



# 7 STEPS TO BIBLE SKILLS

Week 2: Step 2



# Greeting & Review

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- Prayer
- Review Ground Rules
  - Please do not hesitate to engage with the material and with one another
    - Open dialogue is encouraged; no sincere question is silly
- Review last week's material and re-visit questions

# Week 1 Review

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- Why study the Bible?
  - The Bible is unique and the inspired Word of God
- Divine Inspiration
  - The belief that the authors of Scripture were directly influenced by God the Holy Spirit. In that sense, Scripture only has 1 author.
- God is self-revelatory
  - General revelation
  - Special revelation
- The Bible is one way that God has chosen to reveal Himself to us

# Week 1 Review

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- What's in the Bible?
  - The Bible is comprised of 66 books written by over 40 different human authors
  - These books are divided into the Old Testament and the New Testament
    - "Testament" means "Covenant"
  - The OT has 39 books & the NT has 27 books
- The Bible may also be divided into genres such as:
  - Narrative/ History, Law, Prophecy, Poetry, Wisdom, Gospels, Epistles, & Apocalyptic



## STEP 2: ARRANGEMENT OF THE BIBLE

# Introduction

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- Now that we have an understanding of genres and the different books of the Bible, let's take a closer look at each book.
- "Bible" means "book"

βίβλος

biblos / book

- It is often referred to as "THE Book" or "THE Good Book" because even though it is made of 66 different books, they all harmonize to tell one story - God's story.
- When we write the word "Bible" it's capitalized because it's sacred.

# Introduction

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- The Bible has been translated from two original languages:
- Hebrew (in the Old Testament) and Greek (in the New Testament)

Hebrew (Genesis 1:1)

Elohim created The Beginning In  
את (untranslated particle) אלהים ברא בראשית  
the earth and the heavens  
השמים ואת הארץ (untranslated particle)

Greek (John 1:1)

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ  
λόγος, καὶ ὁ  
λόγος ἦν πρὸς  
τὸν θεόν, καὶ  
θεὸς ἦν ὁ  
λόγος.



# OLD TESTAMENT PART 1: THE BOOKS OF THE LAW



# The Old Testament Part 1: Books of the Law

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- The OT is divided into 5 groups, the first of which is the Books of the Law.
- This group includes the first 5 books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy
- This group is also referred to as the Mosaic Law, the Pentateuch, or the Torah.
- Like many books of the Bible, these books also include other genres such as narrative history, but they are purposely grouped this way to avoid confusion with other history books of the OT

# Genesis

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- Author: Moses
- Written: 1430 BC
- Genesis is the first book of the Bible and covers a span of over 2,000 years of history – from creation to the time of Joseph.
  - Genesis can be divided into two parts: chapters 1-12 (pre-history: creation, flood, tower of Babel) and chapters 12-50 (Patriarchal history: Abraham, Isaac & Jacob)
- Famous Stories:
  - Creation, Noah's Ark, Tower of Babel, the call of Abraham, Abraham's test of Isaac, Jacob's ladder vision, Jacob and Esau, Jacob wrestles with God and his name becomes Israel, Joseph is sold into slavery
- Popular Verses:
  - Genesis 1:1 - "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
  - Genesis 1:27 - "So God created humans in his own image, in the image of God He created them..."

# Exodus

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- Author: Moses
- Written: 1400 BC
- Chapters 1-20 tell the story of God raising Moses up to lead the Israelites out of Egypt (hence, the Exodus)
- Chapters 21-40 contain laws and instructions for how the Israelites were to live, including instructions to build the first tabernacle.
  - "Tabernacle" means "tent of meeting" or "dwelling place" - *"Shekinah"*
- Famous Stories:
  - Moses & the burning bush, the 10 plagues of Egypt, Passover, parting of the Red Sea, the giving of the 10 Commandments
- Popular Verses:
  - Exodus 3:14 - "God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM..."
  - Exodus 20:3 - "You shall have no other gods before me."

# Leviticus

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- Author: Moses
- Written: 1445 BC
- Contains many laws (around 613) for the Israelites to follow. As Christians, Christ has fulfilled the Law and we no longer follow the ceremonial or judicial laws, however the moral laws are applicable for all people at all times
- The Day of Atonement was an annual ceremony where the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies and offer a sacrifice to God for the sins of the nation.
- Popular Verses:
  - Leviticus 17:11 - "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life."
  - Leviticus 19:18 - "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD."

# Numbers

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- Author: Moses
- Written: 1400 BC
- The Israelites' 40 years of wandering was God's way of growing their dependence on Him and maturing them as a nation before they could inherit the promised land.
- Famous stories:
  - Israelite spies found giants in the land of Canaan, the Israelites turned from God to worship Baal and as a result 24,000 died, Balaam's donkey, Joshua succeeds Moses
- Popular verses:
  - Numbers 23:19 - "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a human being, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfill?"

