

## IMPORTANT BIBLICAL DATES

### **BC**

- 2100 Call of Abraham
- 1526 Birth of Moses
- 1446 The Exodus
- 1406 Israel enters Canaan
- 1399 Completion of conquering Canaan
- 1051 Saul becomes Israel's first king
- 931 Israel divides into 2 kingdoms
- 722 Fall of Northern Kingdom to Assyria
- 586 Fall of southern kingdom to Babylon
- 550 Cyrus becomes king of Persia
- 539 Babylon falls to Persia

### **538-537 Jews begin return from exile in Babylon**

- 515 Second Temple is rebuilt**
  - 490 Battle of Marathon: 1<sup>st</sup> Greek defeat of Persia**
  - 480 Battle of Thermopolai: Greek power increases**
  - 445 Nehemiah re-establishes political authority**
  - 430 All Old Testament books have been written
  - 428 Ezra's Law sets up religious authority again**
- (Nehemiah and Ezra are helping establish what will become the NEW Israel...God's new people back from exile.)**

### **BC**

- 331 Alexander the Great defeats Persia
- 250 Hebrew Bible translated into Greek Septuagint
- 169 Antiochus Epiphanes (Gk.) defiles Temple
- 167 Maccabees revolt from Greek rule-independent
- 165 Temple cleansed and rededicated
- 146 Rome wins at Carthage-becomes new world power
- 63 Pompey captures Jerusalem-Roman rule begins
- 5-3 Birth of Jesus (calendar discrepancies)

### **AD**

- 26 Jesus is baptized
- 30 Jesus' death and resurrection
- 66 Jews revolt against Rome
- 70 Jerusalem destroyed by Rome

## WELCOME TO INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE PART TWO-NEW TESTAMENT

### PERIOD BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS:

This is the time between the writing of the last Old Testament book and the writing of the first New Testament book that lasted about 400 years.

The end of the 400's BC has prophets, Nehemiah and Ezra, helping to establish what will become the \_\_\_\_\_, God's new people back from Babylonian exile. A weakness develops with these people now basing their \_\_\_\_\_ upon birth. Being **JEWISH** now depends upon being born in the right **FAMILY**, with right **GENETICS**, and having the right **CITIZENSHIP**. This new attitude causes them to become more and more \_\_\_\_\_. They withdraw and really push the theme of \_\_\_\_\_ to the farthest extremes.

A number of Bible books were written during this intertestamental period even though they may have been placed within the Old Testament section at a later date.

One such book is \_\_\_\_\_. This book was written as a \_\_\_\_\_ against the ideas of separation and exclusiveness. Ruth is a Moabite not of Hebrew lineage who chooses to stay with her mother-in-law, Naomi, who is Hebrew. The purpose of this book is to show the line of King David and Jesus both come through Ruth, a non-Hebrew. It concludes that even Israel's greatest king came from a Moabite woman. Thus, the book of Ruth says that God works \_\_\_\_\_ of Jewish lineage, too, and that Jewish genetics are \_\_\_\_\_ needed to be included in God's plan. **The book of Ruth was written by Jews to speak against Jewish EXCLUSIVISM.**

During this period between the Testaments, the question of citizenship (claiming genealogy back to Abraham) becomes even more important than keeping The LAW. **The SEPARATION theme dominates.** A shift occurs so that now Temple \_\_\_\_\_, designed to improve their relationship with their God, aren't used for that purpose, but are used to maintain their \_\_\_\_\_. The function of striving to be righteous in the eyes of God shifts to simply doing it right which then meant you were truly part of God's chosen people. This shift caused a loss of joy regarding being in \_\_\_\_\_ with God to a \_\_\_\_\_ with carrying out the Law to show how Jewish their identity was. So, prophecy totally stops because the focus of the people was only on "doing it right" causing a loss of all spiritual inspiration. The \_\_\_\_\_ seeking relationship with God was missing.

