

A REVIEW OF 400 YEARS OF HISTORY
AFTER MALACHI & A PRESENTATION OF THE
BACKGROUND OF THE GOSPELS

Between The Testaments

A PUBLICATION OF RAY REYNOLDS RAP

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

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BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS OF SCRIPTURE

A Publication of Ray Reynolds Rap

Review, Survey, and History of the Old Testament

DIVISIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Hebrew Bible - 22	Greek Bible - 51 (some divide into 46)	English Bible - 39
Torah (Law)	Pentateuch	Law
Genesis	Genesis	Genesis
Exodus	Exodus	Exodus
Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus
Numbers	Numbers	Numbers
Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy
Prophets	History	History
Joshua	Joshua	Joshua
Judges	Judges	Judges
Samuel (single book)	Ruth	Ruth
Kings (single book)	1 Samuel	1 Samuel
Isaiah	2 Samuel	2 Samuel
Jeremiah	1 Kings	1 Kings
Ezekiel	2 Kings	2 Kings
Minor Prophets (single book)	1 Chronicles	1 Chronicles
	2 Chronicles	2 Chronicles
	1 Esdras	Ezra
	Ezra	Nehemiah
	Nehemiah	Esther
	Esther (<i>with additions</i>)	
	Judith	
	Tobit	
	1-4 Maccabees	
Writings	Wisdom	Wisdom Literature (Poetry)
Psalms	Psalms	Job
Job	Proverbs	Psalms
Proverbs	Ecclesiastes	Proverbs
Ruth	Song of Songs	Ecclesiastes
Song of Songs	Job	Song of Songs (Song of Solomon)
Ecclesiastes	Wisdom of Solomon	
Lamentations	Ecclesiasticus	
Esther	Prophets	The Prophets
Daniel	Minor prophets (12 books)	Major Prophets (5 books)
Ezra-Nehemiah (together)	Isaiah	Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations,
Chronicles (single book)	Jeremiah	Ezekiel, Daniel
	Baruch	
	Lamentations	Minor prophets (12 books)
	Letter of Jeremiah	Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah,
	Ezekiel	Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk,
	Susannah	Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
	Daniel (<i>with additions</i>)	

THE LAW OF MOSES (Torah, Pentateuch)

Genesis (50 chapters)

Genesis 1 - 11 describe Creation, the flood, and introduce us to Abram (Abraham). Creation - man in the fruitful plain of Eden - man disobeys God and is forced to leave his haven - the struggle to survive - jealousy between Cain and Abel - Cain murders Abel - he is expelled to 'the land of wandering' under God's protection - civilization begins to develop - the list of patriarchs representing the time from Adam to Noah - Man incurs God's wrath - God's judgment in the Flood - the growth of nations - man establishes empires and languages become diversified - the list of patriarchs leading to Abram.

Genesis 12 - 50 reveal the history of the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel). Abram called by God - receives God's promise of being a blessing to the world - has vivid experiences of God - adventures in the promised Land - Isaac - Jacob - Jacob produces 12 sons, the 'children of Israel' - Joseph becomes premier of Egypt - the 12 and their households saved from famine by entering Egypt under Joseph's protection.

Exodus (40 chapters)

Exodus 1 - 19 are about Israel being enslaved in Egypt and introduce us to Moses. Israel enslaved in Egypt - Moses raised up a deliverer - plagues on Egypt - Israel escape - miraculous crossing of the Red Sea - Egyptian pursuit thwarted by God - journey through the wilderness - provision of food and water by God.

Exodus 20 - 40 reveal how God gave His law to His people.

The people reach Mount Sinai - God makes a covenant with Israel at Sinai - the ten commandments - the Tabernacle (tent of meeting) made to act as the central sanctuary, to house the Ark, the throne of God, but no image to be made of God.

Leviticus (27 chapters)

God makes a covenant with Israel at Sinai and establishes His commandments.

Various instructions are given - rites of sacrifice established - instruction for living

Numbers (36 chapters)

The tribes numbered and various ordinances are given to God's people.

The tribes numbered - various ordinances - God's presence by fire and cloud - they reach the borders of the Promised Land - spies sent out - discouraging reports - the people rebel - God forbids entry - attempt to enter Canaan from the South - repelled - 38 years at the Oasis of Kadesh Barnea - new attempt to be made from the West - refused passage - battles and treaties - attractiveness of Transjordan - preparation for entering the Promised Land from the West.

Deuteronomy (34 chapters)

A repeat of the journeys of Israel, the giving of the Law, and 40 years in the wilderness. Moses dies and Joshua replaces him as the leader of God's people.

THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL

Joshua (24 chapters)

God's people attempt to take the Promised Land, but befriend some of their enemies. A partially successful assault on the Promised Land - Israel established in the Hill Country - the tribal centre established at Shechem, the central sanctuary for the tribes. The idea was that the tribes would govern themselves but maintain unity by attending three times a year at the central sanctuary to renew their covenant with God and each other, responding when necessary to the call to arms to defend each other. The fruitful plains which God had intended for them in Canaan are now being taken over by a sinister new enemy, the Philistines, who arrive in the land, conquer the Canaanites, and form a five-city league, possessing chariots and weapons of iron

Judges (21 chapters)

The people of God face opposition within and without and struggle with leadership. Various struggles for sections of the tribes to maintain their holdings against outside attack - God raises up war-leaders to deliver them - the menace of the Philistines grows - parts of Israel in subjection- failures in the tribal unity

Ruth (4 chapters)

A beautiful love story about the adventures of a Moabite woman. She marries Boaz, and the descents from her are the forefathers of David.

1 Samuel (31 chapters)

A history of the kingdom under the leadership of King Saul. The sanctuary has been moved to Shiloh, probably because Shechem was too vulnerable to attack - the birth of Samuel - defeat by the Philistines and loss of the ark of God - Samuel established as war leader and prophet - repulsion of the Philistines - Saul established by Samuel as war leader - victories and defeats - God raises up David, who is exiled by Saul and raises up a loyal band of fighting men ('his men'), outwardly acting as a mercenary for the Philistines, but secretly winning favour among the people of Judah - Samuel dies - Saul is finally utterly defeated, and killed.

2 Samuel (24 chapters)

A history of the kingdom under the leadership of King David. David becomes war leader of Judah, and then Israel as a whole, captures Jerusalem with 'his men' (so that it is the City of David, separate from Judah and Israel) defeats the Philistines, is made 'king', establishes Israel and builds an empire. Israel at last safe, and established in the Promised Land, with more besides. The Tabernacle and central sanctuary established in Jerusalem, David's city. All is now seemingly set for the establishment of God's Rule to the ends of the earth.

