

# Genesis



# Genesis

A Book of Law—Old Testament

**Author:** Moses

**When It Happened:** 4004–1635 BC

**Chapters:** 50

**Key People:** Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

**Summary:** The book of Genesis describes God's perfect and complete creation in the beginning. The first people, Adam and Eve, sinned, and now all people are separated from God by sin. Genesis tells about God's judgment on sin in the account of Noah and the Flood.

In spite of the world's continued wickedness, God called Abraham and promised that all nations would be blessed through him. This blessing would come through the promised Messiah—a descendant of Abraham.

**About God:** God is eternal, the Alpha and the Omega. He is and always will be. He is almighty over all.

# Exodus



# Exodus

A Book of Law—Old Testament

**Author:** Moses

**When It Happened:** 1635–1490 BC

**Chapters:** 40

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

**Summary:** Exodus tells about the Jews, their bondage and slavery in Egypt, and their deliverance by God through His servant Moses. We witness God's power in the plagues and His judgment as the final plague—the plague of death—sweeps over Egypt.

God miraculously provided food and water for His people as they escaped from Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, and wandered in the desert. They received His Law and experienced His presence day and night as He guided and protected them on their way to the Promised Land.

**About God:** God is faithful to His promises and will provide for His people.

# Leviticus



# Leviticus

A Book of Law—Old Testament

**Author:** Moses

**When It Happened:** 1490 BC

**Chapters:** 27

**Key People:** Moses, Aaron

**Summary:** Leviticus is a book about God's laws to His people. The Jews were sinful and often strayed toward false gods and idolatry. God is holy and hates all sin. These laws would guide the people in their relationship with God.

God told the people they must kill animals as sacrifices. The people sacrificed these animals so God would forgive their disobedience. The Book of Leviticus points to Jesus and explains why He had to die on the Cross. A perfect sacrifice had to be offered for forgiveness of sins. Jesus is that perfect sacrifice.

**About God:** God is holy and hates sin. But He is merciful and provided a Savior who offers forgiveness to everyone who believes.

# Numbers



# Numbers

A Book of Law—Old Testament

**Author:** Moses

**When It Happened:** 1490–1452 BC

**Chapters:** 36

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

**Summary:** God was faithful to His people as He provided for and protected them. But they kept sinning against Him. When it came time to finally enter the land God had promised, only Joshua and Caleb believed the Lord was with them. The people were afraid to enter the land of Canaan.

God judged their sin, and that whole generation of Israelites would not see the Promised Land. The people wandered for 40 more years.

**About God:** God is just and He punished the people for their sin. But He also showed His mercy and faithfulness as He continued to forgive and prepare them for the Promised Land.

# Deuteronomy



# Deuteronomy

A Book of Law—Old Testament

**Author:** Moses

**When It Happened:** 1452 BC

**Chapters:** 34

**Key People:** Moses, Joshua

**Summary:** The people were ready to enter the Promised Land. This was a new generation. Most had not personally experienced life in Egypt, the plagues, the miraculous escape, or the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai. Moses reminded the people of God's laws and again encouraged them to obey, love, serve, and fear God alone.

God's message was clear: He is the only Lord, and He would bless the people's obedience and curse their sin.

**About God:** God is holy, just, merciful, and faithful. His children are to love Him with all their heart, soul, and strength.

# Joshua



# Joshua

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Joshua

**When It Happened:** 1452–1420 BC

**Chapters:** 24

**Key People:** Joshua, Rahab

**Summary:** The people were prepared to enter the Promised Land. Moses had died, and Joshua was the new leader. The land would be theirs, as God had promised. But it would not be easy. The book of Joshua tells of the many battles against the wicked nations that were necessary in order to take the land.

It was clear after the first battle at Jericho that God would help them if they were obedient to Him and did what He commanded. Once the land was conquered, Joshua divided it among the tribes of Israel.

**About God:** God is powerful and sovereign. His strength and power will go before all who walk in His name.

# Judges



# Judges

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Possibly Samuel

**When It Happened:** 1420–1117 BC

**Chapters:** 21

**Key People:** Deborah, Gideon, Samson, Delilah

**Summary:** Israel turned from God. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes, forgetting God's laws. The book of Judges tells of a cycle that repeated over 300 years and included the Israelites' disobedience and idolatry, God's judgment on the people by allowing neighboring nations to conquer them, the people's repentance and prayer to God for deliverance, and God's forgiveness and compassion to them as He raised up judges to save them. The people did not learn and continued to return to their sinful ways.

**About God:** God is jealous for His glory and will punish idolatry. But He is also faithful to His promises, compassionate, and merciful.

# Ruth



# Ruth

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Possibly Samuel

**When It Happened:** About 1150–1140 BC

**Chapters:** 4

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

**Summary:** This is the account of Ruth, whose love and commitment to the one true God of Israel led her to travel with her mother-in-law, Naomi, to a foreign land. God rewarded Ruth for her faith when He provided a husband for her and provision for Naomi through Boaz, a close relative. Boaz is often referred to as the “kinsman-redeemer” and points to Christ who redeems lost sinners. Ruth and Boaz became the great-grandparents of King David—and that same family would one day lead to Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah.

**About God:** God is sovereign in all things, and His purpose will be accomplished.

# I Samuel



# I Samuel

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Unknown

**When It Happened:** About 1150–1055 BC

**Chapters:** 31

**Key People:** Samuel, Saul, Jonathan, David

**Summary:** This book tells us about the life of Samuel, who became a prophet, a priest, and the last judge over Israel. During Samuel's judgeship, the people rejected him and demanded a king. The Lord sent Samuel to anoint Saul to be the first king over Israel. However, because of Saul's disobedience, God chose another king—David. Saul became jealous of David and wanted to kill him. But God preserved David and prepared him to become Israel's greatest king.