During this period of history with the advance of the Greeks and the practice of Hellenizing those they conquer, the \_\_\_\_\_/IDENTITY problem of Israel is elevated even more. It's a bit hard for us to understand these Greek cultural influences being so strong. We can think of Japan whose culture 50 years ago was about the same as it had been 1,000 years earlier, but today...there's a huge influence of the "western world" evidenced in Coke, McDonald's, Calvin Klein, etc. The same kind of cultural influence was upon Israel due to the Greek Hellenist influence then.

The prophet, Nehemiah, was afraid they would lose their language and eventually they do when \_\_\_\_\_ influence from Persia) becomes the common language of the masses of Hebrew people. This was seen as another step in the loss of their \_\_\_\_\_ identity.

The New Testament shows 3 \_\_\_\_\_ existing in Palestine:

1. Aramaic-common street language
2. Hebrew-religious language used in Temple and synagogues
3. Greek-for international discourse of trade and commerce

**These 400 years were a time of great uncertainty when they return from exile to a world around them that is shifting and they aren't sure \_\_\_\_\_ they are with so much cultural change which they are often at a loss to resist.**

### **TERMS TO KNOW:**

#### **APOCRYPHA:**

Apocrypha means "hidden" in Greek. These are additional books not used for theological purposes, but do provide a valuable source of info regarding historical events and culture during the intertestamental period. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Scriptural books met a certain set of standards to be included. During the time after The Exile, all Hebrew Scriptures were gathered together. They worked to determine the ones that met a certain standard and were considered authoritative. Wisdom and Apocryphal writings were not included. It took about 400 years after The Exile to finally determine and set the Old Testament canon. In AD 90, a combination of \_\_\_\_\_ rabbis from lands of the Jewish dispersion plus early \_\_\_\_\_ church leaders agreed upon the scriptures to be included in the Old Testament canon. This canon was closed to any further additions.

## **HISTORICAL EVOLUTION:**

During the last 600 years the dominance of world powers shifted from \_\_\_\_\_, to \_\_\_\_\_, to \_\_\_\_\_.

### **538 BC the Hebrews return from exile in Babylon.**

#### **450-330 BC**

Persia takes over and allows the Jews to have their own religious practices. People were ruled by their own high priests who were responsible to the Jewish government.

#### **336-166 BC**

Alexander the Great brings Greek culture, education, and language to bear as a major impact upon the entire WORLD during this time. This was called the Hellenistic Period which was designed to unite the world by making the Greek culture and language universal. At 20, Alexander starts his rule defeating first Persia, then Syria and Egypt going all the way to the Indus River in India.

The Greek Empire began with Alexander the Great. He brings military conquest plus a whole new philosophy of life and human potential (the first **possibility** thinker in history). Alexander was tremendously influenced by the philosophy of Aristotle. During this period there was a classic debate between philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. Plato taught Aristotle and Aristotle was a private tutor to Alexander. These philosophers debated ideas like: "how do we know things to be true, what really exists, what is reality?"

Plato said that reality has 2 worlds:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ (CONCRETE) -that which is perceived by the senses-
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSTRACT) -the "world of ideas"

Plato said the physical (the particular) and the spiritual (the idea) both exist even though the spiritual can't be perceived by the senses.

Aristotle (Plato's student) disagreed with his teacher. He didn't believe in \_\_\_\_\_ reality and said the world of ideas did \_\_\_\_\_ exist. He said the only real thing was the particular which could be perceived by the senses.

These 2 philosophical thoughts have collided in the Christian world concerning how we know God, or whether there even is a god. Aristotle said there was no God because God wasn't physical, so couldn't exist. Aristotle taught that the person \_\_\_\_\_ made things happen. Alexander accepted Aristotle's philosophy and conquered the world as a result.

**The Greek era was a time of great insecurity and instability.**

The Maccabees were a Jewish priestly family. 167 BC, a priest named Matthias Maccabeus was performing his duties in the Temple when Greek soldiers came to enforce the edicts of Antiochus. In a fit of rage, Matthias turned on the Greek emissary and killed him. A spontaneous \_\_\_\_\_ started as a result of Matthias' actions. He fled to the mountains nearby and was joined by his sons and others feeling the same way. His son, Judas, led a type of gorilla warfare group. The Jews believed that when they were devoted to \_\_\_\_\_ and stood up for their religious traditions, they would prevail against Antiochus' forces, and so they did.