1 Kings (22 chapters)

The history of King Solomon, the divided kingdom, and the prophet Elijah.

2 Kings (25 chapters)

The two kingdoms (Israel and Judah) are destroyed, and Elisha precedes Elijah.

1 Chronicles (29 chapters)

Ezra compiles the entire history of Israel from Adam to David.

2 Chronicles (36 chapters)

Ezra compiles the entire history of Israel from Solomon to the captivity.

Ezra (10 chapters)

The return to Jerusalem from captivity and priestly worship is reinstated in the Temple. Cyrus proclaims freedom of religion in all his empire - decrees the establishment of a new Temple in Jerusalem - Zerubbabel, with a fairly large group of people, returns to Jerusalem with the Temple treasures restored by Cyrus - the Temple and a small part of the city are partly rebuilt - opposition from dwellers in the land who appeal to Artaxerxes and have the work stopped - Haggai and Zechariah prophesy - Zerubbabel starts up the work again - the Temple finished - Ezra arrives in Jerusalem with another group as a teacher of the Law of Moses - they face opposition on the way but arrive safely - the covenant renewed - the religion is purified. There is, however, continual opposition and the work is restricted. There are powerful people in opposition round about, including the governor of Samaria.

Nehemiah (13 chapters)

The return to Jerusalem from captivity and the rebuilding of the walls. Messengers report to Nehemiah. The Ezra and the people in Jerusalem are hard pressed, and the partly built city subject to continued harassment from the surrounding peoples. Nehemiah was Artaxerxes cup bearer. This was a high position of trust. It was he who would finally hand the king his cup after it had been tested for poison. He was one of the highest in the empire and the king's trusted minister, (and needed to be from what followed). Using his personal influence he obtains permission from the king for the restoration of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the walls, and the re-establishing of the city as capital of Judah. There is powerful opposition from two governors of provinces and a powerful war-lord - but the people unite to refurbish the city and build its walls, sword in hand. The walls are finished and Ezra, the priest, brings the Book of the Law of Moses and reads it aloud to the people. There is general renewal and the city is once again established. Malachi later proclaims the coming of a messenger of the Lord, and the coming of the day of God.

Esther (10 chapters)

The story of a young Jewish woman that becomes queen and saves her people.

THE WISDOM LITERATURE (Poetic Books)

Job (42 chapters)

A man of integrity is tested by God, tempted by Satan, and abused by his friends.

Psalms (150 chapters)

Book I - **Psalms 1-41**

Book II - **Psalms 42-72**

Book III - **Psalms 73-89**

Book IV - **Psalms 90-106**

Book V - **Psalms 107-150**

Proverbs (31 chapters)

Great advice given to the sons of the king in the form of riddles, stories, and teaching.

Ecclesiastes (12 chapters)

The wisdom of Solomon recorded in an attempt to reveal the meaning of life.

Song of Songs/Song of Solomon (8 chapters)

The love story of King Solomon for a Shulamite woman.

THE PROPHETS

Major Prophets (5 books)

Isaiah (66 chapters)

The prophet describes the trials of the people and prophecies about the future.

Jeremiah (52 chapters)

The prophet warns the people about the coming captivity.

Lamentations (5 chapters)

The prophet writes sad songs (funeral hymns) about the fall of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel (48 chapters)

The prophet gives a message of hope to the Babylonian captives.

Daniel (12 chapters)

The life and visions of the prophet in the Babylonian captivity.

Minor prophets (12 books)

Hosea (14 chapters)

The marriage, offspring, life, and teachings of the prophet.

Joel (3 chapters)

The prophet reveals God's punishment coming to Judah.

Amos (9 chapters)

The prophet warns Israel to stop sinning and promises to restore the people.

Obadiah (1 chapter)

The prophet describes God's punishment upon the Edomites.

Jonah (4 chapters)

The prophet refuses to take God's message to Nineveh, but learns about mercy.

Micah (7 chapters)

The prophet warns Israel and Judah that Assyria will bring their judgment.

Nahum (3 chapters)

The prophet warns Assyria that God will punish them for their wickedness.

Habakkuk (3 chapters)

The prophet teaches about learning to trust God and God answers questions.

Zephaniah (3 chapters)

The prophet reveals that God will judge both the righteous and the unrighteous.

Haggai (2 chapters)

The prophet urges the people to get back to work rebuilding the temple.

Zechariah (14 chapters)

The prophet pleads with the people to keep rebuilding the city of Jerusalem.

Malachi (4 chapters)

The prophet reveals that God plans to send a forerunner before the Messiah.

THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

1440 - 1400 B.C.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

1400 - 1000 B.C.

Joshua, Judges

1000 - 586 B.C. (pre-exile - mid-exile)

Period of David and Solomon (1000 - 931):

Psalms, Ruth, 1st and 2nd Samuel, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes,
Song of Songs (Song of Solomon)

Period of Rehoboam to Hezekiah (931 - 686):

Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah

Period of Hezekiah to the exile (686 - 586):

Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, 1st & 2nd Kings, 1st & 2nd Chronicles,
Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel

520 - 400 B.C. (post-exilic)

Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

EARLY = Early to Mid 40s A.D. LATE = Early 60s A.D.

Matthew

EARLY = Mid to Late 40s A.D. LATE = Early to Mid 50s A.D.

1st & 2nd Thessalonians, 1st & 2nd Corinthians, Romans, Luke, Galatians

EARLY = Early to Mid 50s A.D. LATE = Early 60s A.D.

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Acts, 1st & 2nd Timothy, Titus, Hebrews

EARLY = Mid to Late 50s A.D. LATE = Early 60s A.D.

1st & 2nd Peter, Mark, James, Jude

EARLY = Mid to Late 60s A.D. LATE = Late 80s or Early 90s

John, 1st & 2nd & 3rd John, Revelation

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE KINGS & THE PROPHETS

It is often difficult to navigate from I Samuel to Malachi because of the many kings, prophets, and the genealogies. Therefore, on the next two pages I have provided and outline:

Chronology of the Kings & Prophets

(Dates are approximate and debated among various scholars.)

Prophets in *italics* are mentioned in the text, but no books bear their names.

For some kings, the primary name is followed (in parenthesis) by an alternate name.