# Deuteronomy

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- Author: Moses
- Written: 1400 BC
- Deuteronomy records the death of Moses, so his authorship is disputed
- After their wandering, the covenant between God and Israel is renewed (ch. 29-30)
- Moses was forbidden to enter the promised land along with all but 2 of the original generation of Israelites – Joshua and Caleb
- Popular verses:
  - Deuteronomy 34:10 - "So then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."



# OLD TESTAMENT PART 2: HISTORY

# The Old Testament Part 2: History

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- The next 12 books of the Bible are books of history and are subdivided according to the history they tell.
- Theocracy
  - Joshua, Judges and Ruth
- Monarchy
  - 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings and 1&2 Chronicles
- Post-Exile
  - Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther



# Joshua

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- Author: Joshua
- Written: 1375 BC
- This book begins the story of the nation of Israel
  - Ch.1-8: First two decisive battles to take the promised land – Jericho and Ai
  - Ch. 9-12: Israel continues to conquer the promised land
  - Ch. 13-24: The promised land is divided among the 12 tribes of Israel
- Famous stories:
  - Fall of Jericho, Rahab shelters Israel's spies, the sun stood still in the sky (ch.10)
- Popular verses:
  - Joshua 1:9 - "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

# Judges

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- Author: Prophet Samuel
- Written: circa 1050 BC
- The book of Judges covers the time in which Israel had no king and God was to be their king. However, the nation was caught in a cycle of disobedience and oppression. God raised up 15 judges to lead Israel out of captivity.
- Famous Stories:
  - Samson and Delilah, Gideon defeats the Midianites, Deborah and Barak defeat the Canaanites, Ehud assassinates the Moabite king Eglon
- Popular verses:
  - Judges 17:6 - " In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

# Ruth

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- Author: Prophet Samuel
- Written: circa 1050-1000 BC
- Ruth became the great-grandmother of King David after refusing to leave her mother-in-law Naomi, an Israelite.
- The story takes place mostly in Bethlehem, the future birthplace of Jesus.
- Though it is only 4 chapters long, we see an important concept of the kinsman redeemer unfold in the story of Ruth and Boaz
- Popular Verses:
  - Ruth 1:16 - "But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."

# 1 & 2 Samuel

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- Author: Samuel, Nathan, Gad (and an unknown scribe who compiled it)
- Written: circa 1150-1000 BC
- The people of Israel asked for a king like their neighboring nations. God knew it was better for them to serve Him, but He conceded to their desires much like a parent allows their child to learn from their mistakes
- Famous stories:
  - Life of Samuel, life of Saul, David and Goliath, David and Bathsheba
- Popular verses:
  - 1 Samuel 16:7 - "But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart"

# 1 & 2 Kings

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- Author: unknown
- Written: 550 BC
- The stories recorded in these books were compiled in Babylon, during the Great Exile. They showcase how God deals with His people.
- Contains the story of the prophet Elijah, one of the most important prophets who was taken up to heaven while he was still alive and appeared at the Transfiguration with Jesus and Moses in Matthew 17
- Famous stories:
  - Solomon suggests dividing the baby, Solomon builds the temple, Elijah confronts the prophets of Baal, Elijah's transference, Elisha's ministry, Naaman is cured of leprosy, Jerusalem is plundered by the Babylonians
- Popular verses:
  - 1 Kings 2:3 - "and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go"

# 1 & 2 Chronicles

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- Author: unknown
- Written: circa 450 BC & 340 BC
- These books contain a retelling of the same historical record we see in 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings
- Famous stories:
  - Solomon prays to God for wisdom instead of a long life, power or money, so he is given all of the above, the Queen of Sheba visits Solomon, King Cyrus rebuilds the temple after releasing Israel from exile
- Popular verses:
  - 2 Chronicles 7:14 - "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

# Ezra

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- Author: Ezra
- Written: 450 BC
- Ezra was a scribe and scholar
- By the end of the book, Israel had renewed their relationship with God and were committed to obedience
- Famous stories:
  - Rebuilding of the temple, hundreds of Israelite men who had married foreign wives sent them away
- Popular verses:
  - Ezra 9:12 - "Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance."

# Nehemiah

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- Author: Nehemiah
- Written: 425 - 400 BC
- Nehemiah is unique in that it is one of the few books written in the first person
- In the Hebrew tradition, Ezra and Nehemiah are one book. Nehemiah is a sequel, of sorts, to Ezra
- Famous stories:
  - Rebuilding of the wall, Nehemiah holds the men who had intermarried with foreigners accountable, especially the priests, re-establishment of temple laws and sacrifice
- Popular verses:
  - Nehemiah 1:3 - "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."