**About God:** God will turn disobedience to His own purposes. He is in control. His plans will be accomplished.

# 2 Samuel



# 2 Samuel

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Unknown

**When It Happened:** 1055–1017 BC

**Chapters:** 24

**Key People:** David, Bathsheba, Joab, Nathan

**Summary:** After King Saul died, David became king. King David was a great warrior and led Israel in victory over many nations. But he was also a sinner and fell into terrible disobedience against God. Even so, God promised David that he would have a son who would rule after him and build a temple to God. God's promise also stated that David's house would be established forever. This promise points to the Savior, Jesus Christ, who would one day come through David's family.

**About God:** God is merciful to forgive a repentant heart, and He is faithful to His promises.

# 1 Kings



# I Kings

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Unknown **When It Happened:** 1015–897 BC

**Chapters:** 22 **Key People:** Solomon, Jeroboam, Rehoboam, Elijah

**Summary:** 1 Kings tells of King Solomon's reign over Israel. Solomon was greater than all the other kings in riches, honor, and wisdom. And he used those gifts to build the Temple for God. However, Solomon later disobeyed God and did evil in the sight of the Lord. Because of his sin, God would take the kingdom from his son.

Israel was one nation in the beginning of this book. But because of rebellion against God and the sinfulness of man, it ends with a nation divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. God sent prophets, like the great prophet Elijah, to warn both nations of their need to worship and obey the one true God.

**About God:** God demands obedience and loyalty. The consequences of disobedience to God are very serious.

# 2 Kings



# 2 Kings

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Unknown

**When It Happened:** 896–562 BC

**Chapters:** 25

**Key People:** Elisha, Kings of Israel and Judah

**Summary:** The kingdom was divided. The northern kingdom of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. God sent His prophets to warn them. But after 250 years of patient warning, God finally brought judgment through the Assyrians—and Israel was no more.

The southern nation of Judah produced good and bad kings. God sent prophets to them as well, including the great prophet, Elisha. But they would not listen to God's warning to repent. And 125 years after Israel fell to the Assyrians, Judah fell to the Babylonians.

**About God:** God is patient with sinners. But He hates sin, and He will finally judge it.

# 1 Chronicles



# I Chronicles

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Possibly Ezra

**When It Happened:** 1055–1015 BC

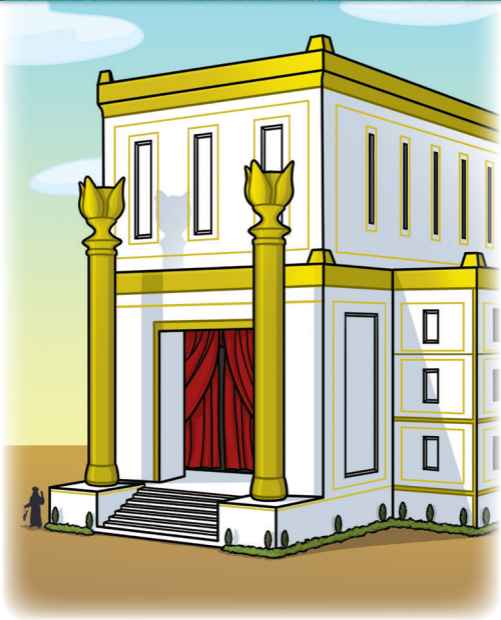
**Chapters:** 29

**Key People:** David, Solomon

**Summary:** The book of 1 Chronicles begins with lists and genealogies of God's people. We then read the history of Saul's death and David's rise to power as king. It tells of David's military victories, the establishment of his throne in Jerusalem, and the Ark of the Covenant's return to Jerusalem. It ends with David preparing the people to build the Temple, his death, and the crowning of Solomon as king.

**About God:** God is faithful to His people and promises blessings to those who follow Him through Jesus Christ.

# 2 Chronicles



# 2 Chronicles

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Possibly Ezra

**When It Happened:** 1013–537 BC

**Chapters:** 36

**Key People:** Solomon, Kings of Judah

**Summary:** In 2 Chronicles we read about the reign of Solomon, his successes, the building of the Temple, and his death. The kingdom was divided into two nations—Israel and Judah. 2 Chronicles tells of the southern kingdom of Judah and the kings that reigned there after Solomon died. It tells of the disobedience and idolatry of the people and God's punishment on them when He sent King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to destroy Jerusalem and the Temple of God and to bring many Jews captive to Babylon.

**About God:** God is patient with sinners. But He hates sin, and He will finally judge it.

# Ezra



# Ezra

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Ezra

**When It Happened:** 537–467 BC

**Chapters:** 10

**Key People:** Ezra, Zerubbabel

**Summary:** The book of Ezra tells about God's faithfulness to His people. Because of their sin, God had allowed them to be taken away by the Babylonians. This book tells how God moved in the hearts of kings to allow His people to return to Jerusalem after 70 years of captivity. God used two leaders, Ezra and Zerubbabel, to bring the people back home, to restore proper worship to God, and to rebuild the Temple.

**About God:** God is faithful to His promises. He is sovereign over all things and is always working to accomplish His good and perfect plan.

# Nehemiah



# Nehemiah

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Ezra

**When It Happened:** 455–416 BC

**Chapters:** 13

**Key People:** Nehemiah, Ezra

**Summary:** Nehemiah knew that things were not good in Jerusalem. He prayed that the Lord would have mercy, forgive the people, and allow him to return to help rebuild the wall of the city. The Lord moved in the heart of King Artaxerxes, and he allowed Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem. After the wall was completed, the people asked Ezra to read from God's Word. As they heard the Word of God, their hearts were changed, and they recalled God's holiness. They wept over their sin and worshipped God.

**About God:** God demands and deserves all praise and glory. His Word alone can change hearts.

# Esther



# Esther

A Book of History—Old Testament

**Author:** Unknown

**When It Happened:** 519–509 BC

**Chapters:** 10

**Key People:** Esther, Mordecai, King Ahasuerus, Haman

**Summary:** God's sovereignty is clearly seen throughout all the events in the book of Esther. The young Jewish girl, Esther, was gathered with other young women as a candidate and then chosen to be queen of Persia. While she was queen, the evil Haman plotted to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom. But God had placed the young Jewish queen and her cousin Mordecai into important positions within the kingdom. Because of that, they were able to influence the king to save the Jews.