Prophet	King of Judah	Date BC {co- regency} (Span)	Date BC {co- regency} (Span)	King of Israel	Prophet
Samuel	Saul (good to bad)	c.1050-1010 (40 years)		The nation was united.	
Samuel, Nathan	David (good)	c.1010-970 (40 years)		Jerusalem was Israel's capital city.	
	Solomon (good to bad)	c. 970-931 (40 years)		The Temple was built in Jerusalem. <i>The nation split after Solomon.</i>	
Shemaiah	Rehoboam (bad)	931-913 (17 years)	931-910 (22 years)	Jeroboam I (bad king)	Ahijah
	Abijah (bad)	913-911 (3 years)	910-909 (2 years)	Nadab (bad)	
	Asa (good)	911-870 (41 years)	909-886 (24 years)	Baasha (bad)	
	Jehoshaphat (good)	870-848 {873-870} (25 years)	886-885 (2 years)	Elah (bad)	
			885 (7 days)	Zimri (bad)	
			885-874 {885-880} (12 years)	Omri (bad)	
			874-853 (22 years)	Ahab (bad)	Elijah, Micaiah
			853-852 (2 years)	Ahaziah (bad)	Elijah
	Jehoram (bad)	848-841 {853-848} (8 years)	852-841 (12 years)	Joram (bad)	Elijah, Elisha
	Ahaziah (bad)	841 (1 year)			Elijah, Elisha
	Athaliah (queen) (bad)	841-835 (6 years)	841-814 (28 years)	Jehu (bad)	Elisha
Joel, Zechariah	Joash (good)	835-796 (40 years)	814-798 (17 years)	Jehoahaz (bad)	Elisha

	Amaziah (good)	796-767 (29 years)	798-782 (16 years)	Jehoash (bad)	<i>Elisha</i> Jonah to Nineveh
	Azariah (Uzziah) (good)	767-740 {791-767} (52 years)	782-753 {793-782} (41 years)	Jeroboam II (bad)	Amos, Hosea
			753-752 (6 months)	Zechariah (bad)	Amos, Hosea
			752 (1 month)	Shallum (bad)	Hosea
			752-742 (10 years)	Menahem (bad)	Hosea
Isaiah			742-740 (2 years)	Pekahiah (bad)	Hosea
Isaiah, Micah	Jotham (good)	740-732 {750-740} (16 years)	740-732 {752-740} (20 years)	Pekah (bad)	Hosea
Isaiah, Micah	Ahaz (bad)	732-716 (16 years)	732-721 (9 years)	Hoshea (bad)	Hosea
Isaiah, Micah	Hezekiah (good)	716-687 (29 years)	Israel captive to Assyria		
Micah	Manasseh (bad)	687-642 {696-687} (55 years)			
	Amon (bad)	642-640 (2 years)			
Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah	Josiah (good)	640-608 (31 years)	Obadiah to Edom		
Jeremiah	Jehoahaz (Shallum) (bad)	608 (3 months)	Nahum to Nineveh		
Jeremiah	Jehoiakim (bad)	608-597 (11 years)	-- Judah's first captivity to Babylon. <i>(Daniel is among the captives.)</i>		
Jeremiah, Ezekiel	Jehoiachin (Jeconiah, Coniah) (bad)	597 (3 months)	-- Judah's second captivity to Babylon. <i>(Ezekiel is among the captives.)</i>		
Jeremiah, Ezekiel	Zedekiah (bad)	597-586 (11 years)			
Ezekiel, Daniel	<i>Jerusalem and the first Temple are destroyed</i>	586	-- Final captivity to Babylon <i>Daniel ministers throughout the full 70 years of Judah's captivity.</i>		
Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	<i>Prophets to the returned remnant</i>	c. 520 c. 520 c. 400	A remnant returns to Jerusalem. The city and the second Temple are rebuilt.		

The Rich History of the Cultures/Nations of the Bible

THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE

This nation was established between the Tigris and Euphrates river (1500 BC+).

These people are regarded to be among the tribesmen in **Genesis 10:22**.

They were powerful enough to conquer all of Babylonia (1300 BC).

The Assyrians ruled for nearly 700 years before anyone significantly challenged them.

This nation defeated the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC, later war against the southern kingdom of Judah in 701 BC (**II Kings 19:35**).

During the period of 833-745 BC they faced internal struggles and war with Syria.

However, they were powerful and God used them to oppress His people.

In order to learn more about the bitterness between them and God's people, you should read Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Jonah, and Nahum.

THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

This nation was established by Nimrod after the flood (**Genesis 10:8-10**).

Like the Assyrian nation it has its roots around the Euphrates River (Persian Gulf).

This nation became one of the first great nations of the world with organization, power, and influence around most of the world.

The city of Babylon is believed to have covered 200 sq miles on both sides of the river.

This region was considered to be the "cradle of civilization" and the site of the Garden of Eden (**Genesis 2:14**) and the Tower of Babel (**Genesis 11**).

The Scriptures also refer to this region as Shinar (**Genesis 10:10,11:2, Isaiah 11:1**) and the land of the Chaldeans (**Jeremiah 24:4, Ezekiel 12:13**).

Nebuchadnezzar's "Hanging Gardens" was one of the seven wonders of the world.

The prophet Daniel referred to the beauty of this site in his book (**Daniel 4:28-30**).

In fact, Daniel's book gives us much insight into this nation and its influence.

Later, in the New Testament, Babylon is often associated with pain, suffering, and demonic activity (**I Peter 5:13, Revelation 14:8, 17:5, 18:2**).

They were later overthrown by the Persian (Medo-Persian Empire)

THE EGYPTIAN EMPIRE

This nation was established after the flood in the Northeast corner of Africa.

It is one of the 70 nations that spread over the earth after the flood through the descendants of Mizraim (**Genesis 10:13-14**).

This region was settled by Arba, a great man among the Anakims (**Genesis 35:27, Joshua 14:15**), whose later descendants were the giants.

Number 13:22 says this nation was established seven years after Hebron (Kirjatharba - **Genesis 23:12, Joshua 15:54**) that plays a significant role in Abram's story.

Because of the fertile Nile River valley the people worried more about flooding than drought and it became a center for trade.

Some scholars believe that at the time of Jacob/Joseph 99% of the world's population were somehow influenced by this great nation.

For the next 3,000 years around 30 dynasties of Pharaohs would rule this land.

