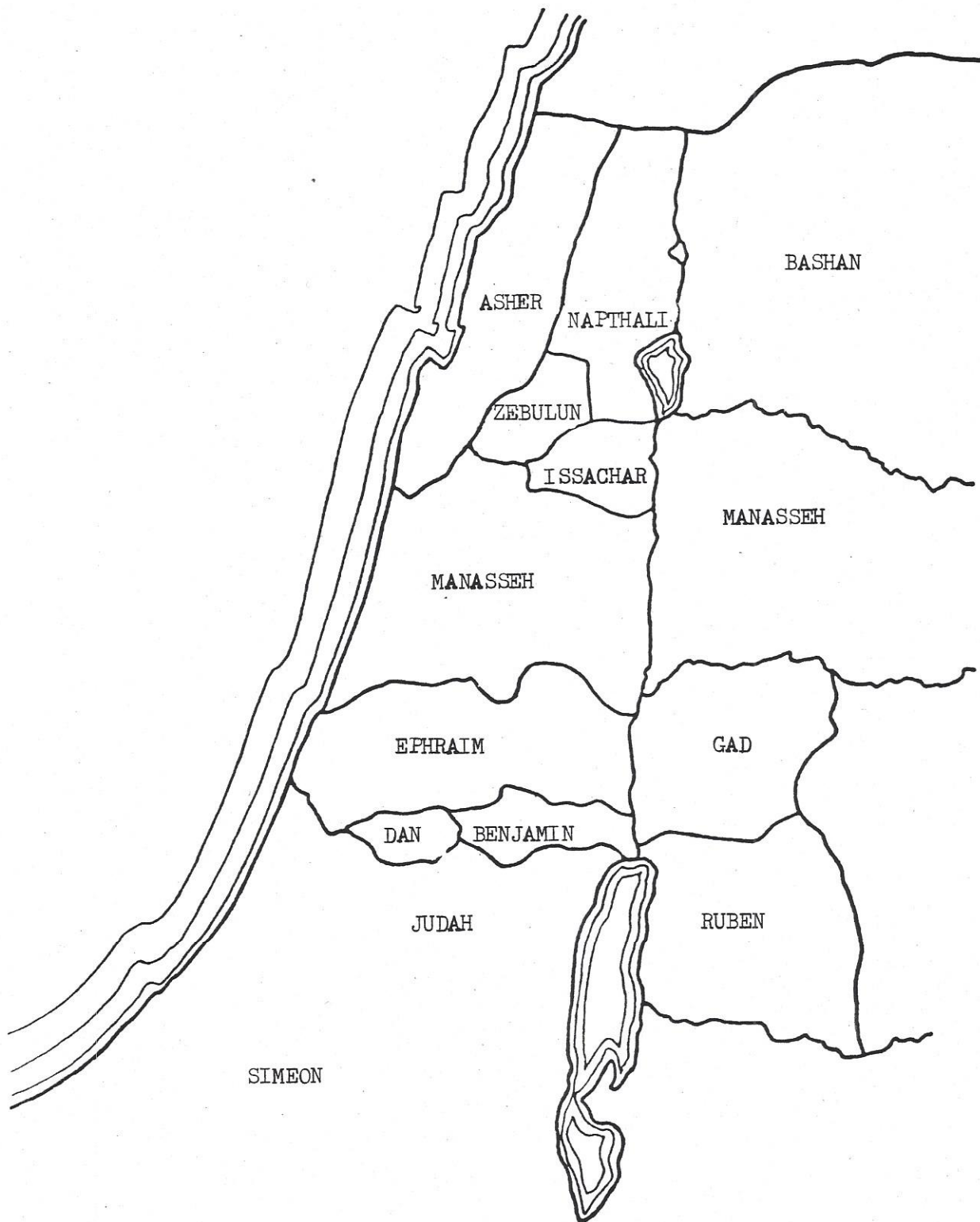
Wrote symbolically about abuses "visions" that they did not fully understand and that their audience found still more baffling. Angels usually had to be on hand to explain the symbolic vision.

Saw the darkness still deeper and the light still more blinding; goodness and evil were interlocked in mortal struggle.

This struggle was a world convulsion.

Watched the heavens open and the future crash into the present.

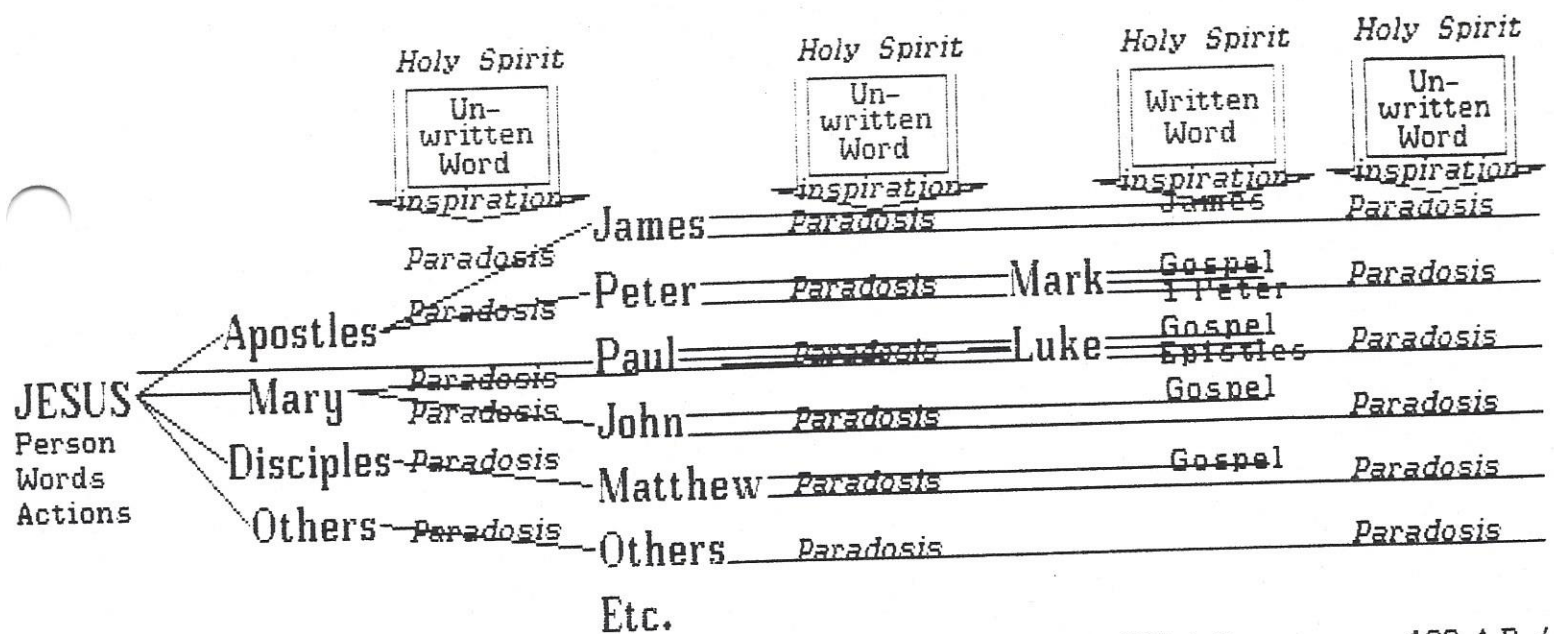




Scale of Miles  
0 10 20 30 40







/4 B.C. - 27 A.D.//27A.D.

50 A.D.//50 A.D. - 100 A.D./

"Hold fast to the traditions you received ... by word ... by letter" 2 Thess 2:15

"When the Paraclete comes ... he will bear witness on my behalf" Jo 15:26  
 "I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. When he comes, ... the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth" Jo 16:13

Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through. Some words like "Holly" and "Holly" are visible at the top left.

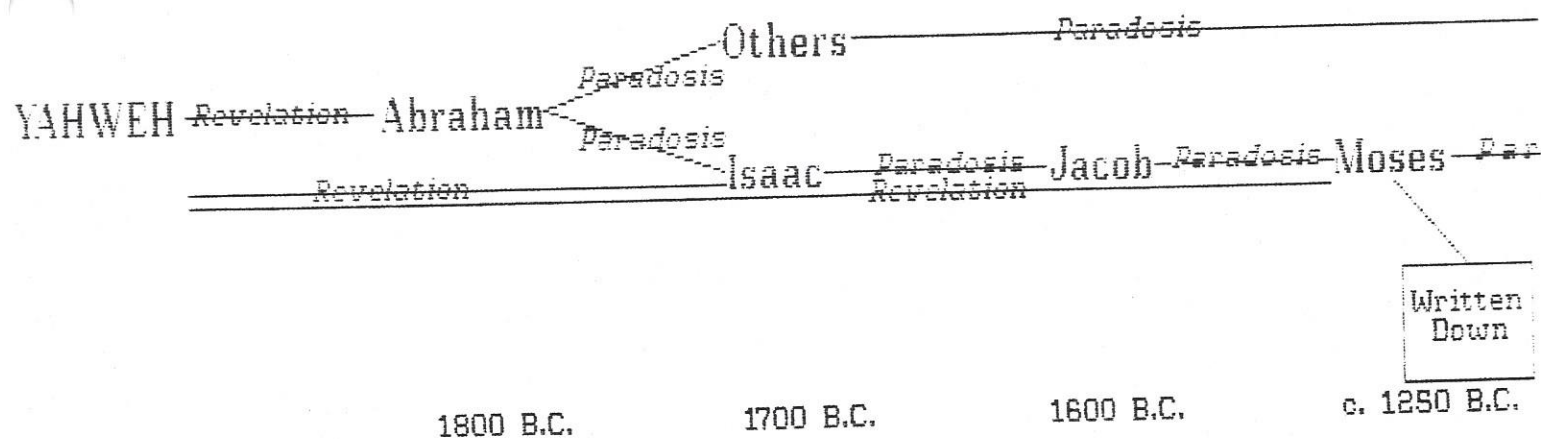
Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through. Some words like "Holly" and "Holly" are visible at the top left.

Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through. Some words like "Holly" and "Holly" are visible at the top left.



# God Revealing and Man Handing On

Revelation and Paradosis (Handing On, Tradition)

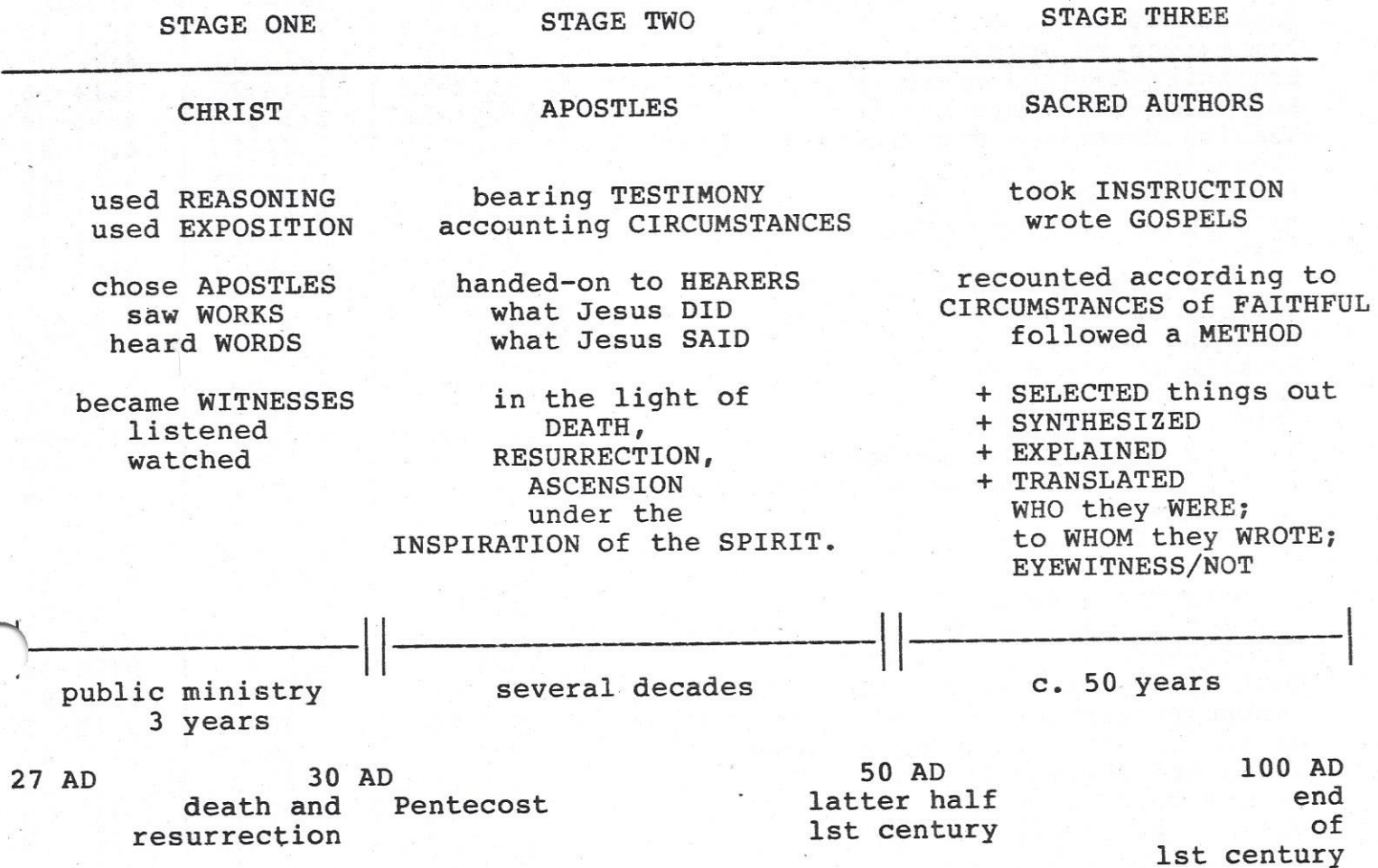


and the following are the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various positions in the organization of the National Association of Manufacturers.

The following are the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various positions in the organization of the National Association of Manufacturers.

The following are the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various positions in the organization of the National Association of Manufacturers.

# STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOSPELS





# SYNOPTIC PARALLELS

	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Preaching of John the Baptist	3:1-2	1:1-8	3:1-20
Baptism of Jesus	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-22
Temptation of Jesus	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13
Beginning Galilee ministry	4:12-17	1:14-15	4:14-15
Rejection at Nazareth	13:53-58	6:1-6	4:16-30
Healing Peter's mother-in-law, others	8:14-17	1:29-34	4:38-41
Cleansing of a leper	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16
Healing of the paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26
Calling of Matthew (Levi)	9:9-13	2:13-17	5:27-32
Fasting	9:14-17	2:18-22	5:33-39
Grain plucking on the Sabbath	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5
Healing of withered hand	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11
Choosing the Twelve	10:1-4	3:13-19	6:12-16
Parable of the sower	13:1-23	4:1-20	8:4-15
Jesus' true family	12:46-50	3:31-35	8:19-21
Calming of the storm	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25
Healing demon-possessed man	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39
Jairus' daughter/woman with hemorrhage	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56
The Twelve sent out	10:5-15	6:7-13	9:1-6
John the Baptist beheaded	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9
Five thousand fed	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17
Peter's confession	16:13-19	8:27-29	9:18-20
Jesus foretells death and resurrection	16:20-28	8:30-9:1	9:21-27
Transfiguration	17:1-8	9:2-8	9:28-36
Casting out unclean spirit	17:14-18	9:14-27	9:37-43
Second prediction of death/resurrection	17:22-23	9:30-32	9:43-45
Greatest in the kingdom of heaven	18:1-5	9:33-37	9:46-48
Jesus and Beelzebub	12:22-30	3:20-27	11:14-23
Demand for a sign	12:38-42	8:11-12	11:29-32
Parable of the mustard seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
Blessing of the little children	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17
Rich young ruler	19:16-30	10:17-31	18:18-30
Third prediction of death/resurrection	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34
Healing blind Bartimaeus, another	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-42
Triumphal entry into Jerusalem	21:1-11	11:1-11	19:28-40
Authority of Jesus	21:23-27	11:27-33	20:1-8
Vineyard and tenants	21:33-46	12:1-12	20:9-19
Paying tax to Caesar	22:15-22	12:13-17	20:20-26
The resurrection	22:23-33	12:18-27	20:27-40
David's son	22:41-46	12:35-37	20:41-44
Sermon on the last days	24:1-36	13:1-32	21:5-33
Passover plot	26:1-5,	14:1-2,	22:1-6
	26:14-16	14:10-11	
Preparing for Passover	26:17-20	14:12-17	22:7-14
Foretelling the betrayal	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23
The Lord's Supper	26:26-30	14:22-26	22:14-20
Prediction of Peter's denial	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:31-34
Gethsemane	26:36-46	14:32-42	22:39-46
Arrest of Jesus	26:47-56	14:43-50	22:47-53
Sanhedrin/Peter's denial	26:57-75	14:53-72	22:54-71

	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Jesus before Pilate	27:1-2, 27:11-14	15:1-5	23:1-5
Sentencing of Jesus	27:15-26	15:6-15	23:17-25
Crucifixion, Death, Burial	27:32-61	15:21-47	23:26-56
Resurrection	28:1-8	16:1-8	24:1-12

The Similarities among the Synoptics:

	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Total verses	1070	677	1150
Unique tradition	330	70	520
Approximate part of whole	1/3	1/10	1/2
Twofold tradition	170 - 180 (Mt and Mk)	170 - 180 (Mk and Mt)	230 (Lk and Mt)
	230 (Mt and Lk)	50 (Mk and Lk)	50 (Lk and Mk)
Threefold tradition	350 - 370	350 - 370	350 - 370

The Arrangement among the Synoptics:

	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Preliminaries to the ministry	3:1 - 4:11	1:1 - 13	3:1 - 4:13
Galilean ministry	4:12 - 18:35	1:14 - 9:50	4:14 - 9:50
Journey to Jerusalem	19:1 - 20:34	10:1 - 52	9:51 - 18:43
Passion and resurrection	21 - 28	11 - 16	19 - 24



GOSPEL MATERIAL UNIQUE TO MATTHEW

Annunciation to Joseph of Jesus' birth	1:18-25
The wise men	2:1-12
Flight to Egypt and return	2:13-23
Instructions in the Sermon of the Mount	
On the Law	5:17-20
On murder	5:21-26
On oaths	5:33-37
On non resistance	5:38-42
On almsgiving	6:1-4
On fasting	6:16-18
On trusting the Father	6:19-32
On prayer	7:7-11
On entrance by the narrow gate	7:13-14
Jesus speaking with authority	7:28-29
Healing the blind and dumb	9:27-34
The harvest is great	9:35-38
The way of a disciple	10:16-42
Condemnation of the cities	11:20-24
Call to discipleship	11:25-30
Parables	
Weeds	13:24-30
	13:36-43
Hidden treasure	13:44
Pearl of great price	13:45-46
Dragnet	13:47-50
Treasures new and old	13:51-52
Peter ... the rock	16:17-19
Payment of temple tax	17:24-27
Forgiveness	18:15-22
Parable of unforgiving servant	18:23-35
Parable of vineyard workers	20:1-16
Parable of two sons	21:28-32
Denunciation of external spirituality	23:8-12
Condemnation of scribes and pharisees	23:13-39
End times	24:32-41
Admonition of readiness	24:42-44
Parable of the wise and wicked servants	24:45-51
Parable of the ten virgins	25:1-13
Sheep and goats	25:31-46
Death of Judas	27:3-10
The guard at the tomb	27:62-66
Report of the guard	28:11-15
The great commission	28:16-20