**About God:** God is trustworthy. In His providence, He determines all events—both the good and the bad—for His good and perfect purposes.

# Job



# Job

A Book of Poetry—Old Testament

**Author:** Unknown

**When It Happened:** About 2100 BC

**Chapters:** 42

**Key People:** Job

**Summary:** The account of Job proclaims the sovereignty of God over all things. Job was a righteous man who loved and served God. He was greatly blessed with a large family and many possessions. But God allowed Satan to test Job by completely destroying his life and his health. God silenced Job with His power and might when Job questioned Him. In the end, Job's faith and trust in God remained firm, and God restored Job's health, riches, and life.

**About God:** God is sovereign and trustworthy. His plans are perfect. We must trust Him even when we do not understand why things are happening.

# Psalms



# Psalms

A Book of Poetry—Old Testament

**Authors:** David, Asaph, sons of Korah, Solomon, Heman, Ethan, Moses

**When It Happened:** About 1491–500 BC

**Chapters:** 150

**Key People:** David

**Summary:** Psalms is a book of prayers and hymns meant to draw our attention from ourselves and to our mighty God. It is a collection of praises to our God. The psalms emphasize man's position before a perfect, holy God. This sets God in His rightful place—as Ruler over the affairs of the world and all mankind. The psalms include singing praises, giving thanks, and crying out for help.

**About God:** God is great and greatly to be praised. He deserves all glory and worship from all of His creation.

# Proverbs



# Proverbs

A Book of Poetry—Old Testament

**Authors:** Solomon, Agur, Lemuel

**When It Happened:** About 1000 BC

**Chapters:** 31

**Key People:** Solomon

**Summary:** In the book of Proverbs, Solomon taught that the wisdom we need to seek—the only wisdom worth having—is wisdom we can receive from God and His Word. The book of Proverbs addresses many everyday, practical issues we face like work, pride, foolishness, speech, money, family, friends, honesty, debt, discipline, child-rearing, godliness, and many more. If we study and apply the wisdom in this book, we will make wiser choices, become godlier, and learn what it means to turn away from the world.

**About God:** God is wise; He is great and good. He is to be feared! The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

# Ecclesiastes



# Ecclesiastes

A Book of Poetry—Old Testament

**Author:** Solomon

**When It Happened:** About 980 BC

**Chapters:** 12

**Key People:** Solomon

**Summary:** In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon, the king of great wisdom and wealth, revealed that the things of the world are empty, hollow, and without meaning. Seeking happiness from “things” is a waste of time. Some of the earthly pleasures Solomon addressed are mirth, alcohol, buildings, property, luxury, youth, wealth, earthly wisdom, greed, and religion. Solomon’s conclusion was that it is only through faith in God that one can achieve wisdom, meaning, and true happiness in this life. All else is vanity because it cannot satisfy.

**About God:** God promises joy to all who obey His commandments and fear Him more than earthly, temporary pleasures.

# Song of Solomon



# Song of Solomon

A Book of Poetry—Old Testament

**Author:** Solomon

**When It Happened:** About 1000 BC

**Chapters:** 8

**Key People:** Solomon

**Summary:** The Song of Solomon is a beautiful poem that explains God's intention for a man and a woman who court, fall in love, and get married. This poem confirms that God's design for marriage is meant to be enjoyed and will be pleasing and fulfilling for those who live by it. God's plan includes a man and a woman joined together as husband and wife for the rest of their lives, sharing spiritual, emotional, and physical affection.

**About God:** God has given a precious gift in marriage. It is to be respected, honored, and enjoyed between one man and one woman for life.

# Isaiah



# Isaiah

Major Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Isaiah

**When It Happened:** 759–698 BC

**Chapters:** 66

**Key People:** Isaiah, Kings of Judah

**Summary:** Isaiah was a faithful and bold prophet of God. Isaiah spoke very specifically about the coming Messiah—His justice, His promises to Israel, His life and death, and His majesty.

Isaiah also told of God's judgment on His people as they continued to turn from Him. However, Isaiah understood not only God's judgment but also His salvation, mercy, grace, and compassion. He told of these things and confirmed God's promise that His people would not be completely destroyed.

**About God:** God is holy. He must judge sin, but He has provided a plan that offers forgiveness to sinners through the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

# Jeremiah



# Jeremiah

Major Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Jeremiah

**When It Happened:** 630–562 BC

**Chapters:** 52

**Key People:** Jeremiah, Kings of Judah

**Summary:** God sent the prophet Jeremiah to the nation of Judah to warn them that their idolatry, backsliding, and disobedience would be judged by the holy God. The nation of Judah and the city of Jerusalem would be wiped out, and the people would be taken into captivity! But the kings of Judah would not listen. They continued in their wickedness. And God's destruction came upon them. However, in the midst of the devastation, God promised that He would restore His people to the land one day.

**About God:** God hates sin and will punish it if sinners do not repent and turn to Him in faith.

# Lamentations



# Lamentations

Major Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Jeremiah

**When It Happened:** 580 BC

**Chapters:** 5

**Key People:** Jeremiah

**Summary:** Through the prophets, God had warned the people and the kings of Judah that they must turn away from their sin and return to Him. But they would not listen. And because of their disobedience against God, the city of Jerusalem was burned, Solomon's Temple was destroyed, and the people were taken away.

Jeremiah is known as the “weeping prophet.” The destruction he saw in Judah broke his heart. The book of Lamentations was written out of the grief he felt as he witnessed the punishment God brought to His people.

**About God:** God will punish sin, but He is always compassionate, forgiving, and loving. He will forgive those who humbly come to Him.