In 166 BC, the Maccabeans were successful. They retook the Temple and rededicated it. On this occasion, the \_\_\_\_\_ remained lit miraculously for 8 days which became the feast of Hanukkah...Festival of the Lights. The Maccabean victory gave them \_\_\_\_\_.

**An interesting side point...**many people began to believe that Matthias was the promised \_\_\_\_\_ because he overthrew the Greek oppressors and re-established the nation of Israel. Palms were laid down when he defeated Antiochus and rode into Jerusalem in victory. The Roman take over of Jerusalem took away their hopes.

The success of the Maccabeans was attributed to the fact that they kept The Law. By the time of Jesus, The Law had become \_\_\_\_\_, but this was soon to change. How short the memory is!

The Maccabees set up trade agreements with Rome. Rome supported them because Rome was trying to take \_\_\_\_\_ away from Greece. The Maccabees set up a government similar to a republic which eventually became known as the Hasmonean Dynasty. The Hasmoneans came to follow the way of the world and set themselves up as an aristocratic ruling class, which evolved into a Hellenistic regime acting similar to the Seleucids previously disliked by the Jews. Two separate factions arose with one side being orthodox Jews vs. Jewish Hellenizers. Soon civil war broke out. Also, Rome was gaining power and challenging Greece for dominance. The Roman general, Pompeii, saw this situation in Palestine as a chance to show his own power and get back at the Greeks, too. In 63 BC, Rome joined forces with the Hellenized side of the Hasmoneans. \_\_\_\_\_ ended and so did Jewish independence. Pompeii used the Hellenized Hasmoneans to rule Palestine for the Roman Empire.

Roman control was opposite of the Greek. It was a time of tremendous \_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_\_\_-Roman peace-unified the world. Roman influence ultimately signaled the END of the Jewish world.

The Talmud defines The Law even more specifically. Both were written between 200-150 years before Christ. Jesus often expresses exasperation with the Scribes and Pharisees due to their manipulation of The Law and their leading the people far astray of a true relationship with God.

#### 1- POLITICAL GROUPS:

**PHARISEES**=the \_\_\_\_\_ party

- separatists and conservatives
- held fast to The Law and \_\_\_\_\_
- worked to reinterpret The Law so Jews could obey and live \_\_\_\_\_ before God
- supported by most people
- had considerable \_\_\_\_\_ over popular opinion
- believe in resurrection of the dead

**SADDUCEES**=the \_\_\_\_\_ party

- liberal thinking...saw The Law in a looser framework
- mostly \_\_\_\_\_ class, few in number
- traded cooperatively with Rome and were called the "people of wise compromise." Their wealth causes their vested interest in the "status quo" under \_\_\_\_\_ leadership
- had political power and control of High Priesthood
- only accepted The Torah, not the Traditions held by Pharisees
- don't believe in resurrection of the dead since not in The Torah

#### **ESSENES:**

- small group staying \_\_\_\_\_
- lived mainly in Qumran (area of Dead Sea Scrolls finding)
- gathered as a group during the Maccabean conflict
- favored strict legal observance
- believed they were the true \_\_\_\_\_ of correct Judaism
- rejected Judaism at large
- felt Temple Priesthood was corrupt
- rejected much of Temple ritual and sacrificial system
- had an Apocalyptic mind set...purifying themselves, \_\_\_\_\_ waiting and ready for the coming \_\_\_\_\_

#### **ZEALOTS:**

- super \_\_\_\_\_ who would fight to the death for their beliefs to re-establish the independent nation of Israel.

## **WHAT IS THE NEW TESTAMENT?**

A library of \_\_\_\_\_ books and letters written over about 50 years by a variety of authors.

The Old Testament covers about \_\_\_\_\_ years of history, while the New Testament covers only about \_\_\_\_\_ years of history that is mostly under Roman control.