GOSPEL MATERIAL UNIQUE TO MARK

Seed grows of itself	4:26-29
Deaf and dumb man healed	7:31-37
Blind man healed at Bethsaida	8:22-26
Forgiveness conditioned on our forgiving	11:25-26
A young man who fled	14:51-52
The great commission	16:14-18

GOSPEL MATERIAL UNIQUE TO LUKE

Dedication to Theophilus	1:1-4
Gabriel and Zechariah	1:5-25
Gabriel and Mary	1:26-38
Mary and Elizabeth	1:39-45
Mary's Magnificat	1:46-56
Birth of John the Baptist	1:57-66
Zechariah's prophecy	1:67-80
Census, journey to Bethlemen, inn full	2:1-7
Angels and shepherds	2:8-20
Circumcision and temple offering	2:21-40
Boy Jesus in the temple	2:41-52
Date of John the Baptist	3:1-2
Specific teachings of John	3:10-14
Luke's genealogy of Jesus	3:23-37
Large catch of fish; calling of Simon Peter	5:5-11
Widow's son at Naim	7:11-17
The penitent woman	7:36-50
Women who supported Jesus	8:1-3
Rejection by Samaritan village	9:51-56
The seventy-two sent out	10:1-12
The seventy-two return	10:17-20
The good Samaritan	10:29-37
Mary and Martha	10:38-42
The importunate friend	11:9-13a
True blessedness	11:27-28
Parable of the rich fool	12:13-21
Much given, much expected	12:41-50
Repent or perish	13:1-5
Parable of the barren fig tree	13:6-9
Woman healed on Sabbath	13:10-17
Man with dropsy healed	14:1-6
Lesson to guests and host	14:7-14
Count the cost	14:28-33
Parable of the lost coin	15:8-10
Parable of the lost son	15:11-32
Parable of the dishonest steward	16:1-13
Rich man and Lazarus	16:19-31
Ten lepers cleansed	17:11-19
Parable of the widow and the judge	18:1-8
Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector	18:9-14
Zacchaeus	19:1-10
The two swords	22:35-38

Jesus before Herod  
Road to Emmaus  
Jesus' last words  
Ascension

23:6-12  
24:13-35  
24:44-49  
24:50-53

---

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

### THE AUTHOR

Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, Asia Minor, at the time of Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD), authored (c. 130 AD) a five volume work (lost) called Interpretation of the Lord's Oracles.

Church historian Eusebius (260-340 AD), Bishop of Caesarea preserved a relevant text in his The History of the Church (c. 325 AD). Eusebius quoted Papias:

This, too, the presbyter (the Apostle John, 80-90 AD) used to say. "Mark, who had been Peter's interpreter, wrote down carefully, but not in order, all that he had remembered of the Lord's sayings and doings. For he had not heard the Lord or been one of His followers, but later, as I said, one of Peter's. Peter used to adapt his teaching to the occasion, without making a systematic arrangement of the Lord's sayings, so that Mark was quite justified in writing down some things just as he remembered them. For he had one purpose only - to leave out nothing that he had heard, and to make no misstatement about it."

Clement (Alexandria, 150-215 AD), Origin (Alexandria, 185-254 AD), Tertullian (Rome, 160-220 AD) and others tell us:

that Mark assisted Peter in his preaching at Rome;  
that the Roman converts requested Mark to write down what Peter was preaching.

The author is called John:

Acts 13:5                      On their (Saul and Barnabas) arrival in Salamis they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues, John accompanying them as an assistant. (NAB)

And also called John Mark:

Acts 12:12                    After coming to realize this, he (Peter) went to the house of Mary the mother of John (also known as Mark), where many others were gathered in prayer. (NAB)

Acts 12:25                    Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem upon completing the relief mission, taking with them John Mark. (NAB)

Acts 15:37                    Barnabas wanted to take along John, called Mark. (NAB)



He was a cousin of Barnabas:

Col 4:10                   Aristarchus, who is a prisoner along with me, sends you greetings. So does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (NAB)

Like Barnabas, he must have been a Levite, that is, belonging to a priestly family, and his home may have been in Cyprus.

Acts 4:36                There was a certain Levite from Cyprus named Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (meaning "son of encouragement"). (NAB)

Similar to other Jewish children of that time, we can be fairly sure:

that he received a strictly Jewish education at home;  
that he learned to speak both Aramaic of his Jewish parents and the Greek spoken in Cyprus.

Living in Cyprus accounts for the fact that Mark "had not heard the Lord nor been one of his followers" (Papias). At some later date the family must have moved to Jerusalem. Perhaps because they had some property there. We know that Mark's mother owned a home in Jerusalem.

Acts 12:12              ... (Peter) went to the house of Mary the mother of John (also known as Mark) ... (NAB)

At Jerusalem, Mark's cousin Barnabas accepted the Christian faith. Barnabas

Acts 4:37               ... sold a farm that he owned and made a donation of the money, laying it at the apostles feet. (NAB)

Mark was converted by Peter about 38 AD. This we know from Peter's first letter, in which he calls Mark "his son," which - in the language of the apostles - indicates a person who received the faith through them.

1 Pet 5:13              The church that is in Babylon, chosen together with you sends you greeting, as does Mark my son. (NAB)

Mark's family were very active followers of Christ. Barnabas helped Paul after Paul's conversion in the road to Damascus.

Acts 9:27               Then Barnabas took him (Paul) in charge and introduced him to the apostles. (NAB)

Mark's mother Mary offered her home as a meeting place for the early Christian community, and Peter went straight there after his miraculous escape from prison expecting to find others there.

Acts 12:12-17 (Peter) went to the house of Mary the mother of John (also known as Mark), where many others were gathered in prayer. (NAB)

Meanwhile, Barnabas and Paul were beginning their apostolate in Antioch (north of Jerusalem). Perhaps on a trip to Jerusalem, about 45 AD, they met Mark and invited him to join them.

Mark left his mother's home in Jerusalem and went to Antioch.

Acts 12:25 Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem upon completing the relief mission, taking with them John Mark. (NAB)

Paul and Barnabas were ordained at Antioch.

Acts 13:2-3 On one occasion, while they were engaged in the liturgy of the Lord and were fasting, the Holy Spirit spoke to them; "Set apart Barnabas and Saul for me to do the work for which I have called them." Then, after they had fasted and prayed, they imposed hands on them and sent them off. (NAB)

Paul and Barnabas immediately left for a missionary tour to the island of Cyprus. They took Mark with them.

Acts 13:4-5 These two, sent by the Holy Spirit, went down to the port of Seleucia and set sail for Cyprus. On their arrival in Salamis they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues, John accompanying them as an assistant. (NAB)

Paul and Barnabas left Cyprus and sailed to Asia Minor. For some unknown reason, Mark left them and travelled back to Jerusalem.

Acts 13:13 From Paphos, Paul and his companions put out to sea and sailed to Perga in Pamphylia. There John left them and returned to Jerusalem. (NAB)

Whatever the reason for the separation, Paul disapproved of it. So in 50 AD, when Paul was planning another missionary trip, Paul and Barnabas argued over Mark. Paul refused to take Mark with them to Asia Minor. Barnabas insisted that Mark be included.



Acts 15:36-41

After a certain time Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back now and see how the brothers are getting on in each of the towns where we proclaimed the word of the Lord." Barnabas wanted to take along John, called Mark. But Paul insisted that, as he had deserted them at Pamphylia, refusing to join them on that mission, he was not fit to be taken along now. The disagreement which ensued was so sharp that the two separated. Barnabas took Mark along with him and sailed for Cyprus. Paul, for his part, chose Silas to accompany him on his journey ... (NAB)

Not much is known about Mark after 60 AD. We know that he became Peter's helper and hence was in Rome. Peter wrote from Rome to the Christians in Asia Minor

1 Pet 5:13

The church that is in Babylon (Rome) ... sends you greeting, as does Mark my son. (NAB)

About 61 AD, Paul was taken prisoner to Rome. Mark was there and was a great help to Paul.

Col 4:10

Aristarchus, who is a prisoner along with me, sends you greetings. So does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. You have received instructions about him: if he comes to you, make him welcome. (NAB)

Philemon 23-24

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. (NAB)

Mark must have composed his gospel during his stay in Rome, around 64 AD. Clement (Alexandria, 150-215 AD) wrote

This is the occasion of Mark's Gospel. When Peter had publicly preached the word in Rome, and had taught the gospel in the Spirit, his numerous hearers are supposed to have asked Mark to write down the things which Peter preached. For he had accompanied Peter for a long time and remembered his words. Mark is said to have agreed to their request, and to have given them the Gospel. When Peter learned of it, he neither forbade it, nor encouraged it.

Peter was martyred in 66 AD during the persecution of the Emperor Nero. Paul was still in Rome undergoing his second imprisonment. It seems that Mark was away in Asia Minor, probably on some apostolic work. Writing to Timothy, bishop of Ephesus, Paul wrote



2 Tim 4:11

I have no one with me but Luke. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he can be of great service to me. (NAB)

This is the last information we have of Mark. He is said to have founded the church in Alexandria and was the first bishop in that city.

There is less reliable tradition that Mark was the young man who fled from Gethsemane (Mk 14:15) and that Mark's mother's house was the place of the Last Supper.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

### THE AUDIENCE

Mark shows little concern for the Hebrew Scriptures. There is little effort to show the connection of the Christian gospel with the Old Testament.

Mark takes a special care to explain Jewish customs.

Mk 7:3-4                      The Pharisees, and in fact all Jews, cling to the custom of their ancestors and never eat without scrupulously washing their hands. Moreover, they never eat anything from the market without first sprinkling it. There are many other traditions they observe - for example, the washing of cups and jugs and kettles. (NAB)

Mk 14:12                     On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the paschal lamb ... (NAB)

Mk 15:42                     As it grew dark (it was Preparation Day, that is, the eve of the Sabbath), ... (NAB)

Mark also translates Aramaic words.

Mk 3:17                      Simon to whom he gave the name Peter; James, son of Zebedee; and John, the brother of James (he gave these two the name Boanerges, or "sons of thunder"); (NAB)

Mk 5:41                      Taking her (Jairus' daughter) hand, he said to her, "Talitha, koum," which means, "Little girl, get up." (NAB)

Mk 7:11,34                   Yet you declare, "if a person says to his father or mother, Any support you might have had from me is korban' (that is, dedicated to God) ... " (NAB)  
He said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!") (NAB)

Mk 10:46                     ... there was a blind beggar Bartimaeus ("son of Timaheus") ... (NAB)

Mk 14:36                     He kept saying, "Abba (O Father), you have the power to do all things. (NAB)

Mk 15:22,34                   When they brought Jesus to the site of Golgotha (which means "Skull Place") ... At that time Jesus cried in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which means

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"  
(NAB)

Mark feels it necessary to give geographical details.

Mk 1:5 All the Judean countryside and the people of Jerusalem went out to him in great numbers. They were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. (NAB)

Mk 1:9 During that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. (NAB)

Mk 11:1 Then, as they neared Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives, close to Jerusalem ... (NAB)

Mark underscores the meaning of the gospel message for pagans.

Mk 7:26-27 The woman who was Greek - Syro-Phoenician by birth - began to beg him to expel the demon from her daughter. He told her: "Let the sons of the household satisfy themselves at the table first. It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." "Please, Lord," she replied, "even the dogs under the table eat the family's leavings." Then he said to her, "For that reply, be off now! The demon has already left your daughter." (NAB)

Mk 8:1-9 (He then left Tyrian territory and returned by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Ten Cities [pagan country].) At about that time, another large crowd assembled, and they were without anything to eat. ... Those who had eaten numbered about four thousand. (NAB)

Mk 11:17 Then he began to teach them: "Does not Scripture have it, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples (Gentiles)' - ?" (NAB)

Mk 13:10 But the good news must first be proclaimed to all the Gentiles. (NAB)

Mark makes reference to persecution corroborating the tradition of a Roman provenance.

Mk 8:34-38 He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them: "If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his



cross, and follow in my steps. Whoever would preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will preserve it. What profit does a man show who gains the whole world and destroys himself in the process? What can a man offer in exchange for his life? If anyone in this faithless and corrupt age is ashamed of me and my doctrine, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes with the holy angels in his Father's glory." (NAB)

Mk 10:38-39

Jesus told them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup I shall drink or be baptized in the same bath of pain as I?" "We can," they told him. Jesus said in response, "From the cup I drink of you shall drink; the bath I am immersed in you shall share." (NAB)

Mk 13:9-13

Be constantly on your guard. They will hand you over to the courts. You will be beaten in synagogues. You will be arraigned before governors and kings on my account and have to testify to your faith before them. But the good news must first be proclaimed to the Gentiles. When men take you off into custody, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say. In that hour, say what you are inspired to say. It will not be yourselves speaking but the Holy Spirit. Brother will hand over brother for execution and likewise the father his child; children will turn against their parents and have them put to death. Because of my name, you will be hated by everyone. Nonetheless, the man who holds out till the end is the one who will come through safe. (NAB)

On this internal evidence, it is clear that Mark was writing for non-Palestinian Christians of pagan origin.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

### THE AUTHOR

Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (about 130 AD) wrote about the various Gospel traditions. He tells us that the apostle Matthew put together the discourses of Jesus in Aramaic.

Eusebius (260-340 AD) Bishop of Caesarea wrote The History of the Church and quoted Papias.

Matthew compiled the Sayings in the Aramaic language, and everyone translated them as well as he could.

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, (180 AD), also quoted by Eusebius, reported the same tradition.

Matthew published a written gospel for the Hebrews in their own tongue, while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel in Rome and founding the church there.

Similar testimony is found in many other outstanding writers of the early church: Clement (Alexandria, Egypt, 150-215 AD), Origin (Alexandria, Egypt, 185-254 AD), Tertullian (Rome, Italy, 160-220 AD), etc.

From the text of Matthew's Gospel, if the text is read carefully, traits of the evangelist can be recognized.  
Matthew must have been a close disciple of Jesus;  
must have known Palestine well;  
must have had a personal knowledge of Jewish customs and practices;  
must have made a thorough study of the Old Testament;  
was a skilled teacher.

Matthew himself records his own conversion to Christ.

Mt 9:9-10                      As he moved on, Jesus saw a man named Matthew at his post where taxes were collected. He said to him, "Follow me." Matthew got up and followed him, Now it happened that, while Jesus was at table in Matthew's home, many tax collectors and those known as sinners came to join Jesus and his disciples at dinner. (NAB)

Tax collectors were looked down upon in the days of Jesus since they were usually dishonest and not at all religious. In recognition of the mercy that Jesus showed toward him, it is Matthew himself who uses the title "tax collector" of himself.

Mt 10:2-3                      The names of the twelve apostles are these:



first Simon, now known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, Zebedee's son, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector ... (NAB)

Perhaps to avoid mentioning the fact that Matthew was the tax collector, both Luke (5:27-29) and Mark (2:13-15) use the name Levi for the tax collector. And as Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter, he likewise changed Levi's name to Matthew.

There are only two clues to the date of composition of Matthew's Gospel:

Irenaeus (above) makes the authorship contemporaneous with the preaching of Peter and Paul in Rome, i.e., before 68 AD.

Internal evidence suggests a date later than the fall of Jerusalem, i.e., 70 AD.

Matthew's familiarity with Palestinian Jewish customs on the other hand, does not allow us to remove the Gospel - in either space or time - too far from Palestinian Judaism before the Jewish Rebellion.

Matthew's acquaintance with Jewish customs and practices is not matched by his acquaintance with Palestinian geography: his geography lies mostly in Galilee, and Matthew, as a Palestinian Jew, need not have known Galilee.

If Matthew wrote his Gospel later than 70 AD, there are excellent reasons for thinking that it was written outside Palestine. Many scholars suggest Antioch in Syria. In the cosmopolitan climate of Antioch, the questions of the relations of the Law and Gospel were probably very sharp.

In Syria, Matthew could have best drawn on Palestinian traditions found in the Gospel material peculiar to him.

Very little else is known about Matthew's life.

Tradition has it that he first preached to the Jews in Palestine and then to other nations outside the Holy Land.

Some ancient writers say he went to Ethiopia. Others mention Persia, Syria, Greece and even Ireland.

Circumstances of his death are also uncertain. The presumption is made that he died a martyr's death.



## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

### The Audience

Matthew emphasized that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, promised in the Old Testament.

Matthew states that Jesus came from the family of David, fulfilling the prophecy that the Messiah would be a descendant of David.

2 Sam 7:8, 12-14      Now then, speak thus to my servant David, "The Lord of hosts has this to say: ... "When your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make his kingdom firm. It is he who shall build a house for my name. And I will make his royal throne firm forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me."

Mt 1:1      A family record of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.

Mt 1:6      Jesse the father of King David.

Mt 1:17      Thus the total number of generations is: from Abraham to David ... from David to the Babylonian captivity ... to the Messiah ...

Mt 1:20      Joseph, son of David, have no fear about taking Mary as your wife.

Jesus is often called "Son of David" in Matthew's Gospel.

Mt 9:27      As Jesus moved on from there, two blind men came after him crying out, "Son of David, have pity on us!"

Mt 12:23      All in the crowd were astonished. "Might this not be David's son?"

Mt 15:22      It happened that a Canaanite woman living in that locality presented herself, crying out to him, "Lord, Son of David, have pity on me!"

Mt 20:30-32      ... two blind men ... began to shout, "Lord, Son of David, have pity on us!"

Mt 21:9      The groups preceding him as well as those following kept crying out: "Hosanna to the Son of David! ..."

Mt 21:15                   ... the children were shouting out in the temple precincts, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

Matthew stress that Jesus is the new Moses, sent in fulfillment of the prophecy by which God had promised that he would raise the Messiah as a new Moses.

Dt 18:15-19               A prophet like me (Moses) will the Lord your God, raise up for you among your own kinsmen; to him you shall listen. This is exactly what you requested of the Lord, your God, at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, "Let us not again hear the voice of the Lord, our God, nor see this great fire any more, lest we die." And the Lord said to me, "This was well said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kinsmen, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell you all that I command him."

As Moses had promulgated the old Law on Sinai, Jesus promulgates his law on a mountain.

Mt 5:1                    When he saw the crowds he went on the mountainside. After he had sat down his disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them: ...

Instead of the Ten Commandments, Jesus gave the eight beatitudes.

Mt 5:3-10                How blest are the poor in spirit: the reign of God is theirs. ... Blest are those persecuted for holiness' sake; the reign of God is theirs.