# Ezekiel



# Ezekiel

Major Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Ezekiel

**When It Happened:** About 595–570 BC

**Chapters:** 48

**Key People:** Ezekiel, People of Israel

**Summary:** Ezekiel was called by God in a supernatural and amazing vision that displayed God's greatness. Ezekiel lived among the Jewish exiles in Babylon, who had been taken captive when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. God sent Ezekiel to proclaim a message of judgment for sins committed. But, in His mercy, God offered hope through the prophet and promised that the people would one day be restored to the land for His name's sake.

**About God:** God is sovereign over all things. His holiness demands that sin be punished for the glory of His name.

# Daniel



# Daniel

Major Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Daniel

**When It Happened:** 607–530 BC

**Chapters:** 12

**Key People:** Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar

**Summary:** Daniel was exiled to Babylon along with his friends. God blessed him, and he was moved into King Nebuchadnezzar's service. There he was given opportunities to exalt God through his knowledge, wisdom, and ability to interpret dreams.

Later, Daniel and his friends would boldly stand for God in the face of serious trouble. And through several trials, including a fiery furnace and the lion's den, God showed that He alone is the Protector and Provider to those who love and serve Him. This book also tells of Daniel's prophecies and visions.

**About God:** God is sovereign over all history, rulers, kings, and nations. All of history is moving toward the day when the King of kings will finally reign.

# Hosea



# Hosea

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Hosea

**When It Happened:** About 800–725 BC

**Chapters:** 14

**Key People:** Hosea, Gomer

**Summary:** Hosea is an account that God uses to parallel a man's love and faithfulness to his unfaithful wife with God's love and faithfulness to His unfaithful people, Israel. Just as Gomer abandoned Hosea, her husband, so Israel had turned from the one true God to false gods and idols. But God reveals His mercy and love in this account. For just as Gomer's husband forgave her and brought her back, so God will forgive all who turn to Him in repentance and faith.

**About God:** God's love for His children is seen through Jesus Christ. And He is faithful and merciful to forgive those who humbly repent.

# Joel



# Joel

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Joel

**When It Happened:** About 810 BC

**Chapters:** 3

**Key People:** Joel, People of Judah

**Summary:** God sent a horrible plague of locusts to destroy and devastate the land of Judah in response to the sinfulness and unfaithfulness of the people. This was the setting for Joel's plea that the people return to the Lord in repentance and faith. Joel warned that a far worse day—the day of the Lord, a day of God's wrath and judgment—would come. And in that day the locusts would seem as gnats to the people who refused to turn to God in obedience.

**About God:** God demands all our trust and obedience. He will judge severely. But His mercy is great, and His forgiveness is available through Jesus Christ.

# Amos



# Amos

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Amos

**When It Happened:** 808 BC

**Chapters:** 9

**Key People:** Amos, People of Israel

**Summary:** The prophet Amos was a simple shepherd called by God to speak to the northern kingdom of Israel. The people of Israel had fallen into great sinfulness including idolatry, greed, bad leadership, and injustice to the poor. Amos' message warned of God's coming judgment, but the people ignored the warning. And after many years, God judged Israel. But as always, the promise of restoration was also given. Amos told of God's forgiveness and grace to all who would repent.

**About God:** God is patient with sinners, but He will finally judge them for their disobedience to Him. And He is always willing to pardon those who repent and place their trust in Jesus.

# Obadiah



# Obadiah

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Obadiah

**When It Happened:** 587 BC

**Chapters:** 1

**Key People:** Obadiah, Edomites

**Summary:** Most of God's prophets warned God's people that they must repent and return to the one true God. However, Obadiah was a prophet who prophesied to an outside nation—Edom. The Edomites had come against the nation of Israel many times. Obadiah's message from God made it clear that God would not allow them to do that forever. Edom was condemned before the Lord and would be destroyed. God would punish Edom and restore the land to His people again one day.

**About God:** God is fair to punish all sinners. His punishment is just and strict. Yet, He will be faithful to His promise of a future kingdom where He will one day reign.

# Jonah



# Jonah

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Jonah

**When It Happened:** About 800 BC

**Chapters:** 4

**Key People:** Jonah, People of Nineveh

**Summary:** God called Jonah to preach to the wicked and pagan city of Nineveh, the capital of the nation of Assyria. Jonah wanted no part of that and ran from God. But God's purpose would not be stopped. Jonah's disobedience led to this amazing account of God's sovereignty and omnipotence over all of creation as He orchestrated wind, sea, and a great fish to carry out His plan! The Lord got Jonah's attention, Jonah obeyed, and the people of Nineveh repented of their sins.

**About God:** God is omnipresent. He is everywhere! We can't run from God, and His purposes will be accomplished.

# Micah



# Micah

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Micah **When It Happened:** 759–710 BC

**Chapters:** 7 **Key People:** Micah, People of Samaria and Jerusalem

**Summary:** The prophet Micah told the people that God's judgment would come because of their idolatry, false teachers, and mistreatment of the poor. As Micah was warning the people, the city of Samaria fell to the Assyrians. God's people were taken captive and the land destroyed.

But all was not lost. God gave Micah a message of hope for the people. A light would shine brightly into the future—and there would be a time that the people of God would walk in light forever through the promised Messiah.

**About God:** God is gracious and merciful toward sinners. He has always had a great plan to redeem and restore sinful people to Himself through the Messiah, Jesus.

# Nahum



# Nahum

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Nahum

**When It Happened:** 664–654 BC

**Chapters:** 3

**Key People:** Nahum, People of Nineveh, Assyrians

**Summary:** God spared Nineveh when they repented in the days of Jonah. However, within 100 years, Nineveh had once again become a wicked and evil city. The Assyrians were fiercely conquering the nations around them. God sent Nahum to tell the wicked Assyrians that they would be destroyed because of their cruelty, sin, and idolatry. That would soon come to pass through the Babylonians who would wipe out the Assyrians. God's judgment would be accomplished.

**About God:** God is slow to anger. But He is a jealous God and will eventually defend His honor and His people for His name's sake and for His glory.