THE ORIENTAL EMPIRE

The Bible reveals, in **Genesis 10**, that all the nations of the world came from Noah. Noah (**Genesis 6-9**) lived 350 years after the flood (3000-2000 BC).

His sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth (firstborn but listed last) took their families and spread out over the earth.

Japheth's descendents enlarged their borders, as Noah prophesied, and they settled Europe, Greece, Russia, and India (giving us Armenians, Medes, Greeks, etc.).

Shem stayed in the region around Syria and Assyria (consider Abram's story).

Ham's descendants established Egypt, Ethiopia, Arabia, Babylon, Crete, Libya, and also gave us the Philistines, Hittites, and the Phoenicians.

It is believed that Canaan's descendants, specifically the Sinites, travelled all the way to China and settled there.

The Jewish historian Josephus indicated that Magog's descendants (son of Japheth) settled here (**Genesis 10:2**) saying, "Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians."

In a prophecy in Ezekiel (**Ezekiel 38-39**), the Bible recognizes this vast territory of northern Eurasia (where the Scyths lived), a region that stretched from the Russian to modern-day China and Mongolia, as "Magog" (**Revelation 20:8**).

The nations of the orient began around the Yellow River and the Yangtze River valleys. The Yellow River is said to have been the "cradle of Chinese civilization."

With thousands of years of continuous history, China may not be the world's oldest civilization, but it has the best written history.

It thrived due to a rich culture, literature, and the development of philosophy.

The Bible often speaks of these "eastern" people and nations, but the most famous of these occurrences is in **Matthew 2** (the wise men from the East).

Remember that this was prophesied in **Zechariah 8:7** and **Malachi 1:11** that soon (during the 400 years of silence) God was planning to bring His people together from the cultures of the East and West.

THE MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE

The first Persian empire was established as an Iranian empire in Western Asia by Cyrus the Great in the 6th century BC (read Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah).

The history of the Median culture and country is difficult to obtain, but most believe the nations of Iran, Iraq, and Turkey to make up its previous borders.

Cyrus overthrew the Median confederation and conquered the Babylonian empire, just as the prophet Daniel had prophesied (**Daniel 2**).

It was this transfer of power that opened the door for the Jews to return to Jerusalem.

At the height of its greatness the Medo-Persian Empire controlled Asia, Africa, and Europe (almost 5 million miles).

During this time the Iranian religion of Zoroaster began and dualism spread.

This nation had ten great kings, and it ruled Asia for over 200 years, until it was conquered by Alexander the Great (330 BC)

It is during this period of time that the Jewish prophets, priests, and scribes are silent and for nearly four centuries the people of God waited for the Messiah.

THE GRECIAN EMPIRE

The history of the Greek empire is surrounded by mythology and tradition.

Scholars believe it had its beginnings in the time of the Judges, as the nation was present during the reign of King David and King Solomon.

The formation of the empire is credited to Philip of Macedon, the king of Macedonia (359-336 BC), who laid the foundation by uniting the Hellenic states.

The Persian wars (500-331 BC) reached its borders and many famous battles took its toll upon the people: Marathon (490 BC), Thermopylae (480 BC), Salamis (480 BC).

The Battle of Thermopylae is famous for the infamous battle of the 300 Spartans.

The prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah prophesied of the conquest of the Greeks.

Alexander the Great was tutored by Aristotle at 13, became regent of Greece at 16, at 20 he was commander of the army (after his father's death), and he died at 33.

The destruction of Tyre would be one of the greatest military achievements credited to Alexander the Great in his attempt to conquer the world.

After this event he captured Jerusalem, Egypt, the East, the Persians, etc.

He established Greek (Hellenistic) culture and spread the Greek language.

He did allow the Jews to keep their laws, religion, and did not have to pay tribute on every seventh year.

The Samaritans saw these things and decided to claim they were Jews too, causing much hardship, which added to their disdain toward one another (see NT).

When he conquered the known world tradition says that he wept.

After his death the kingdom was divided among his four generals: Ptolemy (Egypt), Seleucus (Syria), Lysimachus (Thrace, Bythynia), and Cassander (Macedonia).

The Ptolemies persecuted the Jews, who abandoned many of their laws, establishing new traditions, and neglecting the Hebrew culture.

Many Jews began to speak Greek, read Greek, and named their children Greek names.

Simon the Just (high priest) did rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, when Ptolemy I destroyed them, and he also built a large reservoir in Jerusalem.

The Seleucids were often at war with the Ptolemies causing the Jews to be caught in the middle of the conflict.

Eventually the Seleucids would take control of Jerusalem, causing the Jewish people to distance themselves further from their Hebrew roots.

Two divisions of Jews formed conflicted over allegiance to Egypt or Syria.

During the reign of the Seleucids in Jerusalem, the Hasidim (early Pharisees) rebelled and defended their Jewish roots, refusing to Hellenize completely.

The Seleucids replaced Jewish high priests, sacrificed pigs on the altar of the Lord, entered the Temple at will, and killed Jews who resisted them.

The Maccabean revolt changed the way people viewed the Jews and gave the people a sense of pride and national strength (began by Mattathias in Modin).

This happened when the Syrians tried to force a priest to offer a pagan sacrifice.

When he refused a fellow Jew offered the sacrifice, the old priest killed them both!

As the Hasmon (Asmoneus) family leader he passed on this heroic legacy to his five sons: John, Simon, Judas Maccabaeus, Eleazar, and Jonathan.

This rebellious Hasmonean Dynasty was passed on until Rome conquered Jerusalem.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The history of the Roman empire is also surrounded by mythology and tradition. The story is told of two brothers, Romulus and Remus, twin brothers raised by a wolf. The tale describes a fight that takes place between the two, Romulus killed his brother, then he named the city they had founded after himself.

Originally established in Italy, the nation began to grow out of the region. One famous military conquest was against Carthage in Africa (Punic Wars). The Romans gained control over Macedonia, Corinth, Achaia, and most of Asia Minor. The political pressure of the day, and influence of Hellenization upon the people, brought a two-edged sword upon God's people.

The Hasmonean Dynasty was able to temporarily reinstate the proper priesthood, and have peace with Syria, thanks to a compromise with John Hyrcanus (135-104 BC). More compromises would follow soon after, but the people were divided into different political viewpoints/religious factions (Sadducees/Pharisees). Compromises with Rome would allow Jewish independence, but demanded tribute to Caesar, which further divided the Jewish people.