Matthew records Jesus, referring explicitly to the old Law, perfecting the ancient precepts.

Mt 5:17-48              Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets. I have come, not to abolish them but to fulfill them. ...

In Matthew' Gospel, Moses appears as Jesus' forerunner on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Mt 17:3-4               Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, how good that we are here! With your permission I will erect three booths here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

Matthew records Jesus abrogating the permission to divorce granted by Moses.

Mt 19:3-9                   ... "Because of your stubbornness Moses let you divorce your wives, " he (Jesus) replied; "but at the beginning it was not that way. I now say to you, whoever divorces his wife (lewd conduct is a separate case) and marries another commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Matthew continues to point out Messianic promises that are fulfilled in Jesus' words and actions. Matthew stresses this frequently by saying that a certain event happened "in order to make what the Lord had said through the prophet come true." Matthew quotes the Old Testament forty-one times.

Mt 1:22,23	Jesus' birth of a virgin	Is 7:14
Mt 2:15	the flight to Egypt	Hos 11:1
Mt 2:18	the murder of the innocents	Jer 31:15
Mt 4:15-16	Jesus' ministry in Galilee	Is 9:1-2
Mt 8:17	Jesus' miraculous cures	Is 53:4
Mt 12:17-21	Jesus' unassuming leadership	Is 42:1-4
Mt 13:14-15	the blindness of the people	Is 6:9-10
Mt 13:35	Jesus' preaching in parables	Ps 78:2
Mt 21:4-5	Jesus riding on a donkey	Is 62:11; Zech 9:9
Mt 27:9-10	Judas' treachery	Zech 11:12

Matthew addresses his audience in interesting ways.

Mt 2:5	Here is what the prophet has written: ...
Mt 4:4,5,6,7,10	Scripture has it ...
Mt 11:10	It is about this man that Scripture says ...
Mt 26:31	... for Scripture has it ...
Mt 21:13	Scripture has it ...
Mt 19:4	Have you not read that ...
Mt 21:16	Did you ever read this ... ?
Mt 21:42	Did you never read in the Scriptures ... ?
Mt 22:31	... have you not read what God said to you ... ?
Mt 15:4	For instance, God has said ...



Matthew stresses that Jesus is not a political Messiah. He is instead a Messiah with divine power. Matthew brings this out by showing Jesus' divinity and equality with God the Father.

Mt 12:6 I assure you that there is something greater than the Temple here.

Mt 12:42 She (Sheba, queen of the South) came from the farthest corner of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon; but you have a greater than Solomon here.

Mt 22:41-46 In turn Jesus put a question to the Pharisees, "What is your opinion about the Messiah? Whose son is he?" "David's," they answered. He said to them, "Then how is it that David under the Spirit's influence calls him 'lord,' as he does: 'The Lord said to my lord, Sit at my right hand, until I humble your enemies beneath your feet'? If David calls him 'lord,' how can he be his son?" No one could give him an answer; therefore no one dared, from that day on, to ask him any questions.

Matthew records miracles of Jesus which only God can do.

Mt 8:23-27 ... then he (Jesus) stood up and took the winds and the sea to task. Complete calm ensued; the men were dumfounded. What sort of man is this," they said, "that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

Mt 9:23-25 ... When the crowd had been put out (of the dead girl's room) he (Jesus) entered and took her by the hand, and the little girl got up.

God the Father testifies about Jesus.

Mt 3:17 With that, a voice from the heavens said, "This is my beloved Son. My favor rests on him."

Mt 17:5 Out of the cloud came a voice which said, "This is my beloved Son in whom my favor rests. Listen to him."

Jesus knows all that the Father knows.

Mt 11:27 Everything has been given over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son but the Father, and no one knows the Father but the Son - and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

Matthew writes that Jesus will judge mankind as only God can judge.

Mt 16:27                      The Son of Man will come with his Father's glory accompanied by his angels. When he does, he will repay each man according to his conduct.

Mt 19:28                      I give you my solemn word in the new age when the Son of Man takes his seat upon a throne befitting his glory, you who have followed me shall likewise take your places on twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

See also,  
Mt 24:27, 30-31; Mt 25:31-46.

In Matthew's words, Jesus is, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Almighty God in whose name all men should be baptized.

Mt 28:19                      Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The audience who would be so familiar with the Old Testament - the Hebrew Scriptures - would be the fellow Jews of Matthew in Palestine. To them Matthew wanted to impress with the important truth that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

### THE AUTHOR

Irenaeus (140-202 AD), born in Asia Minor, later bishop of Lyon (c. 177), wrote in his book Against the Heresies (180 AD)

Luke, Paul's companion, put down in his book the gospel which Paul preached.

Tertullian (160-220 AD), writing The Anti-Marcionite Prologue from Africa said

There is Luke, a native of Antioch in Syria, a medical doctor by profession, a disciple of the apostles. Afterwards he was a companion of Paul until Paul's martyrdom. He served the Lord with full dedication. He died at eighty-four years of age without wife or children, in Boeotia, full of the Holy Spirit. Gospels had already been written by Matthew in Judea and by Mark in Rome. Luke, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote this Gospel in the neighborhood of Achaia (near Athens in Greece).

Luke was not a Jew, but a gentile convert from Antioch. He was a highly cultivated man. As a medical doctor he knew Greek science. He wrote his gospel in the center of Greek civilization, Achaia.

The Muratorian Canon (120 AD), Clement (Alexandria, 150-215 AD), Tertullian (Rome, 160-220), Origin (Alexandria, 185-254 AD) and others agree

that Luke himself was not an eyewitness of Christ's ministry;

that he took great care to find out the facts from the apostles and from others who did know Christ in his lifetime.

Much is known about Luke from the New Testament itself. In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke writes some events in the first person because he was present (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5 - 21:18; 27:1 - 28:16).

Since Luke travelled with Paul, Paul's letters are another source of information about him; and there is his own gospel to add more detail.

Luke's own writings show

he was from the city of Antioch, Syria, on the Orontes River;

he was a gentile and pagan;

he was not an apostle;

he was an educated Greek; and as such

he would have enjoyed sports, discussions, poetry and art;

he may have moved in literary circles;

he seems to have had a kindly nature.



From Paul's writings we know Luke was a physician.

Col 4:14                      Luke, our dear physician, sends you greetings. (NAB)

Antioch was a city which must have had an effect on Luke. Antioch was the eastern capital of the Roman Empire and a crossroads of important caravan routes - a very cosmopolitan city.

Antioch lies 16 1/2 miles from the Mediterranean on the Orontes River; 300 miles north of Jerusalem.

It became one of the first great Christian centers outside Palestine;

Jewish Christian converts fled there after Stephen's martyrdom to avoid persecution;

Barnabas and Paul were appointed by the apostles to look after the church in Antioch;

Antioch became a missionary center: Barnabas and Paul started their missionary journeys from there (Acts 13:1-3);

The church of Antioch was known as "progressive": converts did not need to become Jews before becoming Christians; Peter and Paul had their famous argument at Antioch (Gal 2:11-21);

At the Council of Jerusalem, the "progressive theologians" were delegates from Antioch (Acts 15:1-5; Gal 2:1-10);

After the Council, a letter was sent to Antioch to encourage the church there (Acts 15:22-35).

In was in this dynamic atmosphere that Luke became a Christian about 45 - 50 AD. He probably had contact with Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and Mark in Antioch.

Luke then moved to Troas, a city on the coast of Mysia, near Troy, on the north west corner of Asia Minor. In was there in 50 AD that Paul and Silas met Luke. Luke there began his missionary life.

Acts 16:8-10                      Crossing through Mysias instead, they (Paul and Silas) came down to Troas. There one night Paul had a vision. A man of Macedonia stood before him and invited him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." After this vision, we (Paul, Silas and Luke) immediately made efforts to get across to Macedonia ... (NAB)

Luke accompanied Paul and Silas by boat to Macedonia, then inland to Philippi.

Acts 16:11-12                      We put out to sea from Troas and set a course straight for Samothrace, and the next day to Neapolis; from these we went to Philippi, a leading city in the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. (NAB)

Luke records how they established the Christian community at Philippi (Acts 16:13-40):

first converts were pious Jews;  
 a woman, Lydia, offered them a house to stay in;  
 casting out evil spirits incurred the hostility of local people;  
 Paul and Silas were imprisoned and miraculously delivered;  
 their jailer and his family were converted;  
 Paul and Silas were released and continued through Greece;

Luke remained at Philippi and served the new church. He spent six years there, from 50 - 57 AD.

Paul returned to Philippi about 57 AD during his third missionary journey.

Luke returned to Jerusalem with Paul.

Acts 20:6                      We (Luke and Paul) ourselves set sail from Philippi as soon as the festival of Unleavened Bread was over. Five days later we joined them (other companions of Paul) in Troas where we spent a week. (NAB)

Acts 20:13-15                We ourselves went on ahead (of Paul) to the ship and set sail for Assos, where we were to pick Paul up. ... When he met us at Assos we took him aboard and sailed to Mitylene. From there we took off the next day, and reached a point opposite Chios; on the second day we crossed to Samos, and on the day after that we put in at Miletus. Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so as not to lose time in Asia ... (NAB)

Acts 21:1-3                    When we had finally taken leave of them (the presbyters of Ephesus), we put out to sea and sailed straight to Cos. On the following day we came to Rhodes and went on from there to Patara. When we found a ship bound for Phoenicia, we boarded it and sailed off. We caught sight of Cyprus but passed it by on our left as we continued on toward Syria. Finally we put in at Tyre ... (NAB)

Acts 21:7-7                    Continuing our voyage from Tyre we put in at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and spent the day with them. The next day we pushed on and came to Caesarea. (NAB)

Acts 21:15                    At the conclusion of our stay (at Caesarea), we got ready and started up toward Jerusalem.



(NAB)

Paul and Luke were warmly welcomed in Jerusalem by James, the bishop of Jerusalem and the whole community.

Acts 21:17-18      On our arrival in Jerusalem, the brothers there gave us a warm welcome. The next day, Paul and the rest of us paid a visit to James in the presence of all the presbyters. (NAB)

Paul then gave a complete report of their missionary journey. Paul stirred up the Jews and was accused of defiling the Temple.

Paul was arrested and imprisoned in Jerusalem;

Paul was arrested and imprisoned for two years in Caesarea;

It appears that Luke stayed with Paul throughout this time, helping him as much as he could.

Paul had to defend himself before King Agrippa;  
the Governor Felix sent Paul to Rome as a prisoner.

Luke went with Paul to Rome in 59 - 60 AD.

Acts 27:1-2      When it was decided that we (Paul and Luke) were to set sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius from the cohort known as Augusta. We boarded a ship from Adramyttium bound for ports in the province of Asia, and set sail. (NAB)

Luke and Paul endured a very dangerous journey, sailing through a storm, and being shipwrecked near Malta.

Acts 28:11-14      Three months later we set sail (from Malta) in a ship which had passed the winter at the island. ... We put in at Syracuse and spent three days there. Then we sailed around the toe and arrived at Rhegium. A day later a south wind began to blow which enabled us to reach Puteoli in two days. ... This is how we finally came to Rome. (NAB)

Paul arrived at Rome with Luke and was able to continue preaching in spite of being a "private prisoner."

Acts 28:16,30      Upon our entry into Rome, Paul was allowed to take a lodging of his own, although a soldier was assigned to keep guard over him. ... For two full years Paul stayed on in his rented lodgings, welcoming all who came to him. (NAB)



Luke helped Paul during Paul's imprisonment.

Phlm 23-24                      Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. (NAB)

Col 4:14                      Luke, our dear physician, sends you greetings. So does Demas. (NAB)

Paul was released from prison in 62 AD. Not much is known what happened after his release.

It is thought that Luke may have written his gospel during the period, around 63 AD while visiting churches in Greece. He may then have written the Acts of the Apostles as a continuation of his gospel at this time.

Paul was imprisoned a second time from 66 - 67 AD. Luke was again at his side. He appears to have been Paul's only companion.

2 Tim 4:9-11                      Do your best to join me soon, for Demas, enamored of the present world, has left me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia and Titus to Dalmatia. I have no one with me but Luke. (NAB)

Some scholars think that Luke wrote his gospel and Acts of the Apostles during this period, or even after Paul's death during the persecution of the Emperor Nero in 67 - 68 AD. That would place the time of composition of the Gospel and Acts between 70 - 80 AD.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

### THE AUDIENCE

Luke makes many changes in the gospel tradition. Luke seldom quotes the Hebrew Scriptures. He omits Semitic words found in the other Synoptics or makes substitutes. For Luke, Jesus is not presented as fulfilling the Hebrew Scriptures, but is Himself the Prophet.

Luke, the Gentile convert, stresses that salvation is for everyone.

Lk 3:23-38                      When Jesus began his work he was about thirty years of age, being - so it was supposed - the son of Joseph, son of Heli, son of Matthat, son of Levi, ... , son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God. (NAB)

Lk 2:1                              In those days Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole world. (NAB)

Lk 2:14                            Glory to God in high heaven, peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests. (NAB)

Lk 2:29-32                        Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace; you have fulfilled your word. For my eyes have witnessed your saving deed displayed for all peoples to see; a revealing light to the Gentiles, the glory of your people Israel. (NAB)

Lk 3:1                              In the fifteenth year of the rule of Tiberius Caesar ... (NAB)

Lk 3:6                              ... and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. (NAB)

Lk 24:27                           In his name, penance for the remission of sins is to be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (NAB)

Luke includes encounters of Jesus with Samaritans.

Lk 9:52-56                        These (disciples) entered a Samaritan town to prepare for his (Christ's) passing through, but the Samaritans would not welcome him because he was on his way to Jerusalem. When his disciples, James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, would you not have us call down fire from heaven to destroy them?" He turned toward them only to reprimand them. (NAB)

Lk 17:11-19

As he was entering a village, ten lepers met him. ... One of them realizing that he had been cured, came back praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself on his face at the feet of Jesus and spoke his praises. This man was a Samaritan. (NAB)

Lk 10:25-37

There was a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho who fell prey to robbers. ... But a Samaritan who was journeying along came on him and was moved to pity at the sight. ... (NAB)

Luke also takes particular interest in noting the words and deeds of Jesus concerning women.

Mary occupies a prominent place in Luke's Gospel.

Lk 1:26-56

... Upon arriving the Angel (Gabriel) said to her: "Rejoice, O highly favored daughter! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women". ... Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and cried out in a loud voice: "Blest are you among women and blest is the fruit of your womb". ... Then Mary said: "My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit finds joy in God my savior," ... Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home. (NAB)

Lk 2:5-7

... to register with Mary, his (Joseph's) espoused wife, who was with child. While they were there the days of her confinement were completed. She gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the place where travellers lodged. (NAB)

Lk 2:21-22

When the eighth day arrived for his circumcision, the name Jesus was given the child, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived. When the day came to purify them according to the law of Moses, the couple brought him to Jerusalem so that he could be presented to the Lord ... (NAB)

Lk 2:34-35

Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother: "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed - and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword - so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare." (NAB)



Lk 2:48-52      When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him: "Son, why have you done this to us? You see that your father and I have been searching for you in sorrow." ... Jesus, for his part, progressed steadily in wisdom and age and grace before God and men. (NAB)

Lk 11:27-28      While he was saying this a woman from the crowd called out, "Blest is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!" "Rather," he replied, "blest are they who hear the word of God and keep it." (NAB)

Elizabeth, the cousin of Mary and mother of John the Baptist is mentioned with high esteem.

Lk 1:5-6      ... there was a high priest named Zechariah ...; his wife was a descendant of Aaron named Elizabeth. Both were just in the eyes of God, blamelessly following all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. (NAB)

Lk 1:13      Your wife Elizabeth shall bear a son whom you shall name John. (NAB)

Lk 1:24-25      Afterward, he wife Elizabeth conceived. She went into seclusion for five months, saying: "In these days the Lord is acting on my behalf; he has seen fit to remove my reproach among men." (NAB)

Lk 1:39-45      ... Mary set out ... she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb ... and she cried out ... "who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me ... (NAB)

Lk 1:57ff      When Elizabeth's time for delivery arrived, she gave birth to a son. ... The child grew up and matured in spirit. He lived in the desert until the day when he made his public appearance in Israel. (NAB)

It is Luke who mentions the prophetess Anna.

Lk 2:36-38      There was also a certain prophetess, Anna by name, daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. ... She was constantly in the Temple, worshiping day and night in fasting and prayer ... (NAB)

Luke records the pity Jesus felt toward the widow from Naim.

Lk 7:11-17      ... a dead man was being carried out (of a town called Naim), the only son of a widowed mother. ... The Lord was moved with pity upon seeing her and said to her, "Do not cry." ... Jesus gave him (the son) back to his mother. (NAB)

Luke also records Jesus' conversion and consolation of Mary Magdalene.

Lk 7:36-50      A woman known in the town to be a sinner learned that he was dining in the Pharisee's home. She brought in a vase of perfumed oil ... He said to her then, Your sins are forgiven"; ... "Your faith has been your salvation. Now go in peace." (NAB)

Luke pays homage to the women who accompanied Jesus.

Lk 8:103      The Twelve accompanied him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and maladies: Mary called the Magdalene, from whom seven devils had gone out, Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Susanna, and many others who were assisting them out of their means. (NAB)

Luke remembers Mary and Martha:

Lk 10:38-42      On their journey Jesus entered a village where a woman named Martha welcomed him to her home. She had a sister named Mary ... (NAB)

Luke records the healing of the crippled woman:

Lk 13:10-13      There was a woman there who for eighteen years had been possessed by a spirit which had drained her strength. ... Jesus saw her ... and said, "Woman, you are free of your infirmity." (NAB)

Luke recalls the women of Jerusalem weeping for Jesus.

Lk 23:27-31      A great crowd of people followed him, including women who beat their breasts and lamented over him. Jesus turned to them and said: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children ... " (NAB)

2

Luke also mentions the women we know from Matthew and Mark (4:38-39; 8:43-48; 21:1-4; 23:49).

It is Paul who tells us that Luke was a physician (Col 4:14). Luke writes with an observant eye to mannerisms, psychological reactions, hidden motivations.

Lk 4:38                      Leaving the synagogue, he entered the house of Simon. Simon's mother-in-law was in the grip of a severe fever ... (NAB)

Lk 5:12                      On one occasion in a certain town, a man full of leprosy came to him. (NAB)

Lk 8:43                      A woman with a hemorrhage of twelve years' duration, incurable at any doctor's hands (Mk - and exhausted her savings in the process, yet she got no relief), came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. (NAB)

Luke alone of the Synoptics gives psychological settings:

Lk 3:15                      The people were full of anticipation, wondering in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah. (NAB)

Lk 9:43                      And all who saw it marveled at the greatness of God. (NAB)

It is Luke the physician who notices the bloody sweat of Jesus.