# Habakkuk



# Habakkuk

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Habakkuk

**When It Happened:** 609–605

**Chapters:** 3

**Key People:** Habakkuk, Babylonians

**Summary:** In this book, we see Habakkuk crying out to God asking, “Why?” Why was there such evil in the land? Why were God’s people suffering? Why were their enemies prospering? Through God’s answer, Habakkuk realized that God is God! He is good even when we don’t understand why bad things are happening. He is just and, at the same time, merciful. The wicked will be punished, and the righteous will one day see God’s justice.

**About God:** God is sovereign. He is always in control. And He is perfectly trustworthy in all circumstances. He calls His children to have faith in Him through all situations.

# Zephaniah



# Zephaniah

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Zephaniah

**When It Happened:** 630 BC

**Chapters:** 3

**Key People:** Zephaniah, All Nations

**Summary:** Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of King Josiah in Judah. His message was severe. God would judge all sin. He would punish all who do not fear His name. This would include the entire earth—all nations would see the great day of the Lord. But as always, God's prophet gave hope to the people through the message of the Savior. God will preserve for Himself a remnant. Those believers will be restored and enjoy His mercy and grace forever.

**About God:** God hates sin and will punish it. But He loves His people, and His grace and mercy extend to all nations—to all who believe and trust in Him.

# Haggai



# Haggai

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Haggai

**When It Happened:** 520–518 BC

**Chapters:** 2

**Key People:** Haggai, Zerubbabel

**Summary:** Haggai spoke his message to the Jews after they returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple of God that had been destroyed by the Babylonians. The people started the building project well but soon became distracted by their own wealth, and the work on the Temple stopped. Haggai called the people back to work for God and His Temple, reminding them that the Lord was with them and the rebuilt Temple would bring pleasure and glory to God.

**About God:** God commands His people to love, serve, and obey Him above all other things.

# Zechariah



# Zechariah

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Zechariah

**When It Happened:** 520–518 BC

**Chapters:** 14

**Key People:** Zechariah, Zerubbabel

**Summary:** The Lord used Zechariah to encourage the people to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem after their captivity in Babylon. But God's message through Zechariah was also a message of great hope. He called the people to obedience and repentance. He reminded them of God's blessings and the future joy that would one day come through the promised Messiah. This book focuses on the coming of Jesus Christ and gives instruction to God's people about living lives that honor Him through repentance, faith, hope, and obedience.

**About God:** God is faithful, and His plan of redemption will be fulfilled through the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

# Malachi



# Malachi

Minor Prophets—Old Testament

**Author:** Malachi

**When It Happened:** About 416 BC

**Chapters:** 4

**Key People:** Malachi

**Summary:** Malachi spoke for the Lord with a warning that the people must turn back to God. He spoke of God's judgment on the Jews, who had repeatedly fallen away from the Lord into sin and disobedience. But Malachi's call of judgment from God ended with hope in the One who would bring light out of darkness for all eternity—the promised Messiah. The book of Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. There would be 400 years of silence before that light would dawn and Jesus would arrive.

**About God:** God is patient and faithful to His children. He will judge sin, but He has provided a Savior for all who will repent and believe.

**400**  
**Years of**  
**Silence**

## 400 Years of Silence

There were about 400 years between the prophecies of Malachi and the opening of the New Testament. These are called “silent years” because there were no inspired words from God during this time. But there were major political, cultural, and religious changes that prepared the world for the arrival of Jesus.

**Political Changes:** There was a succession of five nations that ruled Palestine: Persia, Greece, Egypt, Syria, and Rome.

**Cultural Changes:** Many things occurred that made the time just right for Jesus’ ministry and the writing of the New Testament. For example, the Greek language spread throughout the world, providing a common language, and the Roman period provided a time of unprecedented peace, magnificent highways, and uniform laws that aided the spread of the gospel by the first century church.

**Religious Changes:** The Jews developed a new zeal for the Law. As a result, several new parties arose, including the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Scribes. And new institutions were established, including the synagogue and the Sanhedrin.

All of these changes set the stage for the long-awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ, to come “in the fullness of time” (Galatians 4:4).

# Matthew



# Matthew

Gospel—New Testament

**Author:** Matthew    **Date Written:** AD 50

**Chapters:** 28    **Key People:** Jesus, Mary, Joseph, John the Baptist, the 12 disciples, Jewish religious leaders

**Summary:** Matthew was a despised, Jewish tax collector, who became a disciple of Jesus Christ. Because Matthew was a Jew, this book tells of Jesus from a Jewish perspective. Matthew represented Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah—the Savior who would bring peace and deliverance to Jew and Gentile alike. He quoted from Old Testament prophecies over 60 times as he established that Jesus Christ did indeed come “to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets.”

This Gospel ends with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and His command to go and make disciples of all nations.

**About Jesus:** Jesus is the promised Messiah who provided a way for sinners to be forgiven and have eternal life.

# Mark



# Mark

Gospel—New Testament

**Author:** Mark

**Date Written:** AD 50

**Chapters:** 16

**Key People:** Jesus, the 12 disciples, Jewish religious leaders, Pilate

**Summary:** Mark was not one of the 12 disciples, but he traveled closely with both the Apostles Peter and Paul. As Mark recorded Jesus' life, he showed that Jesus, the Son of God, did not come to earth as a conquering king but rather as a suffering servant who offered help, healing, and compassion to not only Jews but also to Gentiles. Mark's gospel is a narrative full of action that tells of Jesus' life and journeys through Galilee, the areas around Galilee, and then Judea.

**About Jesus:** Jesus is the suffering Servant of God. He came to serve others and sacrifice Himself—even to His death on the Cross—so that sinners could be saved.

# Luke



# Luke

Gospel—New Testament

**Author:** Luke

**Date Written:** AD 60

**Chapters:** 24

**Key People:** Jesus, Elizabeth, Zechariah, John the Baptist, Mary, the 12 disciples, Pilate

**Summary:** Luke was a doctor who traveled with the Apostle Paul. Luke's Gospel tells us more about Jesus' birth and childhood than any of the other Gospels. Jesus is presented as both God and man. As such, He lived a perfect life and was the only man worthy to provide the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. In this Gospel, we see how much Jesus loved sinners and those who were hated, ignored, and avoided. These are the people He called to repentance and eternal life.