# Esther

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- Author: Unknown
- Written: 450 BC
- Esther is the only book of the Bible not to mention the name of God
- Despite that, God may be seen at work "behind the scenes" in Esther's story
- Famous stories:
  - Esther, an Israelite woman, becomes queen of Susa in Persia and convinces King Xerxes to prevent Haman from killing all the Jews in the land.
- Popular verses:
  - Esther 4:14 - "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?."



# OLD TESTAMENT PART 3: POETRY

# The Old Testament Part 3: Poetry

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- The next 5 books of the Bible are books of poetry and may be subdivided into two groups
- Wisdom Literature
  - Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes
- Poems/ Songs
  - Psalms and Song of Solomon
  - Some of the Psalms were actually used by the Hebrews in worship
  - Lamentations is sometimes also included in poetry

# Job

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- Author: Unknown
- Written: Unknown, but thought to be around the time of Abraham, 1900 BC
- Job may be the only book of the Bible written before Genesis
- The moral of Job is that humans cannot understand the ways of God, yet that should not prevent us from worshiping Him.
- Famous stories:
  - Job endures extreme testing at the hands of Satan and loses his children, land, and health. In the end, he passes the test by not cursing God and God restores everything he lost two-fold.
- Popular verses:
  - Job 1:21 - "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."

# Psalms

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- Author: Many
- Written: 1400-450 BC
- Psalms is a collection of hymns meant to be put to verse
- Of the 150 Psalms, over half of them are attributed to King David
- The Psalms are very popular because they apply easily to every time and person, in a variety of situations. There are Psalms of praise, sorrow, prophecy and encouragement.
- Popular verses:
  - Psalm 23:4 - "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me."
  - Psalm 37:4 - "Take delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart."
  - Psalm 51:10 - "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

# Proverbs

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- Author: Solomon
- Written: 970-675 BC
- Like Psalms, Proverbs are a collection of timeless wisdom meant for all generations to understand and enjoy.
- Two strong themes arise out of the Proverbs: respect for those who have gone before us, and humility
- Popular verses:
  - Proverbs 3:5 - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."
  - Proverbs 9:10 - "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."
  - Proverbs 31:10 - "A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies."

# Ecclesiastes

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- Author: Solomon (disputed)
- Written: 940-931 BC
- Like Proverbs, Ecclesiastes is a collection of timeless wisdom meant for all generations to understand and enjoy.
- The book is 12 chapters long and reads more like an essay or journal of Solomon's thoughts
- Popular verses:
  - Ecclesiastes 3:1 - "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."
  - Ecclesiastes 12:13 - "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the duty of every human being."

# Song of Solomon

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- Author: Solomon (disputed)
- Written: 940-931 BC
- This book is a love poem about a king and his love for an unnamed Shulamite woman, and her love for an unnamed shepherd.
- Some believe this book reflects the affections of Christ for His bride, the Church.
- This book reminds its readers that in the proper context, romantic passion and sexual desire are beautiful, God-honoring things.
- Popular verses:
  - Song of Solomon 2:5 - "Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love."
  - Song of Solomon 1:2 - "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth — for your love is more delightful than wine."





# OLD TESTAMENT PART 4: MAJOR PROPHETS

# The Old Testament Part 4: Major Prophets

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- The next 5 books of the Bible are called the Major Prophets – not because they are more important than the other prophets, but primarily because of their length.
- The Major Prophets are:
  - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel
- Most prophets were often "forth-tellers" rather than foretellers
  - Prophets would hear from God and proclaim His Word to the people, not always in the form of predicting the future, but as a critique of the way things were in their society. This could lead to foretelling, as the prophet would often instruct the people to change their thinking and behavior or else something bad would happen, but it usually came in the form of a warning of impending judgment rather than a mystical fortune-telling.

# Isaiah

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- Author: Isaiah
- Written: 700-680 BC
- Isaiah served as a prophet during the reign of four kings of Judah: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. He most likely died during the reign of a fifth king, the wicked king Manasseh.
- Isaiah contains many Messianic prophecies such as:
  - Christ's coming (40:3-5), the virgin birth (7:14), Christ proclaiming good news (61:1), Christ's ministry and death as a sin sacrifice (52:13-53:12), and the second coming of Christ (60:2-3)
- Popular Verses:
  - Isaiah 9:6 - "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
  - Isaiah 53:5 - "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

# Jeremiah

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- Author: Jeremiah
- Written: 585-570 BC
- Jeremiah was only around 20 years old when he began to prophesy.
- He was known as the "lamenting prophet" because most of the news he had to deliver to the people was rarely good news. Many of Jeremiah's prophecies deal with impending judgement for Judah.
- Despite that, there are some words of hope and encouragement to be found in this book, especially in regards to the new covenant.
- Popular Verses:
  - Jeremiah 29:11 - "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
  - Jeremiah 31:33 - "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