Lk 22:44                      In his anguish he prayed with all the greater intensity, and his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground. (NAB)

Luke writes primarily for Gentiles. He never uses the Semitic words that occur in the other Gospels:

abba (Father) in Mk 14:36

Boanerges (sons of thunder) in Mk 3:17

ephphatha (be opened) in Mk 7:34

hosanna (save, we pray) in Mk 11:9, Jo 12:13, Mt 21:9;

Instead of the Hebrew title rabbi, Luke prefers didaskale (teacher), and especially epistata (master).

Luke will give the meaning of the word instead of its Aramaic form; he uses kranion (Gk for skull) instead of golgotha.

Luke seldom quotes the Old Testament. He has another way of inferring the fulfillment of Old Testament hopes and desires. For Luke, Jesus himself is the prophet.

Lk 4:24                      "But in fact," he (Jesus) went on, "no prophet gains acceptance in his own place." (NAB)



Lk 7:16 "A great prophet has risen among us," they (the people of Naim) said: and, "God has visited his people." (NAB)

Lk 7:39 When the host, the Pharisee, saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is that touches him - that she is a sinner." (NAB)

Luke address his intended audience for his Gospel in a unique way. Luke includes a "foreword".

Lk 1:1-4 Many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events which have been fulfilled in our midst, precisely as those events were transmitted to us by the original eyewitnesses and ministers of the word. I too have carefully traced the whole sequence of events from the beginning, and have decided to set it in writing for you, Theophilus, so that Your Excellency may see how reliable the instruction was that you have received. (NAB)

Luke conveys more meaning than the words of the introduction themselves convey:

- "Theophilus" literally means "lover of God";
- "Your Excellency" must refer to some distinguished official;
- Others who have "undertaken to compile a narrative" are Matthew, Mark, and other (private) Gospel editors;
- Matthew and Mark present the preaching of the apostles who themselves were eyewitnesses;
- Luke admits that he is not an eyewitness - but investigated it very thoroughly;
- Luke seems to intend that his Gospel expand and give further information about the apostles' teaching;
- Luke's Gospel presupposes the existence of catechetical teaching. Its purpose is to provide further reading.
- Luke's Gospel appears to be written to explain the teaching of the apostles to Greek converts. By addressing his Gospel to Theophilus, a Greek, he is writing in a way that Gentiles would better understand - he himself a Gentile convert.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

## The Author

John, in Hebrew, Jochanan, literally means "God is gracious."  
John was one of the sons of Zebedee, mentioned in the synoptic gospels.

John was the younger brother of James.

Mt 4:21                   He (Jesus) walked along farther and caught sight of two other brothers, James, Zebedee's sons, and his brother John. They too were in their boat, getting their nets in order with their father, Zebedee. He called them, and immediately they abandoned boat and father to follow him. (NAB)

Mk 1:19                   Proceeding a little further along, he caught sight of James, Zebedee's son, and his brother John. They too were in their boat putting their nets in order. He summoned them on the spot. They abandoned their father Zebedee, who was in the boat with his hired men, and went off in his company. (NAB)

Lk 5:9-10               For indeed, amazement at the catch they had made seized him (Peter) and all his ship-mates, as well as James and John, Zebedee's sons who were partners with Simon. (NAB)

It seems most probable that Salome, who witnessed the crucifixion, was John's mother.

Mt 27:55-56           Many women were present (at Golgotha) looking on from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to attend to his needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons. (NAB)

Mk 15:40               There were also women present looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome. (NAB)

John's father, Zebedee, was a prosperous fisherman to be able to employ others, and both James and John followed the same occupation as their father.

Mk 1:20               They abandoned their father Zebedee, who was in the boat with his hired men, and went off

in his company. (NAB)

It is highly probable that John was a disciple of John the Baptist. From the Baptist, John would have learned about the need of preparing for the coming of the Messiah. John begins his gospel with the Baptist's preaching (after the Prologue).

It is in fact John the Baptist who prompts John the evangelist to make contact with Jesus. John and Andrew eventually follow him back to his house.

Jo 1:35-39

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. As he watched Jesus walk by he said, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard what he said, and followed Jesus. When Jesus turned around and noticed them, he asked them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi (which means Teacher), where do you stay?" "Come and see," he answered. So they went to see where he lodged, and stayed with him that day. (It was about four in the afternoon.) (NAB)

Subsequently, Andrew brings his brother Simon Peter to Jesus, and we may suppose that it is John who brings his brother.

Jo 1:40-42

One of the two who had followed him after hearing John was Simon Peter's brother Andrew. The first thing he did was seek out his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah!" (This term means the Anointed.) He brought him to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John; your name shall be Cephas (which is rendered Peter.)" (NAB)

During Christ's public ministry, John, together with Peter and James, enjoyed a special friendship with Jesus.

John was chosen to witness the raising of Jairus' daughter.

Mk 5:37

He (Jesus) would not permit anyone to follow him except Peter, James, and James' brother John. (NAB)

John witnessed the Transfiguration.

Mk 9:2

Six days later, Jesus took Peter, James, and John off by themselves with him and led them up a high mountain. He was transfigured before their eyes. (NAB)



John had the place of honor at Jesus' side at the Last Supper.

Jo 13:23                    One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, reclined close to him as they ate. (NAB)

John was also present in Gethsemane.

Mk 14:32-33                They went then to a place named Gethsemane. "Sit down here while I pray," he said to his disciples; at the same time he took along with him Peter, James, and John. (NAB)

John and his brother James were nicknamed by Jesus "men of thunder."

Mk 3:16-17                He appointed the Twelve as follows: Simon to whom he gave the name Peter; James, son of Zebedee; and John, the brother of James (he gave these two the name Boanerges, or "sons of thunder"); (NAB)

There were a number of incidents to justify the nickname: one was their wanting to call down fire on an inhospitable village.

Lk 9:54-55                When his disciples James and John saw this (lack of welcome from the Samaritans), they said, "Lord, would you not have us call down fire from heaven to destroy them?" He turned toward them only to reprimand them. (NAB)

James and John squabbled over places of honor in Jesus' kingdom.

Mt 20:20-24                The mother of Zebedee's sons came up to him (Jesus) accompanied by her sons, to do him homage and ask of him a favor. "What is it you want?" he said. She answered, "Promise me that these sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and the other at your left, in your kingdom." In reply Jesus said, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink of the cup I am to drink of?" "We can," they said. He told them, "From the cup I drink of, you shall drink. But sitting at my right hand or my left is not mine to give. That is for those to whom it has been reserved by my Father. The other ten, on hearing this, became indignant at the two brothers. (NAB)

John objected to someone driving out demons in Jesus' name.

Mk 9:38-40                John said to him (Jesus), "Teacher, we saw a man using your name to expel demons and we tried to stop him because he is not of our company." Jesus said in reply: "Do not try to stop him. No man who performs a miracle using my name can at the same time speak ill of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us. (NAB)

John himself was very aware of the special friendship with Jesus and he expresses this friendship in his Gospel.

John was a key witness to Jesus' passion and Resurrection.

1 Jo 1:1                This is what we proclaim to you: what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked upon and our hands have touched - we speak of the word of life. (NAB)

John was present at the death of Jesus.

Jo 19:26                Seeing his mother there with the disciple whom he loved, Jesus said to his mother, "Woman, there is your son." In turn he said to the disciple, "There is your mother." From that hour onward, the disciple took her into his care. (NAB)

John was the first apostle to reach the empty tomb on the day of Resurrection.

Jo 20:3-4                At that (Mary Magdalene's news of the empty tomb), Peter and the other disciple started out on their way toward the tomb. They were running side by side, but then the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. (NAB)

John was the first apostle to recognize Jesus on the shore of Lake Tiberias after the Resurrection.

Jo 21:7                Then the disciple Jesus loved cried out to Peter, "It is the Lord!" (NAB)

After the Ascension, John was considered one of the prominent leaders of the community that Jesus left behind. It was John and Peter who cured the lame man in the Temple.

Acts 3:1-10            Once, when Peter and John were going up to the temple for prayer at the three o'clock

hour, a man crippled from birth was being carried in. ... When he saw Peter and John on their way in, he begged them for an alms. ... Then Peter said: "I have neither silver nor gold, but what I have I give you! In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, walk!" ... (NAB)

It was John who bore witness to Christ before the Sanhedrin and all the people.

Acts 4:1-31      While Peter and John were still addressing the crowd, the priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees came u to them, angry because they were teaching the people and proclaiming the resurrection of the dead in the person of Jesus. ... (NAB)

After Stephen's martyrdom, it was John who accompanied Peter to the new converts in Samaria.

Acts 8:14      When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. (NAB)

When Paul submitted his preaching to the church after his conversion, John was among those to whom Paul sought approval.

Gal 2:2,9      I went prompted by a revelation, and I laid it out for their scrutiny the gospel as I present it to the Gentiles - all this in private conference with the leaders, to make sure the course I was pursuing, or had pursued, was not useless. ... those who were the acknowledged pillars, James, Cephas, nd John, gave Barnabas and me the handclasp of fellowship, signifying that we should go to the Gentiles as they to the Jews. (NAB)

It is not known when John left Jerusalem, but it is highly likely that he left just before the outbreak of the Jewish-Roman War of 68-70 AD.

According to tradition, John settled in Ephesus. His leadership may be gauged from his seven letters to the churches in Asia.

Rev 1:4 - 3:22      This is the revelation God gave to Jesus Christ, that he might show his servants what must happen very soon. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who is



reporting, all he saw witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ... To the seven churches of Asia: John wishes you grace and peace ... (NAB)

About 95 AD, John was exiled to Patmos (Eusebius, c. 325 AD). During this period we get the final text of the Book of Revelation.

On Subsequent years John wrote the Gospel and his first letter. most scholars think that his second and third letter are earlier.

John died at Ephesus (Eusebius, c. 325 AD) at the beginning of the Emperor Trajan's reign (c. 100 AD). John was the last of the apostles to die.

In the early church, there were two prominent persons called John - John the elder and John the apostle. Unfortunately, John the apostle is sometimes referred to as John the elder because of his seniority. Through the centuries, this confusion has caused some scholars to question who was the author of the fourth gospel.

The first evidence of John's authorship is the internal evidence of the Gospel itself.

Jo 21:24                      It is the same disciple who is the witness to these things; it is he who wrote them down and his testimony, we know, is true. (NAB)

Early church tradition almost unanimously maintains that John the apostle wrote the Gospel.

The earliest evidence comes from Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, writing in 180 AD (Against Heresies, 3.1.1).

Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.

The foreword to a Latin translation of the Gospel dating to c. 150-200 AD attests to John's authorship.

Here begins the writing according to John himself when he was still alive. Papias, called the Hierapolitan, who was a devoted disciple of John tells us this in his last five books of commentary on Scripture.

At about this same time, Theophilus (Antioch, 180 AD), Clement

(Alexandria, 150-215), Origin (Alexandria, 186-254 AD). Tertullian (Rome, 160-240 AD), and the Muratorium Canon (Rome, c. 180 AD) all expressly attribute the fourth Gospel to John the apostle.

Eusebius (Caesarea, c. 265-340 AD), Epiphanius (Egypt, 315-403 AD), and Jerome (Stridon, c. 342-419 AD) all affirm this same tradition.

The fourth Gospel was well enough known before 150 AD to have been used by Ignatius (Antioch, c. 115 AD), by Papias (Hierapolis, c. 117-138 AD), by Justin (Rome, 100-165 AD), and probably by Clement (Bishop of Rome, c. 92-101 AD).

Archaeological evidence supports the authorship of John the apostle. Papyrus fragments of John's Gospel found in Egypt, have been dated as belonging to a period before 150 AD. The oldest known bit of New Testament writing is the John Rylands papyrus. The fragment, containing scraps of four verses of John's Gospel, dates possibly as early as 94 AD and no later than 135 AD. This would not have been possible if the Gospel had not been written quite some time before.

It seems likely that John's Gospel was written 95-100 AD.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

### Organization

In Jewish life and ritual, the number seven had a special place and importance:

- + the Sabbath was kept as a "holy day" every seventh day;
- + the period from Passover to Pentecost lasted seven times seven days;
- + the major feasts and rites of purification were made to last seven days;
- + in the Temple, it was customary to sprinkle the blood of sacrifice or the water of purification seven times;
- + seven kinds of gifts were suitable for sacrifice (oxen, sheep, goats, pigeons, wheat, oil, and wine);
- + the candlestick in the sanctuary had seven branches;
- + seven was a symbolic number used to express sacredness and prosperity or good fortune.

John seems to have used the number seven in the composition of his Gospel to help get across the idea that Christ's life and work of salvation are the source of holiness and happiness for all people.

- + underlying John's Gospel is detected a pattern of seven weeks;
- + John chooses seven of Jesus' miracles to record;
- + John record seven of Jesus' statements of self-revelation all beginning with "I am ...".

The Pattern of Weeks

Miraculous Signs

"I am ..." Statements

1:1-18  
Foreword

1:19 - 2:12

The week of the  
first encounters

Changing water  
into wine

2:13 - 4:54

The week of the  
great conversions:

Nicodemus

the Samaritan woman

the Galilean official

Curing the official's  
son



## 5:1 - 6:71

The week of the  
bread of life

Curing the lame man  
Multiplying the bread  
Walking on the water

"I am the bread of  
life." (6:35ff)

## 7:1 - 9:41

The week of light

Healing the man born  
blind

"I am the light of  
the world."  
(8:12ff)

## 10:1 - 11:57

The week of the  
good shepherd

Raising Lazarus from  
the dead

"I am the gate."  
(10:7ff)  
"I am the good  
shepherd."  
(10:11ff)  
"I am the  
resurrection and  
the life."  
(15:1ff)

## 12:1 - 19:42

The week of  
Christ's sacrificial  
death

"I am the way, the  
truth, and the  
life." (14:6ff)  
"I am the real  
vine." (15:1ff)

## 20:1-29

The week of Resurrection

## 20:30-31

John's conclusion

## 21:1-25

John's disciples' conclusion

# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

## Author

The Book of Revelation gives a few details about its author.

The author's name is John.

Rev 1:1                      This is the revelation God gave to Jesus Christ, that he might show his servants what must happen very soon. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ... (NAB)

Rev 1:4                      To the seven churches in the province of Asia: John wishes you grace and peace ... (NAB)

Rev 1:9                      I, John, your brother, who share with you the distress and the kingly reign and the endurance we have in Jesus ... (NAB)

Rev 22:8                     It is I, John, who heard and saw all these things ... (NAB)

John ranks himself among the prophets.

Rev 22:9                     But he (the angel) said to me: "No, get up! I am merely a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets ... (NAB)

John attributes to himself such titles as "servant" of God.

Rev 1:1                      God .. made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, ... (NAB)

John calls himself a brother and companion in tribulation of those whom he is addressing.

Rev 1:9                      I, John, your brother, who share with you the distress and the kingly reign and the endurance we have in Jesus ... (NAB)

John speaks of his stay on the island of Patmos very probably followed a banishment imposed by Roman authorities.

Rev 1:10                     I, ... , found myself on the island called Patmos because I proclaimed God's word and bore witness to Jesus. (NAB)

The letters John sends to the seven churches show that he was well known to the Christians in Asia and that he enjoyed an uncontested authority.

Rev 2:1-7	To the presiding spirit of the church in Ephesus ...
Rev 2:8-11	To the presiding spirit of the church in Smyrna ...
Rev 2:12-17	To the presiding spirit of the church in Pergamum ...
Rev 2:18-29	To the presiding spirit of the church in Thyatira ...
Rev 3:1-6	To the presiding spirit of the church in Sardis ...
Rev 3:7-13	To the presiding spirit of the church in Philadelphia ...
Rev 3:14-21	To the presiding spirit of the church in Laodicea ... (NAB)

From the second century on, two questions have been asked about the author of the Book of Revelation: (1) What was the relationship between this "John" and the apostle John? (2) Was the author-seer of the Book of Revelation also the author of the Gospel According to John and 1, 2, and 3 John?

From 150 AD: the author of the Book of Revelation is attributed to the Apostle John:

Papias (Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, c. 120 AD);  
Justin Martyr (Rome, 100-165 AD);

From 150-250 AD: similar evidence:

In the East -

Melito (Bishop of Sardis, c. 170 AD);  
Clement of Alexandria (Athens, 150-215 AD);  
Origin (Alexandria, 185-254 AD);

In the West -

Irenaeus (Asia Minor, 140-202 AD);  
Hippolytus (Rome, 170-235 AD);  
Tertullian (Rome, 160-220 AD).

From 300 AD on: dissenting voices:

In the West -

Gaius (Rome);  
the Alogi.

In the East -

Dionysius (Alexandria, d. 264/5 AD):  
Gospel and 1 John written by apostle John;  
Revelation written by John the Presbyter.  
Bishops of Syria and Asia Minor:  
Reject the Book of Revelation;  
The School of Antioch:  
Refuses to accept Revelation as apostolic;



The Syrian Church:

Continues to reject this book.

Several canonical lists of Eastern Churches:

Omit the Book of Revelation;

Many Greek manuscripts before 9th century:

Do not contain Revelation.

From 300 AD on: affirming voices:

In the West -

No real difficulty arises;

Revelation as well as Gospel and 1, 2, 3 John are accepted as the work of the apostle John.

In the East -

Athanasius (Alexandria, 293-373 AD):

Established a certain unanimity regards Johannine authorship.

No objection is raised against this common agreement until 16th century.

From 1500 AD on:

Erasmus (1466-1536):

Questioned the identity of authorship of Revelation, Gospel and epistles.

Luther (1483-1546):

Book of Revelation neither apostolic nor prophetic.

From 1800 AD on:

Biblical scholars increasingly tend to deny the apostolic origin of the Book of Revelation and its relationship to the Gospel of John.

Today:

Most Catholic and some Protestant exegetes hold the two traditional views: "John" is the apostle John, and, "John" is the author of the Gospel and the Epistles.

A small group of non-Catholic scholars reject the apostolic origin of Revelation but maintain that this book was edited by the author of the Gospel.

Some non-Catholic scholars think that the apostle John wrote Revelation but not the Gospel;

Many critics deny that there is any relationship between the son of Zebedee and either the Book of Revelation or the Gospel and attribute the two books to different authors of whom very little is known.

Evidence for the similarity of author between the Book of Revelation and the Gospel of John is plentiful and at least points to the fact of some common origin..

There are some details found nowhere else in the New Testament except in these two books.

Christ is presented as "the Lamb": 28 times in Revelations, but with different Greek words.

Jo 1:29                   The next day, when John caught sight of Jesus coming toward him, he exclaimed: "Look! There is the Lamb of God ... " (NAB)

Jo 1:36                   As he watched Jesus walk by he said, "Look! There is the Lamb of God!" (NAB)

Rev 3:6                   Then, between the throne with the for living creatures and the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, a Lamb that had been slain. (NAB)

Christ's name is the "Word of God".

Jo 1:1                    In the beginning was the Word; the Word was in God's presence, and the Word was God. (NAB)

Jo 1:14                   The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. (NAB)

Rev 19:13                He wore a cloak that had been dipped in blood, and his name was the Word of God. (NAB)

The image of "the spouse" recalls the People of God.