**About Jesus:** Jesus is the perfect Son of Man. He came to earth to seek and save the lost.

# John



# John

Gospel—New Testament

**Author:** John

**Date Written:** AD 65

**Chapters:** 21

**Key People:** Jesus, John the Baptist, the 12 disciples, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Pilate

**Summary:** The Gospel of John is not like the other Gospels. It is not primarily a retelling of Jesus' life and His actions. John had another purpose—to display Jesus' identity as God. He began his Gospel with that truth stating, “the Word was God” (John 1:1). And John plainly explained the purpose of his Gospel in John 20:31, “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

**About Jesus:** Jesus is the only way, the only truth, and the only life. Sinners are redeemed through Him alone.

# Acts



# Acts

History—New Testament

**Author:** Luke

**Date Written:** AD 61

**Chapters:** 28

**Key People:** Paul, Peter, Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, Silas

**Summary:** The book of Acts tells the history of the early church as the disciples sought to continue the work the Lord Jesus had begun. It was through the power of the Holy Spirit that the disciples were given courage, strength, and even miraculous power to proclaim the truth of the gospel. Acts also tells of the dramatic conversion of Saul (Paul), the Jewish leader who went from despising and killing Christians to becoming the most influential man to ever serve the Lord. Throughout this book, we witness the growth of the church to include both Jews and Gentiles in the midst of severe persecution.

**About Jesus:** Jesus commanded His disciples to be witnesses of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

# Romans



# Romans

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 57

**Chapters:** 16

**Key People:** Paul, Church at Rome

**Summary:** The Apostle Paul wrote the book of Romans. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul revealed that God is holy and righteous. Because He is righteous and all men are sinners, God's justice demands eternal punishment. And yet, by the power of the gospel, God vindicates His righteousness and provides forgiveness and eternal life to sinners through the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul explained that all men are dead in their sins, and no one can be justified in God's eyes by his own works. Rather, the just shall live by faith alone—and that faith is a gift from God.

**About Jesus:** The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.

# 1 Corinthians



# I Corinthians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul    **Date Written:** AD 55

**Chapters:** 16    **Key People:** Paul, Church at Corinth

**Summary:** The city of Corinth had become extremely sinful. The church there was struggling to separate themselves from the sins and worldliness they saw around them every day. They were divided on many issues. And they were not committed to Jesus Christ and relying on Him alone as their foundation. They were full of pride, arrogance, and sin. Paul's letter confronted their sin, and he urged them to return to Christ-centered, blameless, holy, and loving fellowship with each other. Paul wrote this letter to remind the church of God's holiness and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**About Jesus:** The truth of the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ—the gospel—will give the church strength to defeat sin and the love needed to remain united.

# 2 Corinthians



# 2 Corinthians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 57

**Chapters:** 13

**Key People:** Paul, Church at Corinth, false teachers

**Summary:** False apostles and teachers were determined to preach a new and untrue gospel to the church at Corinth. This false doctrine was clearly NOT the truth that Paul had taught them about the crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ. In order to get the church in Corinth to believe their lies, the false teachers were attacking Paul, his life, and his teaching. When Paul heard this, he knew he must defend himself, which he did through this letter. He recounted for the church his many experiences and the terrible suffering he had gladly endured for the sake of Jesus Christ and the one true gospel.

**About Jesus:** There is only one gospel. And believers in Christ should examine themselves and their teachers to be sure they are in the faith.

# Galatians



# Galatians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 50

**Chapters:** 6

**Key People:** Paul, Peter, false teachers

**Summary:** The letter to the Galatians was written to Jews and Gentiles who had come to faith in Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, the Jewish believers insisted that the non-Jewish believers obey their laws. This caused tension in the church. Paul explained in his letter that no sinner saved through Jesus Christ stands under the Law any longer. But all believers, no matter what their background, are justified by faith alone through Christ alone. And the faith believers have in Christ brings freedom from the law of sin and death.

**About Jesus:** The gospel of Jesus Christ offers freedom from sin and guilt to everyone who believes. Christians are not free to disobey Christ but are free to serve Him from a forgiven and grateful heart.

# Ephesians



# Ephesians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 61

**Chapters:** 6

**Key People:** Paul, Church at Ephesus

**Summary:** Ephesians was written to encourage the believers at Ephesus. Paul reminded them that they are saved by grace through faith as a free gift from God. This gift of salvation in Christ includes wisdom, hope, understanding, and an eternal inheritance. God brings all believers together under one head—Jesus Christ. They are all adopted as sons and daughters of God and joined together as Jesus' church. Paul then gave practical ways that the lives of all believers should reflect the reality of this amazing truth as they serve one another in the church, in their homes, and in the world.

**About Jesus:** In Jesus Christ, we have redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.

# Philippians



# Philippians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul    **Date Written:** AD 61

**Chapters:** 4    **Key People:** Paul, Timothy, Epaphroditus, Church at Philippi

**Summary:** The letter to the Philippians was written to encourage the church at Philippi. Paul thanked them for their generosity toward him in a time of need. He encouraged them to rejoice in the Lord always—and to rejoice only in the Lord! He encouraged them to humility and love for each other, following the example of Jesus Christ, who made Himself nothing and became a servant. And he encouraged them to righteousness and discernment in the truth as they encountered false teachers. Paul's charge to this church was to stand firm in the Lord and shine as lights in a crooked and twisted generation.

**About Jesus:** Jesus Christ serves as the perfect example of humility, obedience, love, and service.

# Colossians



# Colossians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 61

**Chapters:** 4

**Key People:** Paul, Timothy, Church at Colosse

**Summary:** This letter provides the fullest presentation of Jesus Christ and His work on earth: He is the image of the invisible God; He is the Lord and Creator of all things, both visible and invisible; He is the Head of the church; and He is supreme above all things. And believers who are in Him have redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins. Believers who stay close to Jesus and walk in the Spirit can triumph over the enemy. Because of Jesus Christ, believers can—and should—seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

**About Jesus:** Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. Through His death on the cross, sinners can be reconciled to God.