The Old Testament tells over and over of the chosen nation of Israel \_\_\_\_\_ to keep The Covenant that God laid down for them to follow.

Finally, the prophets began to prophesy the coming of a \_\_\_\_\_ that would no longer be legalistic external practices, but this New Covenant would be "written on the hearts"...a new life within...born anew.

This New Covenant was ushered in by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the \_\_\_\_\_/Messiah. This is the \_\_\_\_\_ (Good News) message.

### **NEW TESTAMENT CATEGORIES:**

- 1) 4 \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)
  - tell of Jesus' life and teachings
  - each is written by a different author for a \_\_\_\_\_ audience
  - each has its own \_\_\_\_\_ to relate to its audience
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts of the Apostles)
  - about Jesus' followers spreading the gospel message from Jerusalem and beyond
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ by prominent apostles and church leaders
  - written to the newly formed Christian churches
  - written to \_\_\_\_\_ or renew info imparted on previous missionary journeys
  - written to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ many issues regarding their new faith
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ (Book of the Revelation)
  - tells of Jesus' return and God's final triumph on earth that will end all history, as we know it
  - written in \_\_\_\_\_ and symbols (unknown to Rome) that would encourage new Christian believers undergoing severe \_\_\_\_\_ because of their faith

**-MARK:**

- first Gospel written about AD 60-70
- \_\_\_\_\_ of 4 gospels
- Apostle Peter was main source for this gospel
- shows Jesus as a \_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus' mission on Earth was to \_\_\_\_\_, be rejected by many of his own people, and die
- shows Jesus as a crucified \_\_\_\_\_ of all humanity
- many Jews failed to see Jesus' true \_\_\_\_\_ because they believed their Messiah king was to be a political ruler, a conquering warrior who would free his "chosen" from their oppressors
- Jews weren't taught or lost sight of Isaiah's \_\_\_\_\_ prophecy of Messiah as \_\_\_\_\_ ... 1st coming...not as \_\_\_\_\_ ...2nd coming

**-LUKE:**

- a Gentile \_\_\_\_\_ and friend of Paul
- writes to a Gentile audience
- points up Jesus as fully \_\_\_\_\_, the "Son of Man"
- emphasizes Jesus' healings and compassion for the poor and needy
- shows Jesus' actions toward " \_\_\_\_\_" of the society of the day...sinful women, tax collectors, Samaritans, etc.
- emphasizes \_\_\_\_\_ of God extends to \_\_\_\_\_

**-JOHN:**

- John is Jesus' "beloved"
- last Gospel written around AD 90-95
- most \_\_\_\_\_ showing Jesus as the \_\_\_\_\_
- Jn 10:30 "I and the Father are one"
- Jn 14:9 "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father"
- Jn 14:10-11 "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me"
- uses the Greek word "**logos**" in "the \_\_\_\_\_ became flesh= \_\_\_\_\_ ..."logos" was a term highly understood by Hellenistic Jews and Greeks both
- uses the texts of the 3 Synoptic Gospels and draws conclusions about the \_\_\_\_\_ meaning of Jesus' actions
- tells of \_\_\_\_\_ as signs pointing to Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ as Messiah
- makes the connection that \_\_\_\_\_ through his actions of \_\_\_\_\_, authoritative \_\_\_\_\_, and "I AM" statements
  - Jn 6:35-48 "**I AM** the bread of life"
  - Jn 6:51 "**I AM** the living bread"
  - Jn 8:12 "**I AM** the light of the world"
  - Jn 8:23 "**I AM** from above"  
"**I AM** not of this world"
  - Jn 10:11 "**I AM** the good shepherd"