Jo 3:29                   It is the groom who has the bride. (NAB)

Rev 21:2                   I also saw a New Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God, beautiful as a bride prepared to meet her husband. (NAB)

Rev 21:9                   Come, I will show you the woman who is the bride of the Lamb. (NAB)

Life is symbolized by water.

Jo 4:10                   Jesus replied: "If only you recognized God's gift, and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him instead and he would have given you living water." (NAB)

Jo 7:38                   Jesus cried out ... "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me; let him drink who believes in me. Scripture has it: 'From within him rivers of living waters shall flow.'" (NAB)

Rev 7:17                   ... the Lamb on the throne will shepherd them. He will lead them to springs of life-giving water ... (NAB)

Rev 21:6                   He (the One who sat on the throne) said to me: "... To anyone who thirsts I will give to drink without cost from the spring of life-giving water." (NAB)

The prophet Zecharia 12:10 is cited in both texts in a form that differs from the Septuagint (LXX).

Jo 19:37                   There is still another Scripture passage which says: "They shall look on him whom they have pierced."

Rev 1:7                    See, he comes amid the clouds! Every eye shall see him, even of those who pierced him. (NAB)

The absence of a temple in the New Jerusalem is similar to both texts.

Jo 4:21                    Jesus said to her: "Believe me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem." (NAB)

Rev 21:22                  I saw no temple in the city. The Lord, God the Almighty, is its temple - he and the Lamb. (NAB)

There is also evidence for separate authors for the two works.

There are great differences in language between the Book of Revelation and the Gospel.

- The Greek of the Gospel: simply, ordinarily correct;
- The Greek of Revelation: so sprinkled with solecisms and barbarisms that one must suppose that the author was a Judeo-Christian who thought in Aramaic and translated his thoughts into Greek of which he had only a rudimentary knowledge.

There are differences in eschatology between the Book of Revelation and the Gospel.

- The eschatology of Revelation: dominated by the viewpoint and the symbols of the apocalyptic tradition, which hopes for a future that will bring with it salvation that God is going to give to his people.
- The eschatology of the Gospel: proves itself to be very independent of apocalyptic and considers salvation almost as already possessed by the believer.

Several notions that are central to the Gospel seldom appear in Revelation:



277

The verb "to believe" (98 times in Jo; never in Rev);  
The noun "faith" (4 times in Rev; never in Jo).

The evidence of tradition that affirms the apostolic and single origin of all the Johannine writings is so old and copious that is impossible to discard it completely. It seems very difficult to explain how all the witnesses of the 2nd century could have been mistaken.

However, the many differences show rather clearly that Revelation and the Gospel cannot have been written by the same author.

#### SOLUTION

According to tradition, the apostle John - the great authority in Asia until about the end of the 1st century. He would have inspired all the Johannine writings, perhaps through a catechetical school at Ephesus, but the redaction would have been carried out by different disciples, more or less familiar with his thought.

#### Date of Writing

Contemporary exegetes differ greatly in the dates assigned for the composition of the Book of Revelation.

Some say it was written as early as 41 - 54, during the reign of Claudius;

Others place composition as late as 96 - 98, during the reign of Nerva; or as late as 98 - 117, the reign of Trajan;

More often exegetes have situated Revelation at the time of the persecution of Nero, 54 - 68; or during the reign of Vespasian, 69 - 78;

The great majority of scholars have continuously opted for the persecution that raged toward the end of the reign of Domitian, 81 - 96.

Early witnesses assign Revelation to this late period 90-96:

Irenaeus (Asia Minor, 140-202 AD);

Clement (Alexandria, 150-215 AD);

Origin (Alexandria, 185-254);

Eusebius (Caesarea, b. 260 AD);

Jerome (Stridon, 345-419).

## APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Apocalyptic literature is a literary genre that was common from the second century BC to the second century AD.

"Apocalypsis" means "revelation. Apocalyptic literature is a revelation; its intention is to transmit to the reader revelations ordinarily had by great personages of the history of Israel such as Moses, Ezra, Baruch, and Enoch.

### THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Revelation or Apocalypse is the most obscure book of the New Testament. It contains expressions and categories of thought which seem strange, even disconcerting to Western readers.

Revelations contains three literary forms: (1) apocalyptic, (2) prophetic, and (3) epistolary.

### APOCALYPTIC

The Prologue of the book itself establishes an explicit link between Revelations and the apocalyptic tradition of the Old Testament.

Rev 1:1-3

This is the revelation God gave to Jesus Christ, that he might show his servants what must happen very soon. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who in reporting, all he saw bears witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Happy is the man who reads this prophetic message, and happy are those who hear it and heed what is written in it, for the appointed time is near! (NAB)

In apocalyptic literature, symbols are cherished by the apocalyptic writer.

In some instances, the meaning is explained.

Rev 1:20

This is the secret meaning of the seven stars you saw in my right hand ... (NAB)

Rev 13:18

A certain wisdom is needed here: with a little ingenuity anyone can calculate the number of the beast, for it is a number that stands for a certain man. The man's number is six hundred sixty-six. (NAB)

A predilection for symbolism connects Revelation to Semitic tradition.

1 Kgs 11:30-32

Ahijah took off his new cloak, tore it into twelve pieces and said to Jeroboam: "Take ten pieces for yourself; the Lord the God of Israel, says: 'I will tear away the kingdom from Solomon's grasp and will give you ten of the tribes.'" (NAB)

Is 20:2-4

The Lord gave a warning through Isaiah, the son of Amoz: Go and take off the sackcloth from your waist, and remove the sandals from your feet. This he did, walking naked and barefoot. Then the Lord said: Just as my servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and portent against Egypt and Ethiopia, so shall the king of Assyria lead away captives from Egypt, and exiles from Ethiopia, young old, naked and barefoot, with buttocks uncovered [the shame of Egypt]. (NAB)

Jer 13:1-11

The Lord said to me: Go buy yourself a linen loincloth; wear it on your loins, but do not put it in water. ... For so close as the loincloth clings to a man's loins, so had I made the house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, says the Lord. ... (NAB)

Symbols abound in the Book of Revelation.

A WOMAN represents a people:

Rev 12:1f

A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. ... (NAB)

a woman also represents a city.

Rev 17: 1f

Then one of the seven angels who were holding the seven bowls came to me and said: "Come, I will show you the judgment in store for the great harlot who sits by the waters of the deep. ... (NAB)

A HORN speaks of power;

Rev 5:6

... I saw a Lamb that had been slain. He had seven horns and seven eyes; ... (NAB)

Rev 12:3

Then another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge dragon, flaming red, with seven heads and ten horns; ... (NAB)



in particular, a horn represents dynastic power.

Rev 13:1           The I saw a wild beast come out of the sea with ten horns and seven heads; on its horns were ten diadems and on its heads blasphemous names. (NAB)

EYES represent knowledge.

Rev 1:14           The hair of his head was as white as snow-white wool and his eyes blazed like fire. (NAB)

Rev 2:18           To the presiding spirit of the church in Thyatira, write this: "The Son of God, whose eyes blaze like fire ... (NAB)

WINGS represent mobility.

Rev 4:8           Each of the four living creatures had six wings and eyes all over, inside and out. (NAB)

Rev 12:14          But the woman was given the wings of a gigantic eagle so that she could fly off to her place in the desert ... (NAB)

In TRUMPETS is heard a superhuman, divine voice.

Rev 1:10           On the Lord's day I was caught up in ecstasy, and I heard behind me a piercing voice like the sound of a trumpet. (NAB)

Rev 8:2f           Then, as I watched, the seven angels who minister in God's presence were given seven trumpets. (NAB)

A SHARP SWORD indicates the word of God which judges and punishes.

Rev. 1:16          In his right hand he held seven stars. A sharp, two-edged sword came out of his mouth, and his face shone like the sun at its brightest. (NAB)

Rev. 2:12,16       To the presiding spirit of the church of Pergamum, write this: "The One with the sharp, two-edged sword has this to say: I know you live in the very place where Satan's throne is erected; ... Therefore, repent! If you do not, I will come to you soon and fight against them with the sword of my mouth." (NAB)

WHITE ROBES signify the world of glory.

Rev 6:11                Each of the martyrs was given a long white robe ... (NAB)

Rev 7:9                After this I saw before me a huge crowd which no one could count from every nation and race, people and tongue. They stood before the throne and the Lamb, dressed in long white robes ... (NAB)

PALMS are a sign of triumph.

Rev 7:9                (The huge crowd) stood before the throne and the Lamb, dressed in long white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. (NAB)

CROWNS represent dominion and kingship.

Rev 2:10                Remain faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life. (NAB)

Rev 3:11                I am coming soon. Hold fast to what you have lest someone rob you of your crown. (NAB)

The SEA is an evil element, source of insecurity and death.

Rev 13:1                Then I saw a wild beast come out of the sea with ten horns and seven heads; (NAB)

Rev 21:1                Then I saw new heavens and a new earth. The former heavens and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no longer. (NAB)

WHITE indicates the joy of victory.

Rev 2:17                To the victor I will give the hidden manna; I will also give him a white stone upon which is inscribed a new name ... (NAB)

Rev 4:4                Surrounding this throne were twenty-four other thrones upon which were seated twenty-four elders; they were clothed in white garments ... (NAB)

PURPLE signifies luxury and kingship.

Rev 17:4                The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and pearls and other jewels. (NAB)

Rev 18:12                - their cargoes of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen and purple garments, silk and scarlet cloth; (NAB)

BLACK indicates death.

Rev 6:5,12                      This time I saw a black horse, the rider of which held a pair of scales in his hand.  
(NAB)

Of considerable importance among symbols used in apocryphal literature is NUMBERS.

The number SEVEN is used 54 times in the Book of Revelation, and signifies fullness and perfection;

The number TWELVE is used 23 times and signifies the twelve tribes of Israel; indicates that the people of God has reached its eschatological perfection;

The number FOUR appears 16 times and indicates the universality of the visible world;

The number THREE is used 11 times, TEN is used 10 times, and a THOUSAND is used 6 times in Chapter 20 alone and often in multiples.

There are three intriguing cases of the use of symbolic numbers in Revelation.

(I) The duration of the persecution is given either as 1260 days;

Rev 11:3                      I will commission my two witnesses to prophesy for those twelve hundred and sixty days, dressed in sackcloth. (NAB)

Rev 12:6                      The woman herself fled into the desert where a special place had been prepared for her by God; there she was taken care of for twelve hundred and sixty days. (NAB)

... or 42 months;

Rev 11:2                      Exclude the outer court of the temple, however; do not measure it, for it has been handed over to the Gentiles, who will crush the holy city for forty-two months. (NAB)

Rev 13:5                      The beast was given a mouth for uttering proud boasts and blasphemies, but the authority it received was to last only forty-two months. (NAB)

... or three years and a half.

Rev 12:14                      But the woman was given the wings of a gigantic eagle so that she could fly off to her place in the desert, where, far from the serpent, she could be taken care of for a year and for two and a half years more. (NAB)



(II) 144,000 are said to follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Rev 7:4-8

I heard the number of those who were so marked - one hundred and forty-four thousand from every tribe of Israel; twelve thousand from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand from the tribe of Reuben, ... tribe of Benjamin. (NAB)

Rev 14:1-5

Then the Lamb appeared in my vision. He was standing on Mount Zion, and with him were the hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name written on their foreheads. ... (NAB)

(III) The Beast is referred to by the number 666. (Some texts have 616 as the number of the Beast.)

Rev 13:18

The man's number is six hundred sixty-six. (NAB)

The most generally accepted theory to understanding the significance of the number is called GEMATRIA - the number of a man.

The "number of a man" was the number equivalent to the sum of the letters in a man's name.

Neron Caesar was NRWN QSR in Hebrew: N = 50, R = 200, W = 6, Q = 100, S = 60. Hence

$$\begin{array}{ccccccccc} N & R & W & N & & Q & S & R & \\ 50 & + & 200 & + & 6 & + & 50 & + & 100 & + & 60 & + & 200 & = & 666 \end{array}$$

Neron Caesar was NRW QSR in Latin:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccccc} N & R & W & & Q & S & R & \\ 50 & + & 200 & + & 6 & + & 100 & + & 60 & + & 200 & = & 616 \end{array}$$

Nero fits the description in the context of the Book of Revelation:

- + he was the first Emperor to persecute Christians;
- + he embodied the worst characteristics of the Beast;
- + he was said to "come to life again" in the Emperor Domitian.

Revelation contains numerous allusions to the Old Testament: of 404 verses in the Book of Revelation, 278 contain at least one Old Testament excerpt.

The Old Testament books that have influenced Revelation most are the Prophets (mainly, Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zechariah,) and Psalms, and Exodus.

# PROPHETIC

The Book of Revelation is prophetic because John conceives his mission as similar to that of the ancient prophets.

Rev 10:11                    Then someone said to me, "You must prophesy again for many peoples and nations, languages and kings." (NAB)

Like the Prophets of old, John is called, and given a mandate.

Rev 1:9-20                    ... I was caught up in ecstasy, and I heard behind me a piercing voice like the sound of a trumpet, which said, "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: ... Write down, therefore whatever you see in visions - what you see now and will see in the time to come. ... " (NAB)

John hears the word of God and is ordered to transmit it to his brethren (11 times).

Rev 1:2                      ... John, who is reporting, all he saw bears witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. (NAB)

John frequently describes his book as a "prophecy."

Rev 1:3                      Happy the man who reads this prophetic message. (NAB)

Rev 19:10                    The prophetic spirit proves itself by witnessing to Jesus. (NAB)

Rev 22:7                    Happy the man who heeds the prophetic message of this book! (NAB)

Rev 22:10                    Then someone said to me: "Do not seal up the prophetic words of this book, for the appointed time is near!" (NAB)

Rev 22:18                    I myself give witness to all who hear the prophetic words of this book. ... If anyone takes from the words of this prophetic book ... (NAB)

Whereas, the title of the book, Apocalypse or Revelation is used only once.

Rev 1:1                      This is the revelation (apokalupsis) God gave to Jesus Christ ... (NAB)

#### EPISTOLARY

A third literary form has made a superficial imprint on Revelation.

The book is framed in the customary Christian epistolary formulas.

Rev 1:4-6

To the seven churches in the province of Asia: John wishes you grace and peace ... To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his royal blood, who made us a royal nation of priests in the service of hid God and Father - to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen (NAB)

Rev 22:21

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all. Amen! (NAB)

The messages conveyed to each of the seven churches takes the form of a letter.

Rev 2:1 - 3:22

To the presiding spirit of the church in Ephesus, write this: ... etc. (NAB)





## ACTS OF THE APOSTLE

### THE AUTHOR

The major clue to the authorship of the Acts of the Apostles is found be comparing the prologue of the Gospel According to Luke with the Prologue to the Acts.

Lk 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events which been fulfilled in our midst, precisely as those events were transmitted to us by the original eyewitnesses and ministers of the word. I too have carefully traced the whole sequence of events from the beginning, and have decided to set it in writing for you, Theophilus, so that Your Excellency may see how reliable the instruction was that you received. (NAB)

Acts 1:1-2

In my first account, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up to heaven, having first instructed the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit. (NAB)

Scripture scholars affirm that it is stylistically impossible to separate the writing of the Acts from the writing of Luke.

The author of Acts does not identify himself by name.

But the author's presence with the apostle Paul is indicated at certain points, the so-called "We-sections".

Acts 16:10-17

Crossing through Mysia instead, they (Paul, Silas and Timothy) came down to Troas. There one night Paul had a vision. A man of Macedonia stood before him and invited him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

After this vision, we (Paul, Timothy, Silas and Luke) immediately made efforts to get across to Macedonia, concluding that God had summoned us to proclaim the good news there. ... (NAB)

As he (Paul) was on the point of embarking for Syria, a plot was hatched against him by certain Jews; so he decided to return by way of Macedonia. Accompanying him were Sopater, son of Pyrrhus, from Beroea; Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica; Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia.

Acts 20:5 -  
Acts 21:18                    These companions went on ahead and waited for us (Paul and Luke) in Troas. We ourselves set sail from Phillipi as soon as the festival of Unleavened Bread was over. Five days later we joined them in Troas, where we spent a week. ... (NAB)

Acts 17:1 -  
Acts 28:16                    When it was decided that we (Paul and Luke) were to sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius from the cohort known as Augusta. ... (NAB)

These passages reveal a "companion of Paul" who travelled with Paul on some eastern campaigns; someone who presumably spent time with Paul at Rome.

The letters of Paul written from Rome (Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon and Philippians) mention associates of Paul.

Eph 6:21                    Tychicus, my dear brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will keep you informed as to how I am and what I am doing. (NAB)

Phlm 23-24                    Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. (NAB)

Col 4:14                    Luke, our dear physician, sends you greetings. So does Demas. (NAB)

Phil 2:19, 25                    I hope, in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you very soon, ... I have decided, too, that I must send you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker, and comrade in arms ... (NAB)

All these individuals, other than Luke, can be set aside as the "we" in Acts because they are mentioned in the third person in Acts, or because they did not make the journey with Paul to Rome.



## ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

### Composition

There appears to be a clear-cut apologetic emphasis in Luke's intent in writing the Acts. This is obvious in the record of confrontation with Roman officials.

In Cyprus:

Acts 13:7-12

They travelled over the whole island as far as Paphos, where they came across a Jewish magician named Bar-Jesus who posed as a prophet. He was attached to the court of the proconsular governor Sergius Paulus ... (NAB)

In Philippi:

Acts 16:19-39

When her (the clairvoyant girl) masters saw that their source of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the main square before the local authorities. They turned them over to the magistrates ... (NAB)

In Thessalonica:

Acts 17:6-9

They (the Jews) marched on the house of Jason in an attempt to bring Paul and Silas before the people's assembly. When they could not find them there, they dragged Jason himself and some of the brothers to the town magistrates ... (NAB)

In Athens:

Acts 17:18-34

Epicurean and Stoic philosophers disputed with him ... then they led him off to the Areopagus ... (NAB)

In Corinth:

Acts 18:12-17

During Gallio's proconsulship in Achaia, the Jews rose in a body against Paul and brought him before the bench ... (NAB)

In Ephesus:

Acts 19:31-41

People rushed together to the theater and dragged in Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's travelling companions from Macedonia. Paul wanted to go before this gathering but his disciples would not let him ... (NAB)

In Caesarea: before Felix

Acts 24:23-27

A few days later Felix came with his Jewish wife Drusilla, and sent for Paul ... (NAB)

In Caesarea: before Festus

Acts 25:1-12

After spending eight or ten days in Jerusalem, Festus went down to Caesarea. On the following day he took his seat on the bench and ordered Paul to be brought in ... (NAB)

In Caesarea: before Agrippa

Acts 25:13 -  
26:32

A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived in Caesarea and paid Festus a courtesy call. Since they were to spend several days there, Festus referred Paul's case to the king. ... (NAB)

Luke makes use of three sorts (major, minor and numerical) summaries used to describe the growth and character of the early Church. These serve to signal the reader and remind him of the progress of the growth.