# Lamentations

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- Author: Jeremiah
- Written: 586-585 BC
- This is the only book of prophecy that looks backward more than it does forward. Jeremiah looks back with lament and sadness at the judgment and evil that had befallen Judah during the Babylonian invasion of the southern kingdom.
- Jeremiah is very transparent with his emotions before God. This shows us that God understands our frustrations and invites us to be honest with ourselves and with Him.
- Popular Verses:
  - Lamentations 3:4-5 - "He has made my skin and my flesh grow old and has broken my bones. He has besieged me and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship."
  - Lamentations 3:22-23 - "Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

# Ezekiel

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- Author: Ezekiel
- Written: 590-570 BC
- Though it comes after Lamentations in the Bible, the book of Ezekiel begins before the Babylonian exile; Ezekiel prophesied about it and then it came to pass. He lived with the Jews in exile in Babylon and prophesied there for another 22 years. Ezekiel lived in Tel Aviv, which is still around today
- The end of Ezekiel deals with end times prophecies – some which have come to pass and others which have yet to be fulfilled.
  - Ezekiel prophesied that Israel would become a nation again, which happened in 1948.
- Popular Verses:
  - Ezekiel 33:11a - "Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.'"
  - Ezekiel 1:16 - "This was the appearance and structure of the wheels: They sparkled like topaz, and all four looked alike. Each appeared to be made like a wheel intersecting a wheel."

# Daniel

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- Author: Daniel
- Written: 536-530 BC
- Daniel was a teenager when he was taken to Babylon in the Great Exile.
- Daniel includes many wonderful stories of faithfulness in the midst of persecution, but also many end-times prophecies that closely align with Revelation
- Famous Stories/ Prophecies:
  - Daniel in the lion's den; shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace; the invisible hand writing on the wall of king Belshazzar's palace; the 70 weeks
- Popular Verses:
  - Daniel 12:2 - "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt."
  - Daniel 7:13 - "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence."



# OLD TESTAMENT PART 5: MINOR PROPHETS



# The Old Testament Part 5: Minor Prophets

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- The next 12 books of the Bible are called the Minor Prophets, and they are the last section of the Old Testament
- The Minor Prophets are:
  - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi
- Although these books are brief compared to the Major Prophets, they contain valuable information and important prophecies concerning the Messiah as well as end times.

# Hosea

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- Author: Hosea
- Written: 750-710 BC
- Hosea was one of only two prophets whose messages were for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The king at the time was Jereboam II.
- Hosea prophesied around the same time as Isaiah and about 10 years after Jonah.
- Hosea prophesied about both the imminent invasion of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians and the Babylonian invasion of the Southern Kingdom which occurred 150 years later.
- Hosea was told by God to marry Gomer, a woman he knew would be unfaithful to him, as a painful representation of Israel's unfaithfulness to God. Despite her unfaithfulness, Hosea purchased Gomer's freedom from slavery and took her back to be with him. God has done the same for His people.
- Popular Verses:
  - Hosea 11:1 - "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son."
  - Hosea 4:6a - "My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge."

# Joel

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- Author: Joel
- Written: unknown
- Joel prophesied to Judah about "the day of the Lord," which was quoted by the Apostle Peter when he preached on the day of Pentecost.
- Joel prophesied about an invasion of locusts, which may have referred to a literal plague of locusts or the Babylonian invasion.
- Popular Verses:
  - Joel 2:28-32a - "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."

# Amos

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- Author: Amos
- Written: 750 BC
- Amos was a shepherd and didn't come from a family of priests or prophets.
- Amos was born in Judah but prophesied in Israel during the reigns of Uzziah and Jereboam II. He also predicted the Assyrian invasion of Israel in 722 BC as well as the Babylonian invasion of Judah in 597 BC. He also predicted the fall of many surrounding nations.
- Many of Amos' prophecies were against the rich and affluent, who were worshiping God in appearance only.
- Popular Verses:
  - Amos 3:7 - "Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets."
  - Amos 5:21 - "I hate, I despise your religious festivals; your assemblies are a stench to me."

# Obadiah

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- Author: Obadiah
- Written: uncertain
- There were 12 Obadiah's mentioned in the OT, so it is uncertain which Obadiah is the author of this book.
- This is the shortest book in the Old Testament, and is exclusively a prophecy against Edom, a neighboring nation of Judah.
- Popular Verses:
  - Obadiah 1:4 - "Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," declares the LORD."

# Jonah

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- Author: Jonah (disputed)
- Written: 780 BC
- Jonah was called by God to go to the city of Nineveh and prophesy to the people there. Jonah refused and wound up being swallowed by a great fish for three days. Afterwards he obeyed and went to Nineveh, and the people repented of their sinful ways.
- Jesus mentioned Jonah in Matthew chapter 12. He speaks of the sign of the prophet Jonah, whose 3 days in the belly of the fish represents the 3 days Jesus would be in the tomb.
- Popular Verses:
  - Jonah 2:10 - "And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land."
  - Jonah 4:11 - "And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?"