# I Thessalonians



# I Thessalonians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 51

**Chapters:** 5

**Key People:** Paul, Timothy, Church at Thessalonica

**Summary:** This letter was written to the church at Thessalonica. The believers there were young in their faith, and Paul wrote to encourage them to persevere in the gospel and continue to live a life pleasing to God. There were misunderstandings in the church about Jesus' return—when it would occur and what would happen. Many thought Jesus was going to return immediately. They thought that believers who had died had missed Jesus' return and would not witness it. Paul assured them that when the Lord returns, the dead who are in Christ will rise first to join Him. And those believers who are still alive will then join with Christ in the air.

**About Jesus:** Hope for everlasting life comes through Jesus Christ who died for us. All believers will one day live together with Him.

# 2 Thessalonians



# 2 Thessalonians

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 52

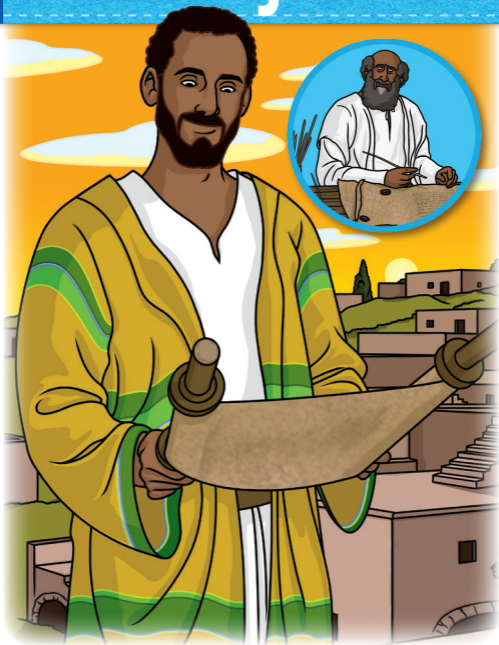
**Chapters:** 3

**Key People:** Paul, Timothy, Church at Thessalonica

**Summary:** This second letter to the church at Thessalonica was written during a time of great persecution. In the midst of their suffering, these early Christians were convinced that the Day of the Lord and the return of Christ were at hand. They were discouraged, afraid, confused, and had stopped working to support themselves. Paul wrote this letter to encourage the church to stand firm in their beliefs, to reassure those who were afraid, to clarify the truth about Christ's return, and to rebuke them for their idleness and disobedience to God.

**About Jesus:** Jesus Christ will one day return as the victorious King. We don't know when that will be. But Christians should continue to live their lives for His glory and not grow weary in doing good.

# I Timothy



# I Timothy

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 65

**Chapters:** 6

**Key People:** Paul, Timothy

**Summary:** Paul wrote this letter to “Timothy, a true son in the faith.” Paul meant to encourage Timothy as he ministered to the church in Ephesus. False teachers were influencing the church, and Paul wanted Timothy to be prepared and ready to rightly handle the Word of truth in the face of opposition. Paul encouraged Timothy to live a godly and holy life. This encouragement was also meant for the church community, especially the leaders of the church. Paul’s final charge to Timothy was to fight the good fight and to cling to the eternal life promised through the gospel.

**About Jesus:** The gospel of Jesus Christ calls all in the church—pastors, elders, deacons, and members—to live out what they believe by caring for and loving each other.

# 2 Timothy



# 2 Timothy

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 66

**Chapters:** 4

**Key People:** Paul, Timothy

**Summary:** Paul wrote this last letter from prison in Rome. He knew as he wrote it that he would die very soon. Paul's priorities were revealed in this letter as he faced his own death and passed the torch of the gospel to his young friend and son in the faith—Timothy. Paul's letter was meant to encourage Timothy to boldly preach the Word and to be diligent to reprove, rebuke, and exhort others in the truth. His advice to Timothy in this last letter includes adhering to sound doctrine, showing steadfast faithfulness to Jesus Christ, and finishing the race set before him by keeping the faith.

**About Jesus:** Jesus is the center of the Christian life. He promises that all who follow Him will wear a crown of righteousness and spend eternity in His presence.

# Titus



# Titus

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 65

**Chapters:** 3

**Key People:** Paul, Titus

**Summary:** Paul wrote this letter to Titus, who was ministering on the island of Crete, because he had heard that false teachers were deceiving the church there. Paul's advice to Titus was to remain strong in the faith and to rebuke those who were listening to the lies being spread and encourage them to live according to the sound doctrine of Scripture. Paul also addressed the church and exhorted them to live godly lives as they waited for the hope and promise of eternity with Jesus Christ. All Christians are to renounce ungodliness and to live lives that exhibit faith and hope in the Savior, Jesus Christ.

**About Jesus:** Jesus came to save sinners—not by works—but by grace through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

# Philemon



# Philemon

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Paul

**Date Written:** AD 61

**Chapters:** 1

**Key People:** Paul, Philemon, Onesimus

**Summary:** Paul wrote this letter to Philemon on behalf of Philemon's runaway slave, Onesimus. Both Philemon and Onesimus were believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul convinced Onesimus that he must return to Philemon. This letter was written to Philemon appealing to him to accept Onesimus back in Christian love as a brother in Christ—not merely as a slave. Paul also appealed to Philemon to forgive Onesimus and receive him graciously and without punishment because of the truth they shared in the risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

**About Jesus:** Through Jesus Christ and His gospel, Christians can forgive, accept, and love each other no matter what outward appearances seem to divide them.