The major summaries:

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. A reverent fear overtook them all, for many wonders and signs were performed by the apostles. Those who believed shared all things in common; they would sell their property and goods, dividing everything on the basis of each one's need. They went to the temple area together every day, while in their homes they broke bread. With exultant and sincere hearts they took their meals in common, praising God and winning the approval of all the people. Day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (NAB)

Acts 4:32-35

The community of believers were of one heart and one mind. None of them ever claimed anything as his own; rather, everything was held in common. With power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great respect was paid to them all; nor was there anyone needy among them, for all who owned property or houses sold them and donated the proceeds. They used to lay them at the feet of the apostles to be distributed to everyone according to his need. (NAB)

Acts 5:12-16

Through the hands of the apostles, many signs and wonders occurred among the people. By mutual agreement they used to meet in Solomon's Portico. No one else dared to join them, despite the fact that the people held them in great esteem. Nevertheless more and more believers, men and women in great numbers, were continually added to the Lord. The people carried the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mattresses, so that when Peter passed by at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them. Crowds from the towns around Jerusalem would gather, too, bringing their sick and those who were troubled by unclean spirits, all of whom were cured. (NAB)

The minor summaries:

Acts 1:14

Together they devoted themselves to constant prayer. There were some women in their company, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. (NAB)

Acts 6:7

The word of God continued to spread, while at the same time the number of the disciples in Jerusalem enormously increased. There were many priests among those who embraced the faith. (NAB)

Acts 9:31

Meanwhile throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria the church was at peace. It was being built up and making steady progress in the fear of the Lord; at the same time it enjoyed the increased consolation of the Holy Spirit (NAB)

Acts 12:24

Meanwhile the word of the Lord continued to spread and increase. (NAB)

Acts 16:5

Through all this, the congregations grew stronger in faith and daily increased in numbers. (NAB)

Acts 19:20

Thus did the word of the Lord continue to spread with influence and power. (NAB)

Acts 28:30-31

For two full years Paul stayed on in his rented lodgings, welcoming all who came to him. With full assurance, and without any hindrance whatever, he preached the reign of God and taught about Jesus Christ. (NAB)



The numerical summaries:

- Acts 2:41      Those who accepted his message were baptized; some three thousand were added that day. (NAB)
- Acts 4:4      Despite this (the arrest of Peter and John), many of those who had heard the speech believed; the number of the men came to about five thousand. (NAB)
- Acts 5:14      Nevertheless more and more believers, men and women in great numbers were continually added to the Lord. (NAB)
- Acts 6:1.7      In those days, as the number of disciples grew, ... the word of God continued to spread, while at the same time the number of the disciples in jerusalem enormously increased. (NAB)
- Acts 9:31      Meanwhile throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria the church was at peace. It was being built up and making steady progress in the fear of the Lord; at the same time it enjoyed the increased consolation of the Holy Spirit (NAB)
- Acts 11:21,24      The hand of the Lord was with them and a great number of them believed and were converted to the Lord. ... Thereby large numbers were added to the Lord. (NAB)
- Acts 12:24      Meanwhile the word of the Lord continues to spread and increase. (NAB)
- Acts 14:1      In Iconium likewise, they (Paul and Barnabas) entered the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way as to convince a good number of Jews and Greeks. (NAB)
- Acts 19:20      Thus did the word of the Lord continue to spread with influence and power. (NAB)

One-third of all of the Acts of the Apostles is devoted to speeches (13 in number). The speech becomes for Luke an important literary device. These speeches are placed on the lips of principal characters to reveal the meaning of the events with which the characters are associated.

Some speeches reflect the missionary preaching (kerygma) of the apostolic generation.

The discourses of Peter:

Acts 2:14-39

Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and addressed them: "You who are Jews ... It was to you and your children that the promise was made, and to all those still far off whom the Lord our God calls. " (NAB)

Acts 3:11-26

When Peter saw this (the cure of the cripple), he addressed the people as follows: Fellow Israelites ... When God raised up his servant, he sent him to you first to bless you by turning you from your evil ways." (NAB)

Acts 4:8-12

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke up: "Leaders of the People! ... There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other name in the whole world given to men by which we are to be saved." (NAB)

Acts 5:29-32

To this (orders not to teach), Peter and the apostles replied: "Better for us to obey God ... So too does the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those that obey him." (NAB)

Acts 10:34-43

Peter proceeded to address them in these words: "I begin to see how true it is that God shows no partiality. ... To him all the prophets testify, saying that everyone who believes in him has forgiveness of sins through his name." (NAB)

The discourses of Paul:

Acts 13:16-41

So Paul arose, motioned to them for silence, and began: "Fellow Israelites ... 'For I am doing a deed in your days which you never would have believed even if you had been told.'" (NAB)

Some speeches are freely composed without regard to historical details. The speech are too short for word-for-word reproduction.

The discourses of Paul: at the Areopagus

Acts 17:22-31

Then Paul stood up in the Areopagus and delivered this address: "Men of Athens ... He has set the day on which he is going to 'judge the world with justice' through a man he has appointed - one whom he has endorsed in the sight of all by raising him from the dead." (NAB)

at Miletus  
Acts 20:18-35

Paul sent word from Miletus to Ephesus, summoning the presbyters of that church. When they came to him he delivered this address: "You know how I lived among you from the first day I set foot in the province of Asia ... 'There is more happiness in giving than receiving.'" (NAB)

in Jerusalem  
Acts 22:3-21

With his (the commander) permission Paul then stood on the steps and motioned the people to silence. A great hush fell on them as he began to speak to them in Hebrew. "My brothers and fathers, ... I mean to send you far from here, among the Gentiles." (NAB)

before Felix  
Acts 24:10-21

The governor then gestured to Paul, who replied as follows: "I know that you have been a judge over this nation for many years ... 'I am on trial before you today because of the resurrection of the dead.'" (NAB)

before King Agrippa  
Acts 26:1-23

So Paul stretched out his hand and began his defense. "Many charges have been leveled against me by the Jews, King Agrippa. ... namely that the Messiah must suffer, and that, as the first to rise from the dead, he will proclaim light to our people and to the Gentiles." (NAB)

to the Jews of Rome  
Acts 28:17-29

Three days later Paul invited the prominent men of the Jewish community to visit him. When they had gathered he said: "My brothers, ... Now you must realize that this salvation of God has been transmitted to the Gentiles—who will heed it!" (NAB)

The discourse of Stephen  
Acts 7:2-53

The high priest asked whether the charges were true. To this Stephen replied: "My brothers! Fathers! Listen to me. ... You who received the law through the ministry of angels have not observed it." (NAB)

Since Luke was not an eyewitness to all the events he records in the Acts of the Apostles, it is important to consider the sources from which he drew.



The We-Sections are extracts from a "travel diary" written by the companion of Paul:

Acts 16:10-17	Troas to Philippi: Missionary Journey II
Acts 20:5-15 Acts 21:1-18	Philippi to Jerusalem: Missionary Journey III
Acts 27:1 - 28:16	Voyage to Rome

There is evidence of a Palestinian (Jerusalemite) source:

Acts 1:6 - 2:40; 3:1 - 4:31; 4:36 - 5:11; 5:17-42; 8:5-40;  
9:32 - 11:18; 12:1-23.

There is evidence of a Antiochene source:

Acts 6:1-6; 6:8 - 8:4; 11:19-30; 15:3-33.

Finally, there is evidence of a Pauline source:

9:1-30; 13:3 - 14:28; 15:35 - 18:31.

The Greek text of the Acts of the Apostles is unique among the books of the New Testament: there are two forms of the Greek text preserved.

Egyptian (Alexandrian) Text  
+ most commonly used  
+ little older than Western Text

Western Text  
+ used in Patristic citations (Irenaeus, Cyprian, Augustine, Ephraem, etc.)  
+ one-tenth longer than Egyptian Text  
+ almost as old as the Egyptian Text  
+ contains many additional phrases, clauses, even whole verses  
+ a conscious revision?!  
+ differs significantly 13:37; 15:29; 18:27; 19:1: 28:31.

## THE CHRONOLOGY OF ACTS

A.D.	EVENT	ACTS
30	The Ascension of Jesus	1:6-11
	Appointment of the Seven Deacons	6:1-7
	Death of Stephen	7:54 - 8:1a
35	The Conversion of Saul	9:1-30
40	Church in Antioch	11:19-30
	Execution of James/Imprisonment of Peter	12:1-25
45		
	Paul's First Missionary Journey	13:1 - 14:28
	? GALATIANS	
	Council at Jerusalem	15:1-35
50	Paul's Second Missionary Journey	15:36 - 18:22
	1 THESSALONIANS, 2 THESSALONIANS	
	Paul's Third Missionary Journey	18:23 - 21:17
55	?GALATIANS, 1 CORINTHIANS, ROMANS, 2 CORINTHIANS AND ?PHILIPPIANS	
	Paul's Arrest in Jerusalem	21:27-36
60	Paul's Journey to Rome	27:1 - 28:15
	Two Full Years in Rome	28:30-31
	COLOSSIANS, PHILEMON, ?EPHESIANS AND ?PHILIPPIANS	
	MARK	
	?Paul's Journey to Spain, Ephesus, Macedonia and Greece	
65	?1 TIMOTHY, TITUS, 2 TIMOTHY or much later	
	Death of Peter and Paul	
70		
	LUKE-ACTS	

# PAUL, THE APOSTLE HIS LIFE AND HIS WRITINGS

Much is known about Saul of Tarsus, because he included much about himself in his letters and his companion Luke included much about him in his Acts of the Apostles.

This author of thirteen letters included in the New Testament is first known as Saul.

Acts 13:9               Saul (also known as Paul) was filled with the Holy Spirit. (NAB)

Peter made reference to Paul in one of his letters.

2 Pet 3:15             Paul, our beloved brother, wrote you this in the spirit of wisdom that is his, dealing with these matters as he does in all his letters. (NAB)

Paul was born Saul at Tarsus in Cilicia, Asia Minor, around the year 10 AD.

Acts 21:39             Paul replied, "I am a Jew, a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia - no mean city ... " (NAB)

Paul came from an Aramaic-speaking Jewish family.

2 Cor 11:22            Are they Hebrews? So am I! Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I! (NAB)

Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin.

Rom 11.1               I myself am an Israelite, descended from Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. (NAB)

Phil 3:5               I ... being of the stock of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew origins ... (NAB)

Paul claimed to himself Roman citizenship.

Acts 22:27             The commander rushed in and asked Paul, "Is it true? Are you a Roman citizen?" "I am," Paul answered. (NAB)

He was circumcised on the eighth day after birth.

Phil 3:6               I was circumcised on the eighth day ... (NAB)

Paul's native city, Tarsus, was the Athens of Asia Minor, and so Paul grew up in the midst of the Greek language and culture.



Acts 17:28      Then Paul stood up in the Areopagus and delivered this address: Men of Athens, ... 'In him (God) we live and move and have our being,' as some of your own poets have put it, 'for we too are his offspring.' (NAB)

1 Cor 15:33      Do not be lead astray any longer. "Bad company corrupts good morals." (NAB)

Tit 1:12      A man of Crete, one of their own prophets, has testified, "Cretans have ever been liars, beasts, and lazy gluttons." (NAB)

Despite his education, Paul was a most zealous follower of Jewish traditions. When he was about eighteen years old he came to Jerusalem where he sat as a disciple at Gamaliel's feet to learn the doctrine of the Pharisees.

History records Gamaliel as Rabbi Gamaliel I who flourished in Jerusalem about 20 - 50 AD. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin which judged Peter and John. It was he who intervened for the apostles (Acts 5:34-39). For Paul to "study at the feet of Gamaliel implies that he was preparing to be a rabbi himself.

Acts 22:3      I was brought up in this city (Jerusalem). Here I sat at the feet of Gamaliel and was educated strictly in the law of our fathers. (NAB)

Acts 23:6      Brothers, I am a Pharisee and was born a Pharisee. (NAB)

Phil 3:6      In legal observance I was a Pharisee ... (NAB)

In writing about marriage in 1 Corinthians, Paul expressed his marriage reference, leaving us to believe that he may have been married and widowed. Marriage would have been required of him for rabbinical ordination.

1 Cor 7:7-8      Given my preference, I should like you to be as I am. Still, each one has his own gift from God, one this and another that. (NAB)

Paul became a passionate defender of Jewish traditions and surpassed all his fellows in his attachment to the Jewish Patrimony and in protecting them against Christian deviations.

Gal 1:14      I made progress in Jewish observance far beyond most of my contemporaries, in my excess of zeal to live out all the traditions of my ancestors. (NAB)

Paul also learned the trade of a tentmaker which provided his livelihood.

Acts 18:3           ... Paul went to visit the pair (Claudius and Priscilla) whose trade he had in common with them. He took up lodgings with them and they worked as tentmakers. (NAB)

Paul was present to Stephen's stoning.

Acts 7:57-58       They ... dragged him (Stephen) out of the city, and began to stone him. The witnesses meanwhile were piling their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. (NAB)

Paul began to take an active part in the persecution of the church in Palestine,

Acts 8:1-3           Saul, for his part, concurred in the act of killing. That day saw a beginning of a great persecution of the church in Jerusalem. ... Saul began to harass the church. He entered house after house, dragged men and women out, and threw them into jail. (NAB)

... and in Damascus.

Acts 9:1-2           Saul, still breathing murderous threats against the Lord's disciples, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus which would empower him to arrest and bring to Jerusalem anyone he might find, man or woman, living according to the new way. (NAB)

Paul's conversion to the Lord took place on the road to Damascus. Of this event there are three versions in Acts. One is Luke's own account.

Acts 9:1-9           As he (Paul) traveled along and was approaching Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed about him. He fell to the ground and at the same time heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, sir?" he asked. The voice answered, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. Get up and go into the city, where you will be told what to do." The men who were traveling with him heard the voice but could see no one. Saul got up from the ground unable to see, even though his eyes were open. They had to take him into Damascus. For three days he continued blind,

during which time he neither ate nor slept.  
(NAB)

The two other versions of Paul's conversion in Acts are his own account.

Acts 22:5-16

As I was traveling along, approaching Damascus around noon, a great light from the sky flashed all about me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" I answered, "Who are you, sir?" He said to me, "I am Jesus the Nazorean whom you are persecuting." My companions saw the light but did not hear the voice speaking to me. "What is it I must do, sir?" I asked, and the Lord replied, "Get up and go into Damascus. There you will be told about everything you are destined to do. But since I could no see because of the brilliance of the light, I had to be taken by the hand and led into Damascus by my companions. (NAB)

Acts 26:12-18

On one such occasion I was travelling toward Damascus armed with the authority and commission of the chief priests. On this journey, Your Majesty, I saw a light more brilliant than the sun shining in the sky at midday. It surrounded me and those who were travelling with me. All of us fell to the ground and I heard a voice saying to me in Hebrew, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goad." I said, at that, "Who are you sir?" and the Lord answered, "I am that Jesus whom you are persecuting. Get up now and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to designate you as my servant and as a witness to what you have seen of me and what you will see of me. I have delivered you from this people and from the nations, to open the eyes of those to whom I am sending you, to turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God; that through their faith in me they may obtain the forgiveness of their sins and a portion among God's people." (NAB)

After his conversion, Paul preached for some days at Damascus.

Acts 9:19-22

Paul stayed for some time with the disciples in Damascus, and soon began to proclaim in the synagogues that Jesus was the Son of God. Any who heard of it were greatly taken aback. They kept saying: "Isn't this the man who



worked such havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoke his name? Did he not come here purposely to apprehend such people and bring them before the chief priests?" Saul for his part grew steadily more powerful, and reduced the Jewish community of Damascus to silence with his proofs that this Jesus was the Messiah. (NAB)

Paul then retired to Arabia, that is, to the region near Damascus which was part of the Nabataean kingdom.

Gal 1:16-18           Immediately, without seeking human advisors or even going to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, I went off to Arabia; (NAB)

He returned once more to Damascus.

Gal 1:18           ... later I returned to Damascus. (NAB)

Paul was forced to flee because he was brought before King Aretas of Damascus.

Acts 9:23-25           After quite some time had passed, certain Jews conspired to kill Saul, but their plot came to his attention. They went so far as to keep close watch on the city gates day and night in an attempt to do away with him. Some of the disciples, therefore took him along the wall one night and lowered him to the ground using ropes and a hamper. (NAB)

Paul then went to Jerusalem where he stayed fifteen days with Peter and James.

Gal 1:18-19           Three years after that I went up to Jerusalem to get to know Cephas, with whom I stayed fifteen days. I did not meet any other apostles except James, the brother of the Lord. (NAB)

Acts 9:26-28           When he arrived back in Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples there; but it turned out that they were afraid of him. They even refused to believe that he was a disciple. Then Barnabas took him in charge and introduced him to the apostles. He explained to them how on his journey Saul had seen the Lord, who had conversed with him, and how Saul had been speaking out fearlessly in the name of Jesus at Damascus. Saul stayed on with them, moving freely about Jerusalem and expressing himself quite openly in the name

of the Lord. (NAB)

There, however, some Jewish Christians remembered his period as persecutor of the Church, so he returned to Tarsus.

Acts 9:29-30      He even addressed the Greek-speaking Jews and debated with them. They for their part responded by trying to kill him. When the brothers learned of this, some of them took him down to Carsarea and sent him off to Tarsus. (NAB)

Gal 1:23      They (communities of Christ in Judea) had no idea what I looked like; they had only heard that "he who was formerly persecuting us is now preaching the faith he tried to destroy," and they gave glory to God on my account. (NAB)

After some time Barnabas come to him there and brought him to Antioch to work in the church.

Acts 11:25-26      Then Barnabas went off to Tarsus to look for Saul; once he had found him, he brought him back to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and instructed great numbers. It was at Antioch that the disciples were called Christians for the first time. (NAB)

With Barnabas, Paul brought to Jerusalem the alms that had been collected to alleviate the famine that struck the region during the reign of Claudius.

Acts 11:29-30      This (the prophecy of the famine) made the disciples determine to set something aside, each according to his means, and send it to the relief of the brothers in Jerusalem. They did this, dispatching it to the presbyters in the care of Barnabas and Saul. (NAB)

From this point on Paul, Antioch was to become for Paul the center of the mission to the Gentiles. Although Paul is the "Apostle of the Gentiles" he always respected the privilege of the Jews.

Rom 1:16      I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God leading everyone who believed in it to salvation, the Jew first, then the Greek. (NAB)

Rom 2:9-10      Yes, affliction and anguish will come on every man who has done evil, the Jew first, then the Greek. But there will be glory, honor, and peace for everyone who has done

good, likewise the Jew first, then the Greek.  
(NAB)

Paul chose the great cities of the Hellenistic world to serve as centers of evangelizing the Christian message. First of all he went to the Jews and proselytes in the synagogues.

Acts 13:5            On their (Paul and Barnabas) arrival in Salamis they proclaimed the words of God in the Jewish synagogues. (NAB)

Acts 14:1            In Iconium likewise, they entered the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way as to convince a good number of Jews and Greeks.  
(NAB)

Not infrequently, Paul's preaching aroused the opposition of the larger part of the Jewish community, obliging him to abandon the city.