They were permitted to force circumcision upon the people, extended to the Samaritans, which seems unbelievable given that Hyrcanus was the grandson of Mattathias. They established a kingship, expanded territory, and had high hopes for the nation. Fighting within, and political turmoil without, caused the fragile nation to implode. Around 64 BC the Roman general Pompey put an end to the Seleucid rule and eventually an Idumean (Edomite) governor would reign over this region.

The rise of the Caesars, and influence of Roman procurators in Palestine, would play a large role in the background of the New Testament.

For instance, Augustus was the first Roman emperor, a grand-nephew of Julius Caesar, who reigned at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ (**Luke 2:1**).

Tiberius was emperor during the ministry and crucifixion of Jesus Christ (**Luke 3:1**). The Bible also introduces us to the Roman procurators/governors Pilate, Felix, and Festus, as well as the Herodian kings and King Agrippa.

During the early reign of the Roman empire, and the leadership of Herod the Great, the temple was built up, the cities were thriving and the people were educated. The people became so dependent upon the Roman government that it affected every aspect of their lives.

Eventually the zealous nationalism of the Jews was rekindled and most of the people began to see the Roman occupation as a curse, rather than a blessing.

They began to hope and pray for the Messiah to come, ironically, it would be these same Jews that would deliver Jesus to the Romans demanding His crucifixion. Corruption from the rabbis, priests, and religious leaders led the people to turn against Jesus and they rejected His Messianic rule.

However, after His resurrection they change their views and many would become loyal followers of Jesus the Christ.

The rebellion of some of the Jews led to the fall of Rome under Titus in 70 AD. In this destruction of the city, the temple was torn down, records were destroyed, and the Jewish religion would never be the same again.

THE ROMAN EMPERORS

<i>Emperor's Reign</i>	<i>Common Name</i>
27 BC - 14 AD	Augustus (c. 63 BC - 14 AD)
14 - 37	Tiberius (c. 42 BC - 37 AD)
37 - 41	Gaius (Caligula) (c. 12 - 41)
41 - 54	Claudius (c. 10 BC - 54 AD)
54 - 68	Nero (c. 37 - 68)
68 - 69	Galba (3 BC - 69 AD)
69	Otho (c. 32 - 69)
69	Vitellius (c. 15 - 69)
69 - 79	Vespasian (c. 9 - 79)
79 - 81	Titus (c. 39 - 79)
81 - 96	Domitian (c. 51 - 96)
96 - 98	Nerva (c.30 - 98)
98 - 117	Trajan (c. 53 - 117)
117 - 138	Hadrian (c. 76 - 138)
138 - 161	Antoninus Pius (c. 86 - 161)
161 - 180	Marcus Aurelius (c. 121 - 180)
161 - 169	Lucius Verus (co-emperor) (c. 130 - 169)
180 - 192	Commodus (c. 161 - 192)
193	Pertinax (c. 126 - 193)
193	Didius Julianus (c. 133 - 193)
193 - 211	Septimius Severus (c. 145 - 211)
193 - 195	Pescennius Niger (c. [135 - 140?] - 195)
195 - 197	Clodius Albinus (c. [140 -150?] - 197)
211 - 217	Caracalla (c. 188 - 217)
211	Geta (c. 189 - 211)
217 - 218	Macrinus (c. 165 - 218)
218 - 222	Elagabalus (c. 204 -222)
222 - 235	Severus Alexander (c. 208 - 235)
235 - 238	Maximus I (or Maximus Thrax) (c. 173? - 238)
238	Gordian I (c. 159 - 238)
238	Gordian II (c. 192 - 238)
238	Balbinus (c.170? - 238)
238	Pupienus (c. 175? - 238)
238 - 244	Gordian III (c. 225 - 244)
244 - 249	Philip I (the Arab) (c. 204 - 249)
249 - 251	Trajanus Decius (c. 190 - 251)
251 - 253	Trebonianus Gallus (c. 206 - 253)
253	Aemilian (c. 207? - 253)
253 - 260	Valerian (c. 200? - 260)
253 - 268	Gallienus (c. 218 - 268)
260 - 268	Postumus (c. ? - 268)
269	Laelianus (c. ? - 269)
269	Marius (c. ? - 269)
269 - 271	Victorinus (c. ? - 271)
271 - 274	Tetricus (c. ? - 274)
268 - 270	Claudius II Gothicus (c. 214 - 270)
270	Quintillus (c. ? - 270)

270 - 275	Aurelian (c. 214 - 275)
275 - 276	Tacitus (c. ? - 276)
276	Florianus (c.? - 276)
276 - 282	Probus (c. 232 - 282)
282 - 283	Carus (c. 230? - 283)
283 - 285	Carinus (c. ? - 285)
283 - 284	Numerianus(c. ? - 284)
284 - 305	Diocletian (c. 240? - 305)
286 - 305, 307 -308	Maximianus (c. ? - 308)
286 - 293	Carausius (c. ? - 293)
293 - 297	Allectus (c. ? - 297)
305 - 306	Constantius I Chlorus (c. 250? - 306)
305 - 311	Galerius (c. 250? -311)
306 - 307	Severus II (c. ? - 307)
306 - 312	Maxentius (c. 279 - 312)
306 - 337	Constantine I The Great (c. 285 - 337)
308 - 324	Licinius (c. 250 - 325)
337 - 340	Constantine II (c. 317 - 340)
337 - 361	Constantius II (c. 321 - 361)
337 - 350	Constans I (c. 323 - 350)
350 - 353	Magnentius (c. 303 - 353)
361 - 363	Julian I the Apostate (c. 332 - 363)
363 - 364	Jovian (c. 330 - 364)
364 - 375	Valentinian I (c. 321 - 375)
367 - 383	Gratian (c. 359 - 383)
375 - 392	Valentinian II (c. 371 - 392)
379 - 395	Theodosius I The Great (c. 347 - 395)
383 - 388	Magnus Maximus (c. 335 - 388)
392 - 394	Eugenius (c. ? - 394)
395 - 423	Honorius (c. 384 - 423)
423 - 425	Johannes (c. ? - 425)
425 - 455	Valentinian III (c. 419 - 455)
455	Petronius Maximus (c. 396 - 455)
455 - 456	Avitus (c. 395 - 456)
457 - 461	Majorian (c. ? - 461)
461 - 465	Libius Severus (c. 461 - 465)
467 - 472	Anthemius (c. 420 - 472)
472	Olybrius (c. ? - 472)
473 - 474	Glycerius (c. ? - 474)
474 - 475, 477 - 480	Julius Nepos (c. ? - 480)
475 - 476	Romulus Augustulus (c. ? - ?)
364 - 378	Valens (c. 328 - 378)
365 - 366	Procopius (c. ? - 366)
379 - 395	Theodosius I The Great (c. 347 - 395)
395 - 408	Arcadius (c. 377 - 408)
408 - 450	Theodosius II (c. 401 - 450)
450 - 457	Marcian (c. 392 - 457)
457 - 474	Leo I The Great (c. 401 - 474)
474	Leo II (c. 467 - 474)
474 - 5, 476 - 491	Zeno (c. ? - 491)
475 - 476	Basiliscus (c. ? - 476)
491 - 518	Anastasius (c. 430 - 518)