## JESUS' REVOLUTIONARY TEACHING:

- 1) The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Old Testament was changing to a \_\_\_\_\_ rule that will be a NEW covenant for a NEW Israel
- 2) Old \_\_\_\_\_ system for atonement for sins existed no more because \_\_\_\_\_ was the \_\_\_\_\_ blood sacrifice necessary as atonement for sin
- 3) Jesus presents himself as God's \_\_\_\_\_ who suffers and dies (Is. 52:13-53:12)...his death was the \_\_\_\_\_ needed to save ALL people from spiritual death
- 4) God would no longer dwell in the Temple with priests carrying out functions for the people because God, the \_\_\_\_\_, would dwell \_\_\_\_\_ and write truth on the hearts of God's people
- 5) Jesus presented God as \_\_\_\_\_, Abba, showing all of God's discipline, judgment, love, and grace given as a parent to a \_\_\_\_\_ child
- 6) Jesus teaches a new \_\_\_\_\_ summarized in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel where Jesus states the most important commandments to be...Love the Lord your God and Love your \_\_\_\_\_ as you love yourself
- 7) Jesus taught that God needed his people to \_\_\_\_\_ by repenting of their sin and be \_\_\_\_\_, then to carry forth this \_\_\_\_\_ of forgiveness
- 8) Jesus may not have referred to himself as Messiah because he didn't meet the people's \_\_\_\_\_ of the long awaited Messiah...the Jewish religious leaders had \_\_\_\_\_ God's plan to their own advantage and comfort zone and could not or would not see the \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the hypocrisy of the Pharisees who replaced God's Law and purposes with their own man-made \_\_\_\_\_.

-many \_\_\_\_\_ prophets, philosophies, shrines to many deities  
The new Christian Church of the 1<sup>st</sup> century was very \_\_\_\_\_.  
The Christian message was \_\_\_\_\_ different from any kind of  
religion that had \_\_\_\_\_ existed.

New churches contained people from very \_\_\_\_\_ backgrounds-  
Jewish, Gentile, wealthy, slave, women, Romans-how to blend this  
diverse group into one \_\_\_\_\_ fellowship was a major challenge for  
these churches. Each letter had a specific \_\_\_\_\_, addressed  
\_\_\_\_\_ needs of that group. The letters display needs that  
varied greatly from church to church.

### **VARIETY OF LETTERS:**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ wrote 13 letters:
  - 1&2 Thessalonians-probably earliest written-about Christ's return
  - Romans, Galatians, 1&2 Corinthians-about Paul's understanding of the Gospel message
  - Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon-called "prison letters"-profound teachings while Paul is imprisoned
  - 1&2 Timothy and Titus-called "pastoral letters"-practical writings about church leadership and organization
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ (anonymous author)
  - writes to Christian Jews who are \_\_\_\_\_ to the security of Judaism prior to their conversion...he encourages the \_\_\_\_\_ even during times of persecution
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Peter-written during periods of persecution to encourage them with the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus' victory on the cross
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter-warns about some \_\_\_\_\_ teaching which led to immorality in the church
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1, 2, 3 John may be the \_\_\_\_\_ New Testament books probably written around 90s AD
  - written to \_\_\_\_\_ oppose the teaching that "the Christ" was \_\_\_\_\_ a heavenly being and incapable of \_\_\_\_\_ and truly wasn't human \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - probably written about 40s AD as earliest part of the New Testament books
  - James was head of the Jerusalem church
  - wrote to Jewish Christians \_\_\_\_\_ when many were still in synagogues
  - encouraged them to be \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
  - writes against \_\_\_\_\_ teachings



## COMPOSITION

### *The Language of the Bible*

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, except for a few segments in Aramaic (Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26; Daniel 2:4-7:28; Jeremiah 10:11). Hebrew is a pictorial, descriptive language, rich in metaphors and symbols not found in any other language. It has also been described as a personal language, appealing more to the heart than to the mind.

The entire New Testament was written in Greek. Contrary to the OT Hebrew, Greek can be considered a language of the mind, allowing the NT writers to discuss concepts like justification, propitiation, and imputation with rabbinic precision. Greek also offered the advantage of being, at that time, a universal language.