Acts 14:2-6, 18      But the Jews (of Iconium) who remained unconvinced stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. ... they (Paul and Barnabas) could scarcely stop the crowds from offering sacrifice to them. (NAB)

Acts 17:5            This (making converts) aroused the resentment of the Jews, however who engaged loafers from the public square in (Thessalonica) to form a mob and start a riot in the town. (NAB)

Acts 17:13-15        But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Beroea also, they hurried there to cause a commotion and stir up the crowds. The brothers sent Paul off directly on his way to the sea ... (NAB)

Acts 18:12           During Gallio's proconsulship in Achaia, the Jews rose in a body against Paul and brought him before the bench. (NAB)

Paul often had to break with the Jewish community and turn to the pagans.

Acts 18:6-7           When Silas and Timothy came down (to Corinth) from Macedonia, Paul was absorbed in preaching and giving evidence to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. When they opposed him and insulted him, he would shake out his garments in protest and say to them: "Your blood be on your own heads. I am not to blame! From now on, I will turn to the



Gentiles." (NAB)

Acts 19:8-9

Paul entered the synagogue (in Ephesus), and over a period of three months debated fearlessly, with persuasive arguments, about the kingdom of God. When some in their obstinacy would not believe, but chose to speak ill of the new way in the presence of the assembly, Paul simply left them. (NAB)

It was Paul's custom to visit again the churches he had founded in a preceding journey to confirm them in the faith.

Acts 14:21-22

After they (Paul and Barnabas) had proclaimed the good news in that town (Derbe) and made numerous disciples, they retraced their steps to Lystra and Iconium first, then to Antioch. They gave their disciples reassurances, and encouraged them to persevere in the faith ... (NAB)

Acts 15:36,41

After a certain time Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back now and see how the brothers are getting on in each of the towns where we proclaimed the word of the Lord." Paul ... travelled throughout Syria and Cilicia, giving the churches there renewed assurance. (NAB)

Paul's return visit also permitted him to install elders (presbyteroi).

Acts 14:23

In each church they installed presbyters and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had put their faith. (NAB)

Paul's apostolic work was accomplished in three great missionary journeys that brought the faith to Cyprus, Asia Minor, Macedonia and Achaia.

Paul's FIRST JOURNEY (46 - 49 AD) was undertaken with Barnabas and Mark to Cyprus, where in Salamis and Paphos the word of God was proclaimed. At Paphos Paul met the proconsul Sergius Paulus. From there they went on to Asia Minor. At Perga Mark abandoned them, while they went on to Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe.

On their way back they visited the same cities in Asia Minor, and boarded a ship at Attalia for Antioch (Acts 13 - 14). On their arrival they discovered that Jewish-Christian converts were exaggerating the obligation of the observance of the law and circumcision by the Hellenist Christians, and so a decision was reached to bring the question to the apostles at Jerusalem (Acts 15; Gal 2).

Paul's SECOND JOURNEY (50 - 53 AD) began with a disagreement with Barnabas and Mark, and so he took Silas-Silvanus with him instead. He returned to the churches of Asia Minor, and at Lystra took Timothy into the band (Acts 16:1-3; 2 Tim 1:5). Later he stayed at Phrygia and Galatia, and then reached Troas where he met Luke. From Troas he passed on to Macedonia, making stops at Philippi, Thessalonica and Beroea. Paul set out alone for Athens where he made a speech on the Areopagus, and then, with Timothy reached Corinth. Here he met Aquilla and Priscilla. He remained there for eighteen months. He was brought by the Jews before Gallio the proconsul on an accusation of breaking the law, but Gallio eased himself out of the case, claiming it was outside his competence. From Corinth Paul returned to Antioch. It was from Corinth that 1 and 2 Thessalonians were written (Acts 15:36 - 18:22).

Paul's THIRD JOURNEY (54 - 59 AD) was through Galatia and Phrygia to Ephesus. where for three months he preached in the synagogue and for two years in the school of a man called Tyrannus. He was expelled because of a commotion caused by the silversmiths of the city. He went from there to Macedonia and stopped at Corinth. After three months he returned by the same way to Troas and then to Miletus where he had summoned the elders of Ephesus. He went by sea to Caesarea where a prophet Agabus foretold the tribulations that awaited him in Jerusalem (Acts 18:25-21:19). During this journey he wrote Galatians (from Ephesus), Romans (from Corinth), Philippians (from Ephesus), and 1 and 2 Corinthians (from Ephesus and Macedonia).

There is a detailed description of what happened in JERUSALEM and the JOURNEY TO ROME. (Acts 21:17 ff).

Notwithstanding Paul's efforts to win over the Jews, he was arrested by them, and got away with his life only through the strategy of the Roman tribune. Twice he was taken before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30 - 23:10) and, when the conspiracy against him was discovered he was sent by night to Caesarea, to the Roman procurator Felix (Acts 24:1-21). There Paul spent two years in jail (Acts 24:22-27).

When the new procurator Festus came along, Paul appealed to Caesar (Acts 25:1-12) and later appeared before Agrippa and Bernice (Acts 25:13 - 26:32).

Then Paul was put on board ship for Rome, where he arrived after an exciting journey during which he was shipwrecked on Malta and forced to stay there for a brief period (Acts 27:1-28:16).

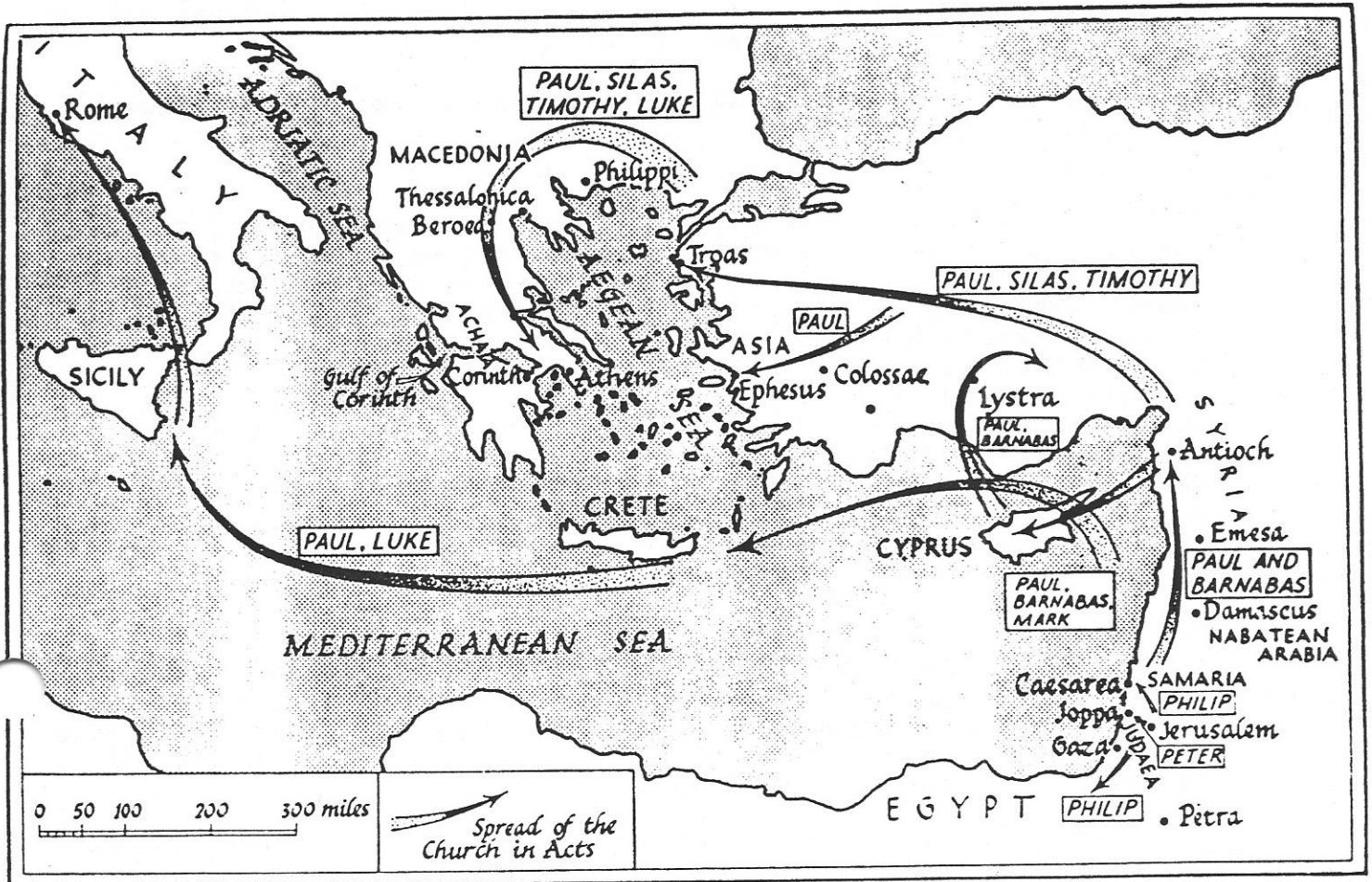
Paul stayed in Rome for two years, his FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT, preaching the gospel, before being taken to trial (Acts 27:17-31). During his Roman captivity, Paul composed the letters to Philemon, to the Colossians and to the Ephesians.

The information about Paul after his first captivity is taken from the pastoral letters. In Romans 15:24-28, Paul expresses his plans for going to Spain, but it is not known if he completed this journey.

According to the pastoral letters he visited Crete (Tit 1:5), and Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3) and the adjacent cities (2 Tim 4:20), Macedonia and Epirus (from Nicopolis he wrote Titus and 1 Timothy).

The reasons for his SECOND IMPRISONMENT are unknown, nor do we know where he was imprisoned. According to 2 Tim 1:8, 16-17; 2:9 Paul wrote 2 Timothy as a prisoner in Rome and is awaiting death. Tradition places his martyrdom in Rome on the Ostian Way, during the persecution of Nero (67 or 68 AD).





*The Mediterranean world in Acts*

## PAUL, THE PHARISEE

- Acts 23:6                      Brothers, I am a Pharisee and was born a Pharisee. (NAB)
- Phil 3:6                      In legal observance I was a Pharisee ... (NAB)

The Pharisees were people who had separated themselves from the ordinary folk to live more saintly lives. The Aramaic word for a Pharisee, perisha, means "separated one". In a certain sense, Pharisees were like monks, persons who had made up their minds to serve God very strictly according to the Law, and who had taken up some especially severe practices (extra fasts, long prayers, etc.). The Pharisees were very much on the front line during the Hellenistic persecutions. They proved fanatical in their loyalty to the ancient practices and were extremely nationalistic. The Pharisees accepted the resurrection of the body, the existence of angels, and God's direct providence in this world as doctrines of faith.

The Scribes began to flourish after the Babylonian exile. They were a reaction to the persecution by the Syrian kings. For them, the study of the Law became a passion. Every physical letter of the Law (the Torah) was of greatest importance. They faithfully explained and taught the Law to others. They naturally evolved as the leachers of the Law. They received the title "Rabbi" or "Rabboni."

Not every Scribe was automatically a Pharisee, nor was every Pharisee a Scribe. But most Pharisees were Scribes and most Scribes were Pharisees. For this reason the two groups are considered practically identical in the Gospels.

The fiercest opponents of the Pharisees were the Sadducees. The following are highlights of the differences between them.

**SADDUCEES**

Belonged mostly to the priestly and upper classes.

They occupied important posts, especially in the Temple. Most of the high priests were Sadducees.

In spite of their power and prestige they were despised by the people.

Only the Torah was accepted as the source of moral obligations.

They rejected later doctrines such as the resurrection of the dead, angels and devils, and God's direct providence.

They were inclined to be sympathetic to Roman rule.

They were in danger of becoming skeptics, with little interest in religious justice.

**PHARISEES**

Belonged mostly to the non-priestly classes. Anyone could become a Pharisee.

Most of the Pharisees were teachers of the Law, with a place in the synagogues as well as the Temple precincts.

They had great influence with the ordinary people, who considered them saints and listened to their teachings.

The Pharisees accepted all the instructions and traditions as binding.

They accepted the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment, the existence of angels and devils, God's direct providence, and Messianism.

They were looking forward to the liberation from Roman rule and would go to any length to achieve their end.

They were in danger of falling into extreme fanaticism and legalism.



## NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES

The literary form of 21 of the 27 books of the New Testament are "epistolai", epistles. Interestingly, there are no books so designated in the Old Testament. There are letters in the Old Testament, but not letters with a religious purpose.

There is a real distinction between an epistle and a letter:

EPISTLE	LETTER
A artistic literary form (like a dialogue, an oration, a drama);	Something non-literary;
Nothing in common with a letter except its form;	A process of communication between separated persons;
The opposite of a "real" letter;	Confidential, personal in nature;
Intended for publicity;	Intended only for the person addressed;
Developed in Greek philosophical school of the 4th century B.C.;	Not at all for the public;
Resembles a treatise, a dialogue.	Free style, intimate, familiar.

The New Testament "Epistolai" constitute a particular corpus of biblical literature today. They were not originally intended to be epistles. Paul wrote them as letters: they were composed for an occasion, often composed in haste, and written mostly in complete independence of each other. For example, Philemon is a private letter addressed to an individual; Galatians is a letter addressed to a group of local churches.

The form of an ancient letter or epistle was standard as the form of a letter is today. There were four parts customarily distinguished in the Greco-Roman form for a letter:

- (1) OPENING FORMULA: This was not the "address" but the praescriptio - an elliptic sentence giving the name of the sender and the addressee with a short greeting.

E.g.: Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to our beloved friend and fellow worker Philemon, to Apphia our sister, and to the church that meets at your house. Grace to you and peace from God our

Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. (Phil 1-2)

- (2) THANKSGIVING: A widespread custom called for an epistolary introduction expressing a religious or non religious sentiment of thanks.

E.g.: I thank God always, my brother, as I commend you in my prayers, for I keep hearing of your love and faith toward the Lord Jesus and all God's people. (Phil 4-5)

- (3) MESSAGE: The body of the letter.

- (4) FINAL GREETING: This is the "good-by". It took the place of the modern signature. In the case of the dictated letters it was sometimes written by the sender himself.

E.g.: Confident of your compliance, I write you, knowing that you will do more than I say. And get a room ready for me; I hope that through your prayers I shall be restored to you. Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (Phil 21-25)

#### THE PAULINE CORPUS

Paul wrote many letters; thirteen are preserved in the New Testament canon. Thirteen is the number of letters attributed to Paul in the Muratorium Canon. The Muratorium Canon is a list of the inspired and canonical books of the New Testament composed in Rome during the second half of the second century (c. 180 AD). This Canon lists all the books of the canon as defined by the Council of Trent except Hebrews, James and 2 Peter.

Paul unquestionably wrote more letters than the thirteen ascribed to him. 2 Cor 2:3-4 indicates a lost other "second" letter to the church at Corinth; Col 4:16 refers to a "Laodicean" letter, etc.

#### HEBREWS

The letter to the Hebrews was once ascribed to Paul, but modern scholars both Catholic and Protestant doubt Paul's authorship. Hebrews better suits the definition of an epistle. It appears in reality to be an ancient hortatory sermon. The letter is rich in instructive theological discussion. Unlike classical letters, it has no opening formula and no real concluding section.

#### CATHOLIC EPISTLES

James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, Jude

These epistles are distinguished by the name of the writer,

rather than the name of the addressee.  
Eusebius wrote of these epistles as the "seven called catholic" because they were addressed to all the churches.

#### PAULINE EPISTLES

The Captivity Letters: Philippians (1:7, 13-14), Philemon (1, 9-10, 23), Colossians (4:3, 18), Ephesians (3:1; 4:1; 6:20) were all written while Paul was in prison, and he mentions imprisonment.

The Pastoral Letters: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, because of the concern voiced in these letters for the establishment of hierarchical and ecclesiastical discipline.

The Great Letters: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, because of the length of these letters and the importance of the teaching in them.

#### WRITING OR DICTATION

There were four modes of letter writing in the ancient world:

- (1) to write the letter oneself;
- (2) to dictate word for word (even syllable by syllable);
- (3) to dictate the sense, leaving the formulation to a secretary-scribe;
- (4) to have a friend or secretary write in one's name, without indicating the content.

(1) and (3) were the most commonly used modes of letter writing.

#### PAUL

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Rom 16:22    | I, Tertius, who have written this letter, send you my greetings in the Lord. (NAB)               |
| 2 Thess 3:17 | This greeting is in my own hand - Paul's. I append this signature to every letter I write. (NAB) |
| 1 Cor 16:21  | It is I, Paul, who send you this greeting in my own hand. (NAB)                                  |
| Col 4:18     | This greeting is from Paul - in my own hand! (NAB)   |
| 1 Pet 5:12   | I am writing briefly through Silvanus, whom I take to be a faithful brother to you. (NAB)        |



## THE CITY OF CORINTH

### CORINTH: THE CITY

Situated on the end of the narrow isthmus that joins the Peloponnesus to the Greece mainland;  
 Made access easy to two seas: Aegean on the east, Adriatic on the west;  
 Homer and Pindar (Greek authors) wrote of the "wealth of Corinth": primarily industrial - shipbuilding center; celebrated for architecture and cultivated the arts;  
 Cicero (Roman author) called Corinth "the light of all Greece";  
 Ancient Corinth was a center for Greek resistance to Roman invasion; Rome finally destroyed Corinth in 146 BC;  
 In 46 BC Julius Caesar rebuilt Corinth and named it "Laus Julii."

### CORINTH IN THE TIME OF PAUL

Corinth was a bustling city;  
 Cosmopolitan population;  
 A center of government and commerce;  
 Known for a famous sports center: home of Isthmian Games, played every second spring;  
 In a pagan world notoriously tolerant of sexual license, Corinth had a reputation of debauchery and licentiousness:  
     korinthiaxein meant "to live like a Corinthian, to fornicate";  
     kore korinthe meant "a Corinthian girl, a prostitute";  
 Patron deity was Aphrodite (goddess of love and beauty) whose shrine supported a thousand priestesses, temple prostitutes;  
 Recent excavations uncovered a 100' x 80' colonnade, the largest non-religious structure in ancient Greece; also 33 taverns were discovered.

### FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH IN CORINTH BY PAUL

Early 50/51 (Acts 18:1-18);  
 Paul stayed 18 months;  
 Became friendly with Aquila and his wife Priscilla;  
 Paul taught in the synagogue: the Western Text (Acts 18:4) says that Paul "inserted the name of the Lord Jesus at appropriate points in the lessons";  
 Synagogue authorities could no longer tolerate Paul when Paul converted a synagogue official Crispus;  
 Paul was forced to leave the synagogue; he then concentrated on the non-Jewish population;  
 Paul converted a Gentile Titius Justus, a citizen of Corinth and moved into his home - next door to the synagogue;

Jews tried to make trouble for Paul: they dragged him to court before Gallio, the Roman proconsul;

Gallio took the official line that the incident was a purely religious dispute and had nothing to do with Roman administration;

Paul left Corinth in the fall (September) of 52 AD.

### THE OCCASION OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

During Paul's Ephesian ministry, 56 AD, he received disquieting news from Corinth about ethical principles and the practices of some Corinthian converts. Some had not broken with the besetting vice of Corinth - fornication.

Paul takes the occasion to send them a letter.

1 Cor 5:9-11            I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral persons. I was not speaking of association with immoral people in this world, or the covetous or thieves or idolaters. To avoid them, you would have to leave the world! What I really wrote about was your not associating with anyone who bears the title "brother" if he is immoral, covetous, and idolater, an abusive person, a drunkard, or a thief. (NAB)

Paul then hears from Chloe's people indicating a factionalism in the Corinthian church.

1 Cor 1:11-12           I have been informed, my brothers, by certain members of Chloe's household that you are quarreling among yourselves. This is what I mean: One of you will say, "I belong to Paul," another, "I belong to Apollos," still another, "Cephas has by allegiance," and the fourth, "I belong to Christ." (NAB)

Paul then dictated chapters 1 - 4.

Another communication arrives from Corinth.

1 Cor 16:17-18           I was very happy at the arrival of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because they made up for your absence. They have refreshed my spirit as they did yours. You should recognize the worth of such men. (NAB)

Paul then completed chapters 5 and 6, 7 to 16.

The letter was taken to Corinth, possibly by Stephanus, Fortunatus and Achaicus.



## CHRISTIANITY IN CORINTH

The occasion which prompted Paul's First Letter to the Church in Corinth has forever preserved the spiritual condition of a first century Christian community as it assimilated to a Hellenistic environment.

To specific ills of the Corinthian community Paul addressed the Gospel solution.

<u>Problems of the Corinthian Church</u>	<u>Paul's Solution</u>
They openly divided according to a spiritual factionalism;	1 Cor 1:12 1 Cor 4:8f
They saw the Gospel message as a superior wisdom to an initiated few;	1 Cor 12:1-3
They cherished the charisms of the Holy Spirit over the practice of charity;	1 Cor 13
They ate meat offered to idols to the scandal of others;	1 Cor 6:12 1 Cor 10:23
They lacked moral power to take action against an incestuous union;	1 Cor 5:1-13
They showed disedifying conduct in pagan courts;	1 Cor 6:1-11
They revived the old practice of religious prostitution;	1 Cor 6:13-20
They participated in the rites of the temples of the gods;	1 Cor 10:14-22
They questioned Paul's authority as an apostle;	1 Cor 9:15-18
They permitted women at liturgy without their heads covered;	1 Cor 11:2-16
They quarreled over the right to address the assembly;	1 Cor 14:34f
Their ills were reflected in the Eucharistic liturgy: clannishness, drunkenness, denied the poor;	1 Cor 11:17-22
They believed against the general bodily resurrection;	1 Cor 15:1-57
They were ignorant of the use of sex in marriage.	1 Cor 7:1-7

# OCCASION OF SECOND CORINTHIANS

In Paul's first letter to Corinth, he mentioned travelling plans he had to visit them again.

1 Cor 4:18-19      Some have grown full of self-importance, thinking that I will not come to you. But I shall come to you soon, the Lord willing, and find out, not what they say, but what they do. (NAB)

Paul even suggests that he might spend the winter of 55-56 AD with them.

1 Cor 16:5-9      I shall come to you after I have passed through Macedonia. If it is at all possible, I should like to remain with you for some time - even to spend the winter with you - that you may provide me with what I need for the rest of my journey. (NAB)

Paul's plans changed and he decided to visit Corinth twice. The first time on his way to Macedonia, and again, on his way back from Macedonia.

2 Cor 1:15      Confident as I am about this, I wanted to visit you first so that a double grace might be yours. I planned to visit you, both on my way to Macedonia and on my return, that I might receive your help on my journey to Judea. (NAB)

As Paul mentioned, he planned to sail to Palestine hoping to take a gift collection to Jerusalem.

1 Cor 16:1-4      About the collection for the saints, follow the instructions I gave the churches of Galatia. On the first day of each week everyone should put aside whatever he has been able to save, so that the collection will not have to be taken after I arrive. When I come I shall give letters of introduction to those whom you have chosen to take your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems fitting that I should go myself, they will accompany me. (NAB)

A number of things appear to have made it impossible for Paul to carry out these plans.

Some "deadly peril" hit Paul in Asia.

2 Cor 1:8-10

Brothers, we do not wish to leave you in the dark about the trouble we had in Asia; we were crushed beyond our strength, even to the point of despairing of life. We were left to feel like men condemned to death so that we might trust, not in ourselves, but in God who raises from the dead. He rescued us from that danger of death and will continue to do so. (NAB)

News of further trouble in Corinth made it necessary for Paul to make an urgent visit to them.

2 Cor 13:2

I said before when I was there the second time - and I repeat it now in my absence - to those who sinned before and to all the rest, that if I come again I shall not spare you. (NAB)

It appears that the first letter to Corinth was not as effective and that Timothy was not strong enough to enforce Paul's monitions.

Paul opts not to make a visit under the present circumstances.

2 Cor 2:1

I did decide, however, not to visit you again in painful circumstances. (NAB)

Paul grieves over a member of the Corinthian church who even humiliated him.

2 Cor 12:21

I fear that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may have to mourn over the many who sinned earlier and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and sensuality they practiced. (NAB)

Instead Paul sends the Corinthians a stinging letter carried by Titus.

2 Cor 2:3f

I wrote as I did so that when I come I may not be saddened by those who should rejoice my heart. I know you all well enough to be convinced that my happiness is yours. That is why I wrote you in great sorrow and anguish, with copious tears - not to make you sad but to help you realize the great love I bear you. (NAB)

Paul is then assailed by severe depression and finds himself in extreme external danger.



2 Cor 1:8-10

Brothers, we do not wish to leave you in the dark about the trouble we had in Asia; we were crushed beyond our strength, even to the point of despairing of life. We were left to feel like men condemned to death so that we might trust, not in ourselves, but in God who raises from the dead. He rescued us from that danger of death and will continue to do so. We have put our hope in him who will never cease to deliver us. (NAB)

Paul started towards Troas hoping to meet Titus there.

2 Cor 7:5

When I arrived in Macedonia I was restless and exhausted. I was under all kinds of stress - quarrels with others and fears within myself. (NAB)

Titus finally meets up with Paul with the good news from Corinth.

2 Cor 7:6-7

But God, who gives heart to those who are low in spirit, gave me strength with the arrival of Titus. This he did, not only by his arrival but by the reinforcement Titus had already received from you; for he reported your longing, your grief, and your ardent concern for me, so that my joy is greater still. (NAB)

It is clear that Paul's "tearful letter" was effective.

2 Cor 7:8-10

If I saddened you by my letter I have no regrets. Or if I did feel some regret (because I understand that the letter caused you grief a time), I am happy once again; not because you were saddened, but because your sadness led to repentance. You were filled with a sorrow that came from God; thus you did not suffer any loss from us. Indeed, sorrow for God's sake produces a repentance without regrets, leading to salvation, whereas worldly sorrow brings death. (NAB)

Some in the Corinthian community complained that Paul's change of travel plans were disconcerting. On the whole, the general mood was one of reconciliation.

2 Cor 5:17-21

This means that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old order has passed away; now all is new! All this has been done by God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry

of reconciliation. I mean that God, in Christ, was reconciling the world to himself, not counting men's transgressions against them, and that he has entrusted the message of reconciliation to us. This makes us ambassadors of Christ, God as it were appealing through us. We implore you, in Christ's name: be reconciled to God! For our sakes God made him who did not know sin, to be sin, so that in him we might become the very holiness of God. (NAB)

Paul immediately sent a further letter: Second Corinthians.

## LETTERS OF PAUL SUMMARY

### LETTER TO THE ROMANS

Addressee: Christians in Rome

Written: from Corinth

Date of Composition: 57 AD

Intent:

Paul's self introduction to a community he had never visited;

To present Paul's position on some things clearly in case there had been misrepresentation;

To comment on some issues debated in the Roman community.

Background:

Rome had a sizable Christian community;

Founded by converts from Judaism;

Majority members were gentile Christians.

Content:

1:16-17	Paul identifies himself and states his theme;
1:18 - 3:20	Paul proceeds to demonstrate that no one can gain righteousness without the help of God;
3:21 - 5:21	Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ;
5:1 - 7:25	The Christian life brings a threefold liberation: from sin and death, from self, and from the law;
8:1-39	A description of the gift of the Spirit which makes it possible for the created human being to achieve the destiny planned by God;
9:1 - 11:36	Paul treats the question of the meaning of God's covenant with the Jews now that a new covenant has been ratified in Jesus;
12:1 - 15:13	Paul includes a section on the moral duties of Christians;
15:14 - 16:27	The conclusion.

### LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

Addressee: Christians churches in Galatia, Asia Minor

Written: from Ephesus

Date of Composition: between 50 and 55 AD

Intent:

Paul is most exasperated; he is harsh; the vigor of his language is meant to impress upon his readers his serious concern;

To try to snuff out a fire he thought was already well doused.

Background:

Paul founded the churches in Galatia in the early 50s;

The Galatian community had welcomed Jewish-Christian teachers from Jerusalem who were demanding that the Galatian converts observe the Mosaic Law - so called "Judaizers".



## Content:

- 1:1 Paul introduces himself as the "servant" of Jesus; he identifies himself as "an apostle";
- 1:11-16 Paul expresses amazement at the susceptibility to error of the Galatians; he reminds them of his authority - his firsthand account of his apostolic call;
- 2:1-14 Paul reports the decision of the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15);
- 3:1-29 Paul presents his basic arguments for justification by faith;
- 4:1-31 Paul stresses the freedom of the Christian which is undermined by a dependence on observances;
- 5:6 Works have their place in the life of faith;
- 5:13-26 Paul explains that he argues not for an undisciplined license but an interior freedom guided by the Holy Spirit;
- 6:2 The best way to fulfill the true law, the law of Christ is to carry one another's burdens;
- 6:14-16 Paul tries to lift a false burden from their shoulders.

## LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

Addressee: Christian churches in Ephesus

Written: from Roman

Date of Composition: c. 60 AD

## Intent:

- Paul's key teaching is to present the nature of the Church;
- The tone and character of a statement of program or a position in theology;
- The most typical epistle as distinct from a letter.

## Background:

- Ephesus, in Asia Minor, was visited by Paul during his second missionary journey;
- Paul stayed at Ephesus for two years during his third missionary journey;
- From Miletus, on his third missionary journey, Paul sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus to talk to them.

## Content:

- 1:1-23 Paul presents a vision of God's overall plan of unity in Christ;
- 2:1-22 The gratuity of God's gift toward the gentiles in bringing them into a share of the fulfillment of the ancient promises is stressed;
- 3:1-21 Paul explains his mission in the manner of the earlier letters;
- 4:5 Paul stresses the unity of the Church;
- 5:1 - 6:24 Paul calls for a life worthy of the Christian calling. He makes special emphasis to household relationships: husbands and wives, children and parents, slaves and masters.

## LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Addressee: the Christian community of Philippi

Written: from Rome

Date of Composition: c. 55/56 AD

Intent:

- To show his evident affection for the Church at Philippi;
- To encourage the Philippians to continue in their faithful following of Jesus;
- To express the wish that they will share his own deep joy;
- To warn them against the Judaizers.

Background:

Paul founded the church in Philippi (Acts 16) during the second missionary journey;

Scholars think that this letter is a composite of perhaps three brief letters to Philippi, combined by an editor at some later date.

Content:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1:1 - 3:1 | Paul speaks of his imprisonment but without concern for the future; he is joyful and confident in the Lord's power to bring good from his suffering;   |
| 2:5-11    | Paul speaks of the situation at Philippi; he encourages love among the members of the Church; incorporates a beautiful hymn on Jesus' self-emptying love;  |
| 2:19-30   | He talks about his plans for serving them through his assistants, Timothy and Epaphroditus; ends on a note of joy;   |
| 3:2 - 4:3 | Paul responds more directly to the problem of false teachers infiltrating the community; Paul describes his own attitude in following Jesus through suffering to resurrection; he offers himself as a model rather than those who are urging adherence to the Law; |
| 4:10-23   | Paul gives a thank-you note for aid the community of Philippi sent Paul when he was in need in Thessalonica.   |

## LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

Addressee: Christian community in Colossae in Asia Minor

Written: from Rome

Date of Composition: 61/63 AD

Intent:

- To express the development of Paul's doctrine of the Church as the body of Christ;
- To confront the teachings of the Judaizers.

Background:

The Christian community of Colossae was founded by Epaphras, a gentile Christian;

Epaphras visited Paul in prison and brought news of some problems in the Colossian Church caused by superstitious teachings;

Erroneous teachings included a Greek idea that human affairs are controlled by angelic beings who must be appeased; also the Judaizers teaching on observances of the Law; other false teachers were advertising a secret knowledge beyond the gospel.

Content:

- 1:3-4 Paul opens with his customary thanksgiving, commending the Colossians;
- 1:15-20 Paul describes the preeminence of Christ with the help of a beautiful liturgical hymn;
- 2:3 Paul reminds the Colossians that perfect knowledge is found in Christ;
- 2:4-23 He then explains his role as minister of the mystery of Christ, and follows with a warning against false teachers;
- 2:5 He repeats the approval of the Colossians' faith, hope and love;
- 3:1-25 Christian life is portrayed as a new existence empowered by the resurrection;
- 4:1-18 Paul ends with a final admonition and information about his situation and plans.

FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

Addressee: The Christian community at Thessalonica

Written: from Corinth during Paul's second missionary journey

Date of Composition: 51 AD

Intent:

- To explain the second coming of Christ;
- To inquire of the firmness of the foundation of the Church in Thessalonica.

Background:

- Perhaps the earliest work of the New Testament;
- Paul founded this community about the year 50 AD;
- He so aroused severe Jewish hostilities that he and Silas left town at night;
- He sent Timothy to inquire of the faithfulness of the Thessalonians.

Content:

- 1:1 - 2:20 Paul writes the longest introduction of all his letters giving thanks and happiness over the good news from Thessalonica;
- 3:2-8 Timothy's mission explained;
- 3:9 - 4:12 Paul gives advice to help continue in their Christian conversion;
- 4:12-17 Paul responds to the Thessalonians' distress over Christ's apparent delay in coming by stating that death will in no way deprive faithful Christians of the victory;
- 5:1-28 Paul concludes by calming the anxieties of these new Christians; he tells them that the best preparation for the coming of Christ is the faithful and loving conduct of daily responsibilities.



- 4:1-16 Paul returns to the issue of false doctrine, this time concerned with misguided asceticism;
- 5:1 - 6:21 The final two chapters give practical advice for guiding widows, presbyters, slaves, and their masters.

## THE SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

Addressee: Timothy

Written: from Rome

Date of Composition: c. 67 AD

Intent:

A personal message from Paul to Timothy;  
Paul wants to speak of his own position, confessing a feeling of loneliness and abandonment;  
To give personal encouragement to Timothy.

Background:

Paul is now a prisoner in Rome; Paul's situation has changed since 1 Timothy;  
Hope of liberation is almost gone for Paul; some companions have abandoned him, Luke alone remains;  
Paul's exhortations assume greater gravity and urgency.

Content:

- 1:4-5 A personal tone is set by Paul with the description of the last meeting with Timothy and references to Timothy's family;
- 1:15 Paul confesses to feeling pains of desertions;
- 2:1-26 Paul tells Timothy what he considers essential for a good Christian leader in difficult times;
- 3:10-16 Paul offers himself as a model for the young Timothy;
- 4:1-5 He repeats the commission of a sacred charge;
- 4:7 Paul sounds like an old warrior signing off;
- 4:13 He instructs about his cloak and parchments.

## LETTER TO TITUS

Addressee: Titus, companion and fellow worker with Paul

Written: from Asia Minor

Date of Composition: c. 66 AD

Intent:

Paul is ware of the fluid state of the new Church;  
To comment on the offices of bishop and presbyter.

Background:

Titus was a Greek convert of Paul's;  
He fulfilled several important missions for the Apostle (2 Cor 7:7-8; 8:16-17);  
Paul left Titus on the island of Crete to finish Paul's work there;  
Paul intends to send more detailed instruction for Titus' work.

## THE SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

Addressee: The Christian community at Thessalonica

Written: From Corinth

Date of Composition: 51 AD

Intent:

A more impersonal style to give a different treatment to the same issues.

Background:

Paul felt he had to write again to the Thessalonian community;

His admonitions about the second coming were not heeded;

Some Thessalonians had even stopped working because they thought the end was near.

Content:

- 1:3-10 Paul stresses words of comfort to the community in distress from persecution;
- 2:1-12 He reassures his readers, reminding them if his earlier teaching that certain events must precede the coming of Jesus;
- 2:6 Paul refers to the mysterious "lawless one" who will do Satan's work but will be overcome by the Lord;
- 2:13-17 He emphasizes that the important things is to remain firm without fear, holding fast to traditional truth;
- 3:1-18 Paul concludes by invoking his own example of work as a contrast to the Thessalonians who sit idle.

## THE FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

Addressee: Timothy

Written: from Macedonia

Date of Composition: c. 62 AD

Intent:

To reflect a Church order, stressing sound doctrine and rules for choosing leaders;

To give advice for general and particular problems in leading the community.

Background:

Timothy was the son of a Hebrew mother and a Greek father;

He was a companion of Paul on some journeys;

Now he is stationed in Ephesus, the leader of the local Christian community.

Content:

- 1:1-20 Paul begins with an attack on the teachers of false doctrines;
- 2:1-15 Then Paul reviews rules for correct conduct in liturgical assemblies;
- 3:1-16 He also reviews a list of qualifications for various ministries in the community;

Content:

- 1:1-16 Paul gives the qualifications for a Christian leader with the familiar warning about false teachers;
- 2:1-15 Paul includes practical counsel for family relations;
- 3:1-15 Paul expands the practical advice to the broader society.

LETTER TO PHILEMON

Addressee: Philemon of Colossae

Written: from Rome during Paul's imprisonment

Date of Composition: c. 61/63 AD

Intent:

- A personal letter on a personal matter;
- To write Philemon about his runaway slave, Onesimus;
- To express the new relationship believers share in Christ.

Background:

- Philemon was a prominent member of the Christian community at Colossae;
- Philemon was converted by Paul probably at Ephesus;
- A slave of his, Onesimus, fled the home of his master and sought asylum with Paul while he was a prisoner probably at Rome;
- Onesimus converted to Christianity and was sent back to Philemon with this note asking him to receive the fugitive with the kindness of a brother.

Content:

- v. 1-3 Paul greets Philemon and his family;
- v. 4-7 Paul gives thanks to God for the good reports he has heard about Philemon's Christian influence;
- v. 8-20 The body of the letter is a plea to Philemon's conscience: he cannot behave toward Onesimus, also a Christian, as if neither master nor slave knew Christ;
- v. 21-25 Paul concludes with a little pressure to bolster his argument.