# Micah

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- Author: Micah
- Written: 735-710 BC
- Micah prophesied at the same time as Isaiah and Hosea.
- The earlier prophecies of Micah are about judgment on the kingdoms of Judah and Israel for their idolatry. His later prophecies concern the future Kingdom that Jesus spoke of.
- Popular Verses:
  - Micah 5:2 - "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."
  - Micah 6:8 - "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

# Nahum

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- Author: Nahum
- Written: 650 BC
- Nahum primarily focuses on the coming judgment against Nineveh.
- This takes place 200 years after the story of Jonah. Nineveh did repent at the time of Jonah, but slid back into their idolatry and sin.
- God eventually did pass judgment on Nineveh in 612 BC through the hands of the Medean army
- Popular Verses:
  - Nahum 1:7-8 - "The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him. but with an overwhelming flood he will make an end of Nineveh; he will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness."



# Habakkuk

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- Author: Habakkuk
- Written: 615-605 BC
- The book of Habakkuk begins with a heartfelt prayer to God about the evil Habakkuk saw surrounding him.
- Habakkuk prophesied that the Chaldeans would be the ones God would send to punish Judah. Chaldea is another name for Babylon.
- However, God also told Habakkuk that the Chaldeans would be punished too, as a reminder that justice would prevail in the end.
- Popular Verses:
  - Habakkuk 2:2-3 - "Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay"

# Zephaniah

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- Author: Zephaniah
- Written: 635-625 BC
- Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of King Josiah, one of the few good kings of Judah.
- Zephaniah also prophesied about a coming "Day of the Lord". This term is often used to mean the end times, but it can also mean any time in history where God's judgment is passed on a people.
- Popular Verses:
  - Zephaniah 2:3 - "Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger."

# Haggai

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- Author: Haggai
- Written: 526 BC
- Haggai prophesied in the post-exile period. He was one of the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple.
- Haggai is one of the few prophets whom the people actually listened to. (2:12)
- Popular Verses:
  - Haggai 1:9 - "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house."

# Zechariah

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- Author: Zechariah
- Written: 520-484 BC
- Of the minor prophets, Zechariah contains the most Messianic prophecies.
- Zechariah jumps around in his prophetic timeline, which can be confusing at first. For example, he prophesies about the Messiah's first coming in 9:9 and His second coming in 9:10.
- Zechariah prophesied at the same time as Haggai, though his messages tended to be more hopeful than Haggai's.
- Popular Verses:
  - Zechariah 9:9-10 - "Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."

# Malachi

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- Author: Malachi
- Written: 433-424 BC
- This is the last book of the Old Testament.
- Malachi prophesied nearly 100 years after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon. The people at that time were beginning to lose their spiritual fervor.
- Malachi 4:5 refers to John the Baptist, who had "the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17). Because most people in Jesus' time were looking for the physical appearance of Elijah, they missed John's message announcing that the Messiah had arrived.
- Popular Verses:
  - Malachi 3:10 - "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."
  - Malachi 4:5 - "See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes."



# THE INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

# The Intertestamental Period

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- A period of about 400 years elapsed between the writing of the Old Testament and the events of the New Testament
- This period of time is sometimes called the "silent years" because God chose not to speak to His people through any new prophets
- God broke His silence by sending a new prophet, John the Baptist, to prepare Israel for the coming Messiah
- During the 400 years between the OT and NT, the Hebrews were conquered and ruled by the Persians, Egyptians, Macedonians (later the Greeks) and eventually the Romans
- The Jewish people were generally allowed to practice their religion under foreign occupation, but they adopted Greco-Roman customs. This process of Hellenization led to Greek being the common language at the time of the New Testament, and thus the language it was recorded in.



# NEW TESTAMENT PART 1: THE GOSPELS



# The New Testament Part 1: The Gospels

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- The entire Old Testament story sets the stage for the coming Messiah. The Gospels reveal who that Messiah is – namely, Jesus Christ.
- The four Gospels are:
  - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
- The Gospels are biographies of sorts, detailing the life and teachings of Jesus, as well as His death and resurrection.
- The synoptic Gospels – Matthew, Mark and Luke – all share similar content and likely borrowed material from each other. John, on the other hand, presents a unique, but no less true, perspective.
- The 2nd century church father, St. Irenaeus, associated the four creatures from Ezekiel 1:1-21 and Revelation 4:6-8 with the four gospels. Matthew is the human face, Mark is the lion, Luke is the ox, and John is the eagle.