The Divisions of the Jews

THE PHARISEES

As Hellenism spread throughout the Jewish nation it altered religion and culture. Many Jews sought to conform to the Greek culture, while a small handful rebelled. The Pharisees were originally known as the "Hasidim" (the pious) party and were arguably the largest of the sects by the time of Jesus (around 6,000). They were the most conservative group, until the Essenes later splintered from them. This group was interested in religious liberty, purity to the faith, steadfastness in the Hebrew culture, and were unconcerned about the political atmosphere. This group is first mentioned around the same time John Hyrcanus began to lead. They adopted the term Pharisee (separated ones) to show their disdain for the Greeks. The Pharisees were more scholarly, understood the law, were good teachers, and were adamant about the oral traditions being equal to the written law. They accepted the entire Old Testament canon, unlike other sects. Their beliefs included angels, the resurrection, fasting, tithing, praying in a ritual form, strict observances of the Sabbath, the immortal soul, and keeping the festivals. Their legalism led them to devise loopholes in the law so as to avoid breaking it. By the time of Jesus the Pharisees had the upper hand in the Sanhedrin. In the long run, it would be the sect that would survive and develop into orthodox Judaism that is still present today. This is probably because of their willingness to add new traditions and bind those laws and loopholes to the laws that were passed down.

THE SADDUCEES

While the Pharisees sought to rebel against Greek culture, the Sadducees (righteous ones) embraced it. Their name comes from the sons of Zadok, the high priest of David. After the establishment of the Sanhedrin the Sadducees enjoyed great power and influence both religiously and politically. Until the Maccabean revolt these two parties (Pharisees and Sadducees) were cordial, but afterwards they bitterly opposed one another (Hasidim and Hellenizers). The Sadducees were politically savvy and were able to control the high priesthood due to their close relationship to the Greeks and other cultures. Their sect was smaller than the Pharisees and was more aristocratic. Where the Pharisees were more conservative, the Sadducees were more liberal. They held to the literal interpretation of the Law and ignored the oral traditions. They did not believe in angels, the resurrection, ceremonial fasting or prayer. They were not concerned with spiritualism and most of their religion revolved around what was done in the temple (once a week followers). The Sadducees were liberal on Sabbath keeping, observance of festivals, and they had no trouble tithing so long as they gave to Caesar. They opposed Jesus and Christians only because they feared Rome would punish them. When the temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD they faded away.

THE ESSENES

The Essenes (holy ones) were a more conservative sect than the Pharisees. We can learn a lot about them from Josephus, Philo, and archaeology. They are the group that preserved what is now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Some scholars believe that many of the Essenes remained in Babylon during the revival of Zerubbabel and finally made it to Jerusalem around 150 BC. They are estimated to number around 4,000 in the time of Christ, however, they are not mentioned in the New Testament (John the Baptist???). This would mean they entered a vastly different political environment than what the Jews saw under the Persian rule. They were also entering Palestine in a time when the Maccabean revolt was heating up. They lived a very restrained and ascetic lifestyle, as is evident from the Qumran community where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. This simple and secluded lifestyle led them to abstain from marriage, child rearing, strong drink, etc. The Essenes refused to take oaths, but strictly obeyed the Law. Like the Pharisees they believed in angels, the resurrection, fasting, praying, and the immortal soul (possibly Heaven and Hell). They did not marry, procreate, recruit, or proselytize but multiplied because they adopted orphans from the streets and taught them their ways. After the fall of Jerusalem, a small group of Essenes (Qumran community) fled to Masada with several Zealots to avoid the Romans.

THE ZEALOTS

The Zealots were formed by Judas the Galilean and Zadduk the Pharisee (6 AD). They rebelled against the Roman government and wanted political freedom. This sect of the Jews was aggressive and easily agitated by occupiers to Jerusalem, even prone to riots and violence. They were advocates of overthrowing the Roman government and were vocal about it, even going so far to say that those who were loyal to Caesar were sinners. The adherents of this party refused to pay Roman taxes, abhorred tax collectors, and were considered by many to be terrorists. Scholars believe that most of them were Galileans. Gamaliel actually assumed that Peter and John were in this sect, when in fact some of Jesus' followers did adhere to this political viewpoint (Simon, Saul???). They had a hard time discerning between religious principles and nationalism, choosing to become act on behalf of God bringing justice and vengeance. They objected to calling any man a king and rebelled against the tainted priesthood. The most extreme group of Zealots was known as the Sicarii (violent men or dagger men) that often killed Jews who opposed them. The term "sicarii" was also used for gladiators who fought with a long, curved knife. After the fall of Jerusalem it was the Zealots that led the exodus to Masada having already developed a stronghold there about four years prior (960 people).

THE HERODIANS

This group, often overlooked and forgotten, did play a role in the New Testament. They were a small minority, but were wholly dedicated to the government. Many consider them to be the most liberal of the sects, even going so far as to say that they thought the Sadducees were conservative. The Zealots were on the complete opposite side of the fence. In the New Testament they were in favor of the Sadducees rule, the priesthood changes, the Herodian dynasty, the Roman occupation of Rome, and paying taxes. They were very liberal when it came to ritual worship, religious principles, and observance of the Jewish laws. Some have suggested that many of their adherents thought Herod to be the Messiah and his lineage would preserve them under Roman occupation. There was a small group of rabbis within this sect that taught this Messianic philosophy and they were called by the Boethusians. The family of Boethus, whose daughter Mariamne - one of Herod the Great's wives, led this small group of rabbis. A handful of scholars believe that Saul of Tarsus may have been related to the family of Herod, citing his namesake and references in his epistle to the Romans.