### *Writing Materials Used by Bible Authors*

As the Spirit of God moved upon the authors of the Bible, they recorded the messages upon whatever material was in use at the time. The following verses, while not all directly relating to the writing of the Bible itself, illustrate the various means of writing used in Bible times:

- Clay (Jer. 17:13; Ezek. 4:1)
- Stone (Exod. 24:12; 31:18; 34:1, 28; Deut. 27:2-3; Josh. 8:31-32)
- Papyrus (two layers of split papyrus reeds pressed together to form a sheet) (2 John 1:12; Rev. 5:1)
- Vellum (calfskin), parchment (lambskin), leather (cowhide) (2 Tim. 4:13)
- Metal (Exod. 28:36; Job 19:24; Matt. 22:19-20)



## CANONIZATION

The 66 books accepted as part of God's inspired, written Word are often described as the "canon" of Scripture. Charles Ryrie, in his book *Basic Theology*, explains several things about the word *canon*:

1. *Its derivation.* The word comes from the Greek word *kanon*, which refers to a measuring instrument. It therefore came to mean a rule of action (this is the word rendered "rule" in Gal. 6:16 and Phil. 3:16, KJV).
2. *Its history.* In the early church the word *canon* was used to refer to the creeds. In the middle of the fourth century it came to be used of the Bible; i.e., of the list of accepted books that were acknowledged to make up the Bible.
3. *Its meaning.* Actually the word *canon* has a twofold meaning. It refers to the list of books that met certain tests or rules and thus were considered authoritative and canonical. But it also means that the collection of canonical books becomes our rule of life.

### *Preservation of the Canonical Books*

#### OLD TESTAMENT

Before the Babylonian captivity, the OT books were apparently laid beside the Ark of the Covenant in the Temple (Deut. 31:24-26).

During the Babylonian captivity, they were probably carried to Babylon. Daniel 9:2 indicates that Daniel had access to them. Daniel says he was reading Jeremiah

and "the writings," a reference, no doubt, to the other OT books written up to that time.

After the Babylonian captivity, the books Daniel refers to may have been taken back to Jerusalem by Ezra and kept in the newly completed Temple (see Ezra 3:10-11; 6:15-18; Neh. 8:1-8).

#### NEW TESTAMENT

While the OT books were kept in the Temple, the NT books, unwelcome in the Temple, were apparently cared for and circulated among the Christian community by various local churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27).

### *Tests of Canonicity*

To determine whether or not they should be a part of the Bible, books were subjected to various tests:

- *Authorship.* Was the author respected and regarded as speaking with divine authority?
- *Local church acceptance.* Had it been read by the various churches? What was their opinion of it?
- *Early church leaders' recognition.* Did the students of Christ's apostles (such as Polycarp, a disciple of John) quote from the book?
- *Content.* What did the book teach? Did it contradict other recognized books?
- *Personal edification.* Did the book inspire, convict, and edify local congregations and individual believers?

### *Bible Books Whose Canonicity Was Disputed*

The canonicity of about a dozen books now in the Bible was at first doubted:

Disputed Old Testament books:

- *Esther*, because it makes no overt mention of God
- *Proverbs*, because of seeming self-contradictions (e.g., 26:4-5)
- *Song of Songs*, because it seemed merely a poem on human love
- *Ecclesiastes*, because some felt it taught atheism (e.g., 9:5)
- *Ezekiel*, because it seems to contradict the Mosaic law

Disputed New Testament books:

- *Hebrews*, because of uncertainty about its authorship
- *James*, because it seemed to contradict the teachings of Paul (compare James 2:20 with Eph. 2:8-9)
- *2, 3 John*, because they seemed to be purely personal letters
- *Jude*, because it refers to the uncanonical book of Enoch
- *Revelation*, because of uncertainty about the book's authorship and because of its mysterious symbols

### *The Apocrypha*

After the OT canon had been recognized by the Jews as officially closed, and prior to the NT period, there arose a body of literature which is today commonly referred to as the Apocrypha. *Apocrypha* literally means "that which is hidden." The term refers to the 14 books which were included in the Greek Septuagint but not in the Hebrew OT. The Apocrypha is accepted by the Roman Catholic church and appears in Catholic and various other versions of the Bible.