# Matthew

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- Author: Matthew
- Written: 50-60 AD
- This is the first book of the New Testament.
- Matthew's audience was primarily Jewish, which is why his gospel quotes the Old Testament far more frequently than the other gospels, as a way of showing the hearers & readers how the OT prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus.
- The genealogy of Christ listed in Matthew goes all the way back to Abraham. It is different than the one listed in Luke probably because Matthew's lists legal parentage and Luke's is a bloodline.
- Matthew is symbolized by the human face, because it "is the Gospel of His humanity", due to the emphasis on Jesus' humility and meekness
- Popular Verses:
  - Matthew 28:19-20 - "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

# Mark

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- Author: Mark (a.k.a John Mark, who traveled with Paul on his first missionary journey)
- Written: 50-60 AD
- Mark's gospel does not include a genealogy or birth narrative; it begins with the ministry of John the baptist.
- Mark's audience was gentiles, not Jews
- Mark was probably the first gospel to be recorded; Irenaeus said that as the disciple and interpreter of Peter, Mark wrote down the eyewitness accounts of Peter himself.
- Even though it's the shortest, Mark contains more miracles than any other gospel
- Mark is symbolized by the lion because it is fast paced, and action packed. The "one calling out in the wilderness" reminded the early church of a lion roaring in the desert.
- Popular Verses:
  - Mark 8:34 - "Then Jesus called the crowd to Him along with His disciples, and He told them, "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."

# Luke

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- Author: Luke
- Written: 60-61 AD
- Luke is the longest gospel and focuses on Jesus' interactions with individuals.
- Luke was a gentile and a physician.
- Luke's genealogy is strictly paternal and goes all the way back to Adam (and God Himself).
- Luke is symbolized by the ox because oxen were sacrificial animals. Luke emphasizes Jesus' priestly character and His sacrifice to take away the sins of the world.
- Popular Verses:
  - Luke 19:10 - "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

# John

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- Author: John
- Written: 80-90 AD
- 90% of John's gospel is unique, and not contained in the synoptics.
- John, his brother James, and Peter were among Jesus' "inner circle" of disciples and so his testimony in this gospel is highly credible.
- John is symbolized by the eagle because he takes a "bird's eye view" approach to his gospel. A lofty view of Christ is presented from the outset and John frequently alludes to the divinity of Christ.
- Popular Verses:
  - John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."



# NEW TESTAMENT PART 2: HISTORY

# Acts

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- Author: Luke
- Written: 62 AD
- Acts is the only New Testament book of history; it outlines the works of the Apostles and the formation of the early Church.
- Chapters 1-12 primarily follow Peter's ministry; chapters 13-28 primarily follow Paul's ministry.
- The book of Acts ends before either Peter or Paul are martyred for the faith, which presumes they were still alive at the time it was written.
- Whereas the gospels focus on the works of Jesus, Acts details the works of the Holy Spirit.
- Popular Verses:
  - Acts 1:8 - "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."



# NEW TESTAMENT PART 3: THE EPISTLES



# The New Testament Part 3: The Epistles

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- The next 21 books of the Bible consist of Epistles – letters written to people or congregations in the early Church.
- The first 13 epistles are written by Paul – 9 of them addressed to churches and 4 addressed to individuals. These are called "Pauline epistles".
- The last 8 epistles are referred to as "general epistles" because they were not addressed to specific people or churches, but had a broad audience in mind.
- The Pauline epistles and the book of Hebrews were named after the people they were addressed to. The general epistles were named after their authors.

# Romans

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 56 AD
- Paul addressed this letter to Christians living in Rome during the reign of emperor Nero.
- Romans is Paul's most complete theological treatise; he systematically outlines doctrines such as salvation, justification and assurance. Because of this, Romans is often used in salvation messages (e.g. "the Romans road").
- Popular Verses:
  - Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
  - Romans 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
  - Romans 10:9 - "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

# 1 Corinthians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 55 AD
- Both 1 and 2 Corinthians were correspondences sent to the church in Corinth, Greece.
- Paul's emphasis on love was directed at the Corinthians to help them solve some of the issues and quarreling within the church.
- Outline:
  - Ch. 1-4: Paul offers advice in solving disputes amongst the Corinthian believers
  - Ch. 5-11: Paul speaks against the sin he's heard that has entered the church
  - Ch. 12-15: Paul outlines some difficult doctrines such as speaking in tongues
  - Ch. 15-16: Paul presents the gospel again and reminds the believers to hold fast
- Popular Verses:
  - 1 Corinthians 13:4 - "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud..."

# 2 Corinthians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 55-56 AD
- 2 Corinthians is actually the fourth letter Paul wrote to the church in Corinth.
- After the bad news of the previous letters, Paul is encouraged by the good news of the Corinthians' adherence to the gospel.
- Paul addresses his qualification as an apostle in this letter. Some didn't recognize him as an apostle because he didn't meet Jesus until after Jesus' resurrection.
- Paul also exhorts the Corinthians to live honest, godly lives using his own ministry as an example.
- Popular Verses:
  - 2 Corinthians 6:14 - "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership can righteousness have with wickedness? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness?"