The Development of Jewish Traditions

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCRIBES & RABBIS

The scribes were not a religious sect, or political group, but were a powerful force among the Jewish people. The New Testament often refers to them as lawyers, scribes, and teachers of the law. Their office was often synonymous with that of a rabbi (teacher). Jesus, regarded as the Master Teacher, was above such teachers, but often compared to these teachers of the law and called Rabbi by some of his followers. Jesus would tell His disciples NOT to do this citing equality with them and His desire for servanthood among them (setting an example). The role of a scribe/rabbi probably began with Ezra who interpreted the law for the people in addition to reading it aloud. In the time of Christ, most of the scribes/rabbis were Pharisees and taught publically. They were considered to be experts, not the priests, on all religious matters.

THE OFFICE OF TAX COLLECTORS (PUBLICANS)

The Roman rule caused much hardship for the Jews, but they began to adapt. The Hellenization of culture, and collection of taxes, forced conformity on the people. One of the ways to serve Rome was to aid in the collection of taxes, therefore, rich Jews often paid much money to gain this office and served as mediators. It pitted them against their Jewish nation, but kept them safe from Roman persecution. Some have called these people "tax farmers" who could forcibly take your money from you and then pass it on to the emperor, taking some for themselves. They were hated among the Jews and classified often simply as "sinners" in the gospels.

THE POLITICAL CORRUPTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD

As already mentioned, the priesthood was corrupted by the Hasmonean dynasty and compromises because of political pressure.

With the teachers of the law being corrupted the people had no one to turn to in religious matters.

In the Old Testament, the people consulted the priests, but in New Testament times the priests were classified with the politically corrupt.

This is evident when Jesus is taken to trial and the dilemma between the high priests.

The Roman government had taken the spiritual authority from the leaders.

The government now controlled the priesthood.

THE DISPERSION AMONG THE GREEKS

The Jews were a heavily persecuted people.

The Old Testament reveals the stories of Israel being taken into captivity by the Assyrians, and Judah being taken away by the Babylonians.

During the 400 years of silence the people were still treated as slaves by their neighbors.

Due to famine, foreign occupation, and persecution, many of the Jews sought refuge away from Jerusalem, choosing to flee instead of fight.

Those who dispersed from Jerusalem are known as the "Diaspora" (dispersed ones).

These people founded Jewish communities all over the world including Asia, Africa, and possibly even India.

This explains the many nations present on the Day of Pentecost in **Acts 2**, and the many Jewish people in the cultures and towns described throughout the book of Acts.

The Seleucid kings actually encouraged these Jewish colonies and urged the people to disperse abroad, taking their Hebrew culture with them.

As Paul takes his missionary journeys he often seeks out those Jewish settlements and teaches in their synagogues.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SYNAGOGUES

During the 400 years of silence the Jews established synagogues (congregations).

These synagogues probably began shortly before return to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity.

The Jewish people needed a place to worship, study, and congregate when the temple was unavailable.

When the people were unable to offer sacrifices and worship they would often gather in the home of a prophet or a priest (**Ezekiel 8:1, 20:1-3**).

During the prophetic ministry of Elijah and Elisha there were already schools of the prophets and meeting places for people to congregate and learn the Scriptures.

Those who were of the Diaspora felt the synagogue to be the most valuable resource to the community using it for many purposes and established them everywhere.

The synagogue would be the place of worship, seat of government, education building, and meeting place for social events (no sacrifices offered).

Tradition says that at least ten people were needed to establish a synagogue and in the time of Jesus there were nearly 500 in Jerusalem (hundreds around the world).

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SANHEDRIN

While the synagogues were established seats of government for the local people, a more formal national government was needed to make decisions for the whole. The Jews obtained permission under Roman rule to exercise their own religious practices and follow their own laws. The Sanhedrin (sitting together) was already meeting regularly in Jerusalem and would serve as the "supreme" court in decision making. They were especially needed in regards to high profile cases which proved too much for the local synagogue (specifically death penalty cases). This court was made up on 70 members, from the two major political parties (Pharisees and Sadducees) and the high priest would also serve in the court. In the New Testament it was often referred to as the "council" instead of Sanhedrin. Those men who served had to meet certain qualifications, but were mainly elders, family patriarchs, scribes, and chief priests. Some have tried to trace the origins of the Sanhedrin to Moses (**Numbers 11:16**). Ezra was supposedly a member of the "Great Synagogue" according to tradition, but no records can be found of its existence until around 200 BC. As one reads the New Testament, you can see its influence upon men like Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Paul, Stephen, and the early Christians. The Sanhedrin disbanded after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT & THE SEPTUAGINT

The Jews needed to preserve their history, genealogy, and laws. Therefore, under the influence of the priests and scribes, and with the blessing of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the Jews translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. As already noted, this would have been a controversial task because the Jews highly regarded tradition and the Hebrew Scriptures. However, because of the spread of Hellenism, most of the Jews spoke Greek and the Hebrew tongue was becoming archaic and was unused by the common people. The work would be known as the Septuagint (LXX - Roman 70) which was the nearest round number to 72, the number of interpreters used to translate it. The high priest singled out six elders from each of the twelve tribes to oversee this work and brought them to Alexandria (Egypt) to accomplish the task, but they were not told why they were summoned by the king and high priest. Once they were all assembled the king placed them in 72 individual chambers, isolated from the group, and simply told them to write the Law for their teacher. The painstaking, meticulous translating would have probably taken them several weeks, but all 72 brought out texts that were in perfect agreement. The king felt that meant that God had moved them to this action and blessed the translation of the other books that would produce the Old Testament canon. That process would play out over the next two centuries before completed. All the books in our English Old Testament can be found in the Septuagint, but the order and structure is varied (book of Kings, Chronicles, minor prophets. etc.). Other apocrypha books are also found in the Septuagint that were taught by the Jews.

THE APOCRYPHA BOOKS

While the translation of the scriptures into Greek allowed thousands of people all over the world to read of the prophesies of the Messiah, there were dangers to avoid. One significant danger was the additions of the apocryphal books to the Bible.

There is no doubt that some apocrypha (hidden) scriptures of ancient origin are found in the Septuagint but they were not present in the Hebrew.

These additional books are *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Wisdom of Solomon*, *Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach*, *Baruch*, *Letter of Jeremiah* (which later became chapter 6 of Baruch in the Vulgate), *additions to Daniel* (The Prayer of Azarias, the Song of the Three Children, Susanna and Bel and the Dragon), *additions to Esther*, *1 Maccabees*, *2 Maccabees*, *3 Maccabees*, *4 Maccabees*, *1 Esdras* (also 2-4 Esdras), *Odes*, *the Prayer of Manasseh*, *the Psalms of Solomon*, and *Psalms 151*.

These additions may have been accepted into the canon, and may be taught by Catholics and Protestants, but are not embraced by all Christians.

Scholarship seems to be divided as to the place of these "hidden" books, however, most believe that if they are included it should be noted their presence is there for historical purposes, not for religious significance.

Jerome, a 5th century scholar, who coined the term "apocrypha" actually taught that the Old Testament ended with Malachi and the New Testament began with the gospels, the rest were simply seen as hidden historical books.

Their place, between the testaments, should be regarded as misleading to the reader.

They should actually be printed in a separate volume on their own.

The Gutenberg Bible (1455), for instance, would not distinguish between them.

Luther's Bible of 1534 was the first to publish it separate as an intertestamental section, making a strong case against their place in the canon of the Bible.

Unfortunately, the Reformers who translated the Geneva Bible of 1560 did not agree with Luther's opinion stating these books must have proceeded "from godly men" which led others to include them, refusing to withdraw them.

For many years, Bibles continued to include these books: *Mathew's Bible* published them all (1537), the *Cloverdale Bible* excluded Baruch and the Prayer of Manasseh (1538), the *Douay-Rheims Bible* reorganized them (1582), and *King James Bible* refused to omit them (1611).

In fact, all King James Bibles published prior to 1666 had the Apocrypha and were only taken out because in 1826 the British and Foreign Bible Society threatened to withdraw its funding unless they removed them.

This was the first group to vigorously oppose the Apocrypha in the canon but the groundwork was laid at the Westminster Confession of 1647.

In the 18th century the translators of the Douay-Rheims version followed the KJV.

Some translations today, especially those of Catholic and Orthodox influence, have included these books for reference (i.e. Revised Standard Version).

It should be noted that anyone who chooses to read the Apocrypha books, for historical value, should be warned that they are not reliable or historically accurate.

To include them in a Bible today would be similar to including the works of Shakespeare, J.K. Rowling, Stephenie Meyer, John Grisham, or George Lucas.

Review, Survey, and History of the New Testament

THE FULLFILLMENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Christians often forget that to a Jew, the Old Testament IS the Bible.

As we read the Old Testament we see concepts and imagery that can clearly be explained in a New Testament context.

The Old Testament is only part of the puzzle.

In the Old Testament reveals the Creator, the Law, the sin of man, and the need for a Savior.

The New Testament brings closure, fulfillment, and answers to the great mysteries of the old.

Clearly, the New Testament reveals that Jesus the Christ has fulfilled the prophesies of the Messiah that was to come into the world.

The Law was brought to completion and nailed to the cross.

The New Testament uses the Old Testament as a point of reference, and we would do well to study those references to grasp a better understanding of the whole counsel of God.

DIVISIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospels	History	Epistles (Letters)	Prophesy
Matthew	Acts of the Apostles	Romans	Revelation
Mark		1 Corinthians	
Luke		2 Corinthians	
John		Galatians	
		Ephesians	
		Philippians	
		Colossians	
		1 Thessalonians	
		2 Thessalonians	
		1 Timothy	
		2 Timothy	
		Titus	
		Philemon	
		Hebrews	
		James	
		1 Peter	
		2 Peter	
		1 John	
		2 John	
		3 John	
		Jude	

THE GOSPELS

Matthew (28 chapters)

The first gospel was written by the apostle to a Jewish audience. He uses scripture references and document several prophesies that were fulfilled along the way.

Remember that Matthew (Levi) was a tax collector, so he had a unique perspective.

Mark (16 chapters)

The second gospel was written to a Gentile audience, from a Jewish perspective. He uses the story-line of Peter to reveal the facts that lead one to faith in Christ.

Luke (24 chapters)

The third gospel was written by the physician Luke, who was a close associate of the apostle Paul. He writes as a Gentile to fellow Gentiles, and dedicates it to Theophilus.

John (21 chapters)

The final gospel was written by the beloved apostle of Jesus. For the most part, this gospel was intended for a universal audience. He does not follow much form or structure, but simply tells about his firsthand experiences with Jesus.

HISTORY**Acts of the Apostles** (28 chapters)

This book is the second part of Luke's gospel. The intention is to show how the church spread throughout the world.

THE EPISTLES (LETTERS)**Romans** (16 chapters)

This is the first of many books from the apostle Paul, meant to encourage the Christians in Rome and around the world.

1 Corinthians (16 chapters)

This book was written to the church in Corinth to halt the division of the church.

2 Corinthians (13 chapters)

This was another book written to the church in Corinth about suffering.

Galatians (6 chapters)

This book was written to the churches of Galatia that needed the gospel.

Ephesians (6 chapters)

This book was written to the strong church in Ephesus that needed unity.

Philippians (4 chapters)

This book was written to the church in Philippi that needed encouragement.

Colossians (4 chapters)

This book was written to the church in Colosse to exalt Jesus as supreme.

1 Thessalonians (5 chapters)

This book was written to the church in Thessalonica to help them seek holy living.

2 Thessalonians (3 chapters)

This was another book written to the church in Thessalonica to explain the end of days.

1 Timothy (6 chapters)

This book was written to Timothy, a young preacher, and friend of Paul.

2 Timothy (4 chapters)

This book was also written to Timothy, but in anticipation of Paul's death.

Titus (3 chapters)

This book was written to Titus and the church at Crete.

Philemon (1 chapter)

This book was written to Philemon to help handle an issue with a former slave.

Hebrews (13 chapters)

This book was written to compare the Israelites with the New Testament church.

Parallels are made to the covenant at Sinai, the high priesthood, and the patriarchs to those of the fellowship of Christian believers.

James (5 chapters)

This book was written by the brother of Jesus to encourage the persecuted.

1 Peter (5 chapters)

This book was written by the apostle to lift up the saints abroad.

2 Peter (3 chapters)

This book was a second letter to follow up with the churches of Asia Minor.

1 John (5 chapters)

This book was written by the apostle John to deal with false teaching.

2 John (1 chapter)

This book was a personal letter to a local church in Asia Minor.

3 John (1 chapter)

This book was another personal letter to another congregation.

Jude (1 chapter)

This book was written by the brother of Jesus to contend with false teaching.

PROPHESY

Revelation (22 chapters)

This book was written by the apostle John to the seven churches of Asia.