# Hebrews



# Hebrews

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Unknown

**Date Written:** AD 66

**Chapters:** 13

**Key People:** Jewish Christians

**Summary:** The book of Hebrews presents Jesus Christ as the perfect High Priest, the Son of God, and the promised Messiah. The author compares the daily, imperfect sacrifices of the Old Testament, which could never take away sins, with the one perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which is far better and able to take away sins forever. We find in this book that the Law of the Old Testament was a shadow of the good things to come in Jesus, the Savior. It is through Christ alone—the better and perfect sacrifice—that sinners can confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and grace to help in time of need.

**About Jesus:** Jesus Christ, for the joy that was set before Him, accomplished His Father's perfect will by enduring the Cross so that sinners could be saved.

# James



# James

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** James, half-brother of Jesus

**Date Written:** AD 47

**Chapters:** 5

**Key People:** James, Jewish Christians

**Summary:** James wrote his letter to Jewish believers who were living in Gentile lands. He meant it to be an encouragement and also an appeal that their lives would reflect their religion. James was bold to insist that these early Christians not only “talk the talk” but also “walk the walk” of their faith. He addressed topics including suffering, temptation, the tongue, wisdom, truthfulness, pride, and anger, while insisting that Christians be doers of the word and not hearers only. James wanted Christians to know that faith without works is dead.

**About Jesus:** The reality of salvation through Jesus Christ should lead all Christians to good works motivated by love, obedience, and gratefulness to the Savior.

# I Peter



# I Peter

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Peter    **Date Written:** AD 63

**Chapters:** 5    **Key People:** Peter, dispersed and persecuted Christians

**Summary:** The Apostle Peter wrote this letter to Christians who were experiencing great suffering and persecution. Peter told them that they were not to be surprised at the fiery trials that were testing them. Instead, they were to follow the example of Jesus Christ, who did not revile or threaten His attackers. Peter wrote that they were to endure, persevere, and rejoice in persecution, ridicule, suffering, and even death as they shared in their Lord's sorrow. To motivate them to joy in suffering, Peter reminded them of the hope, grace, and promise of the eternal inheritance that is kept in heaven for all believers through the Lord Jesus Christ.

**About Jesus:** Jesus Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example so that we might follow in His steps and rejoice in suffering for His name's sake.

# 2 Peter



# 2 Peter

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Peter    **Date Written:** AD 65

**Chapters:** 3    **Key People:** Peter, dispersed and persecuted Christians

**Summary:** This second letter of Peter was written shortly before his death. It served as a last reminder to the church to continue in the faith with virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, and love. He encouraged them to continue in godliness and holy conduct as they matured in the true faith and to put off the cleverly devised myths that were being taught within the church. In all of this, Peter encouraged them with the promise Jesus made—that there would one day be a new heaven and a new Earth where righteousness would reign.

**About Jesus:** True grace and knowledge come through Jesus Christ alone. It is through Him that we receive the precious promises of salvation and eternal life.

# I John



# I John

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** John

**Date Written:** AD 85

**Chapters:** 5

**Key People:** John, Jesus

**Summary:** The Apostle John was an old man when he wrote this letter. John encouraged his readers to consider their faith. He warned them of false teachers who would try to deceive them. And he urged them to measure their maturity by their love and care for one another, reminding us all that we can love others only because God first loved us. The promise of eternal life comes through knowing Jesus. And believers are to abide in Jesus Christ, put off sin, practice righteousness, love one another, put off worldliness, and keep His commandments.

**About Jesus:** He who believes in the name of the Son of God has eternal life. Those who reject Jesus, the Son of God, do not have life.

# 2 John



# 2 John

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** John

**Date Written:** AD 86

**Chapters:** 1

**Key People:** John, early church

**Summary:** This short, second letter from John was written to the early church as a warning against worldly deceivers who did not confess the truth of Jesus Christ. John warned the church to be on guard, to walk in obedience to the commandments of God, to hold fast to the truth of the gospel, and to love one another.

**About Jesus:** Through Jesus Christ alone, sinners can know the truth, love each other, and keep His commandments.

# 3 John



# 3 John

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** John

**Date Written:** AD 86

**Chapters:** 1

**Key People:** John, early church

**Summary:** This very brief letter from John addressed two issues in the early church. First, encouragement was given for loving care and hospitality to Christians in need. Second, John criticized a man who had turned from the truth and was exhibiting wicked talk and a lack of loving hospitality to other believers. John's message goes on to say that believers are not to imitate evil but good, and that whoever does good is from God. But those who do not do good are not from God.

**About Jesus:** The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only truth. It is important that we walk in this truth and that our lives reflect our faith.

# Jude



# Jude

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** Jude, half-brother of Jesus

**Date Written:** AD 66

**Chapters:** 1

**Key People:** Jude, early church

**Summary:** It is believed Jude was Christ's half-brother. He lived and wrote at a time when Christianity was under great attack by apostates—false teachers sowing their lies among the early church. This letter was a passionate plea to believers to contend for the one true faith against these ungodly men who were denying that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Master. Jude also told the church to build up their faith, pray in the Spirit, stay in the love of God, and look for the mercy of Jesus Christ.

**About Jesus:** Jesus Christ is the one who is able to keep us from stumbling and will one day present all believers faultless before the throne of God.

# Revelation



# Revelation

Letter—New Testament

**Author:** John    **Date Written:** AD 95

**Chapters:** 22    **Key People:** John, early church

**Summary:** The Apostle John wrote this last letter from the island of Patmos. It presents the Revelation of Jesus Christ and things that must soon take place. John addressed both a severe warning of devastating judgment and the eternal hope for everlasting joy. We see God's final warning to sinners: judgment is certain, the world will end, and there will be tribulation and great persecution—unlike anything experienced before—which will include war, drought, famine, and disease. But through it all, Jesus will triumph in glory. Satan and his angels will be cast down forever. The old heaven and earth will pass away—and a new and perfect one will come forth.

**About Jesus:** Jesus Christ will return in glory as the King of kings. Anyone whose name is found in the Lamb's Book of Life will inherit eternal life in the New Jerusalem, but unbelievers will be cast into the lake of fire.