# Galatians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 49-50 AD
- One of Paul's main points in addressing the church of Galatia was to correct the teaching that had begun to spread about Gentiles needing to follow Jewish customs such as circumcision. He does so by reminding them that Jesus sets us free; He doesn't place us under a yoke of slavery to legalism.
- Paul addresses his qualification as an apostle again in this letter by appealing to his relationship to the other apostles.
- The fruit of the Spirit is also mentioned in this letter under Paul's instructions on how to live a godly life.
- Popular Verses:
  - Galatians 5:22-23 - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

# Ephesians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 60-62 AD
- Ephesus was a large city in Asia minor that was full of idolatry. On Paul's second visit there, a riot almost broke out over the growing Christian community and its effect on the idolatry business (Acts 19:24-41).
- Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians while he was in prison in Rome.
- The fruit of the Spirit is also mentioned in this letter under Paul's instructions on how to live a godly life.
- Popular Verses:
  - Ephesians 6:12 - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

# Philippians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 60-62 AD
- Philippians is another one of Paul's prison epistles that he wrote while under house arrest in Rome.
- Paul does not write to the church in Philippi to address a major concern; rather, his purpose was mainly to express gratitude for their support (both financial and spiritual) and to offer them encouragement in the face of trial and adversity
- Popular Verses:
  - Philippians 1:6 - "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."
  - Philippians 4:13 - "I can do all things through Him who gives me strength."

# Colossians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 60-62 AD
- The church in Colossae was attempting to mix Christian theology with Greek philosophy, resulting in the heresy of gnosticism. Gnostics believed that the physical was evil and only the spiritual was holy – therefore, Jesus was not a physical man, but a spirit.
- Paul reasserts the divinity of Jesus in this epistle, and rejects the view that Jesus was merely a teacher and prophet – a view which is also prevalent today.
- Popular Verses:
  - Colossians 1:16 - "For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him."



# 1 Thessalonians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 51 AD
- Paul wrote this letter to encourage the church in Thessalonica in their pursuit of holiness, diligence, love and hope.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16 talks about Christ's return and believers being caught up to meet Jesus in the sky. This verse is usually one of the main verses people point to in support of a pre-tribulation rapture.
- Popular Verses:
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:6 - "So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober."
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:18 - "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus"

# 2 Thessalonians

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 51-52 AD
- Paul's second letter to the church in Thessalonica elaborates more on Christ's return. Some believers thought that Jesus had already returned or would be returning immediately, but Paul corrects this misunderstanding and encourages the believers to live in such a way that they will be ready whenever Christ returns.
- Chapters 2-3 give some more detail about the return of Christ, as well as some information about the Antichrist, who will come first.
- Popular Verses:
  - 2 Thessalonians 1:10 - "On the day He comes to be glorified in His holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you."

# 1 Timothy

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 62-64 AD
- This is the first letter addressed to Paul's young disciple Timothy, and is meant to encourage Timothy as he pastors the church in Ephesus
- This letter famously includes Paul's instructions for church leaders and over time has been used to train many people in church leadership
- Popular Verses:
  - 1 Timothy 4:12 - "Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."
  - 1 Timothy 3:5 - "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?"

# 2 Timothy

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 66-67 AD
- Paul's second letter to Timothy takes a more serious tone, likely signifying that Paul knew his life on earth was coming to an end.
- Tradition says that Paul was martyred during the reign of Emperor Nero. According to church fathers such as Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, he was beheaded.
- Paul writes to encourage Timothy to be steadfast in the trials ahead
- Popular Verses:
  - 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."
  - 2 Timothy 2:15 - "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."

# Titus

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 62-64 AD
- Titus was the young pastor of a church in Crete
- Paul addressed many of the same issues regarding church leadership as he did with Timothy
- In chapter 1, Paul gives instruction about choosing other church leaders. In chapters 2-3, he talks about how believers can live righteously
- Titus is important because it teaches about redemption and how Jesus' incarnation and humanity are necessary components to salvation.
- Popular Verses:
  - Titus 3:5 - "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."

# Philemon

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- Author: Paul
- Written: 60-62 AD
- Philemon is the last of the Pauline Epistles
- Philemon was the owner of a slave, Onesimus, who became a believer and ran away. Paul returns Onesimus to Philemon with this letter.
- Paul asks Philemon to forgive Onesimus because he has been useful in preaching the gospel.
- Even though slavery was part of Roman society, Paul encourages Philemon to treat Onesimus as a brother, and even calls Onesimus his "son".
- Popular Verses:
  - Philemon 1:16 - "No longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord."

# Hebrews

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- Author: Unknown
- Written: 67-69 AD
- Hebrews is the only book of the New Testament where scholars are unsure of the author. However, its composition and writing style have led some to believe that Paul wrote it.
- Hebrews contains a systematic rundown of Old Testament figures and how their faith was credited as righteousness, even though the Messiah had not yet come.
- Jesus' divinity and sovereignty is fully on display in the author's presentation. I.e., Jesus is higher than the angels, He intercedes for us before the Father, He is the only path to salvation, He was the once-for-all sacrifice for all mankind, etc.
- Popular Verses:
  - Hebrews 11:1 - "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."
  - Hebrews 12:1 - "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

# James

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- Author: James
- Written: 44-49 AD
- James was the half-brother of Jesus
- James is sometimes referred to as the "Proverbs of the New Testament"
- James was not initially a follower of Jesus during his early ministry; in fact, he was among the family members who considered Jesus to be "out of his mind" (Mark 3:21). James' conversion came after the resurrection when he saw Jesus alive and well. He then went on to become one of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem.
- Popular Verses:
  - James 1:5 - "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."
  - James 2:14 - "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if people claim to have faith but have no deeds? Can such faith save them?"



# 1 Peter

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- Author: Peter
- Written: 64 AD
- Peter wrote this letter during the reign of Emperor Nero, who is infamous for persecuting Christians. Peter wanted to give believers encouragement during these times of trial to be faithful to Christ, no matter what.
- Peter teaches that "the testing of your faith produces perseverance." He speaks from experience and this message is a stark contrast to Peter's denial of Christ in the face of persecution at Jesus' trial.
- Popular Verses:
  - 1 Peter 5:8 - "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."

## 2 Peter

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- Author: Peter
- Written: 67 AD
- At the time, false teachers had popped up in and around Asia Minor. Peter wrote to encourage believers not to listen to them.
- Also, 2 Peter continues the theme of 1 Peter, encouraging believers to be faithful in the midst of persecution.
- Popular Verses:
  - 2 Peter 3:9 - "The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."
  - 2 Peter 3:8 - "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord, a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day."

# 1 John

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- Author: John
- Written: 90-95 AD
- John was considered to be Jesus' closest disciple
- 1 John addresses the false teaching of gnosticism, like Paul did in Colossians.
- John's emphasis is on love; since love comes from God, when we experience love, we know that God is involved.
- Popular Verses:
  - 1 John 1:8-9 - "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But, if we confess our sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."
  - 1 John 4:7 - "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God"

# 2 John

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- Author: John
- Written: 90-95 AD
- 2 John is the only book of the Bible addressed to a woman
- This short letter only contains 1 chapter, but offers great encouragement to walk in love. In that way, it continues the theme of 1 John.
- Popular Verses:
  - 2 John 1:6 - "And this is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands. As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that you walk in love."

# 3 John

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- Author: John
- Written: 90-95 AD
- This is the shortest book in the New Testament
- This letter is addressed to two people – Gaius and Demetrius, who were faithful preachers. John mentions writing to them previously, though that letter is not recorded in the Bible.
- In this short letter, John criticizes a false teacher and even calls him out by name – Diotrephes. He accuses him of being prideful and a troublemaker
- Popular Verses:
  - 3 John 1:4 - "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth"
  - 3 John 1:11 - "Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good"

# Jude

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- Author: Jude
- Written: 75 AD
- Jude was the brother of James, and another half-brother of Jesus. Like James, he didn't come to faith until after the resurrection.
- Jude is also very short, but alludes to two stories that are not in the Bible:
  - 1st, that Satan argued with Michael the Archangel over top of Moses' body
  - 2nd, Jude mentions Enoch, who is only briefly mentioned in Genesis, but is the subject of the apocryphal book of Enoch, which many early believers would have been familiar with.
- Jude also bluntly talks about "the sin and doom of godless men" and cites many people in the OT who did not enter into God's promises due to their lack of faith.
- Popular Verses:
  - Jude 1:4 - "For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only savior and Lord."
  - Jude 1:9 - "But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!""



# NEW TESTAMENT PART 4: PROPHECY

# Revelation

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- Author: John
- Written: 95 AD
- Revelation is the only New Testament book of prophecy; it is apocalyptic in scope, detailing end times events.
- John was in exile on the island of Patmos when he wrote Revelation. He was the last remaining living disciple.
- It is addressed to seven churches in the western part of the Roman province of Asia. The order in which these churches are addressed mirrors the route in which a messenger would have delivered the letter along the great Roman road which connected the cities.
- The book of Revelation is often misinterpreted because it contains a lot of symbols. It shows visions of a seven-year tribulation period that will take place around the return of Christ.
- Popular Verses:
  - Revelation 3:20 - "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they with me."
  - Revelation 21:1 - "Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea."