

THE WATERS CHURCH BIBLE RESOURCES

THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Summary, Author, Date, Theme, Writing Date, and Life Application

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE BOOKS OF MOSES

(also known as the first five books of the Bible, or the Pentateuch)

GENESIS

Author: Moses Theme: Creation and Human History Date of writing: c. 1450-1410 B.C.

Genesis (from the Greek genesis, beginning) is the book of beginnings. It records not only the beginning of the heavens and the earth, and of plant, animal, and human life, but also of all human institutions and relationships. The problem of sin as affecting man's condition on the earth and his relationship to God, and the divine solution of that problem, are here in essence. **Read and discover God's character, His personality, His plan for creation, and His deepest desire-to relate and fellowship with you.**

EXODUS

Author: Moses Theme: Deliverance Date of writing: c. 1450-1410 B.C.

Exodus is a fitting title for the book that describes the departure of the Israelites from Egypt where they had suffered helplessly as slaves for generations. In Exodus, God, who up to that time was connected with the Israelites only through His covenant with Abraham, brings them to Himself nationally through redemption, puts them under the Mosaic Covenant, and dwells among them in a cloud of glory. Is God calling you? Exodus is the exciting story of God's guidance. **Will you follow wherever He leads?**

LEVITICUS

Author: Moses Theme: Holiness Date of writing: c. 1450-1410 B.C.

Leviticus is based on the name of Levi, whose tribe was the priests of the Israelites. The book is devoted to the worship of the redeemed people of God. The vocabulary of sacrifice pervades the book, the words "priest," "sacrifice," "blood," and "offering" occur very frequently; and "godesh," rendered "holiness" or "holy," appears more than 150 times. Observe also the repeated command: "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy." **Read Leviticus and rededicate yourself to holiness by allowing God to use you however He wants for His special and wonderful purposes.**

NUMBERS

Author: Moses Theme: Wilderness Wandering Date of writing: c. 1450-1410 B.C.

Numbers derives its name from the record of the two numberings of the Israelites. More accurate is the Hebrew title, Benidar ('In the Desert'). The book concludes the divine record of the experiences at Sinai back in Exodus. The major part of the book recounts the years of wandering, from the departure from Sinai until, a new generation's arrival at the Jordan River. In Numbers the message is clear. **You must trust in God and move ahead by faith if you are to claim His promised land.**

DEUTERONOMY

Author: Moses

Theme: Law Restated

Date of writing: c. 1450-1410 B.C.

The title of the book means "The Second Law". The book begins with a survey of the history of Israel, then enlarges upon the basic laws of the preceding books, and concludes with a series of prophecies carrying the history of Israel down to their final return to Palestine. The lesson is clear. **Because of what God has done, you should have hope and follow Him; because of what he expects, you should listen and obey; because of who He is, you should love Him completely.**

The Historical Books

JOSHUA

Author: Joshua

Theme: Conquering Canaan

Date of writing: 14th Century B.C.

Joshua records in part the military campaigns waged by Joshua in conquering the promised lands and concludes with detailed instructions for the division of the land among the tribes. The book illustrates the principle that the child of God will be involved in conflict with evil powers and with Satan himself. **If you obey God then you will possess all that God has promised to you on earth. "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve..."**

JUDGES

Author: Unknown

Theme: Defeat and Deliverance

Date of writing: 11th Cent. B.C.

Judges records the activities of the twelve men and one woman, designated as judges and raised up by God to deliver Israel in times of decline and unrest after Joshua's death. The cycle so common in Israel's history (rebellion, retribution, repentance, and restoration) occurs repeatedly. **Be in awe of God's mercy as He delivers His people over and over again, knowing He will do the same for you.**

RUTH

Author: Unknown

Theme: Kinsman – Redeemer

Date of writing: 10th Cent. B.C.

The book is more than a beautiful picture of pastoral life; for behind the story of Ruth's fidelity there are clear implications of our Lord's redeeming work. Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer, points to Christ; Ruth portrays those who enter into a new life through trust in Him. It is significant that both Boaz and Ruth are mentioned in the Messianic genealogy. **Be encouraged, God is at work in the world and wants to use you.**

1 SAMUEL

Author: Unknown

Theme: Samuel, Saul, and David

Date of writing: 10th Cent. B.C.

The book records Samuel's life, Saul's life, and David's anointing and early life. Samuel (a descendant of Levi) is referred to as initiating the prophetic order. 1st Samuel is a great book of history and adventure. **If you run your race as God's person from start to finish you will finish strong.**

2 SAMUEL

Author: Unknown

Theme: David's Reign

Date of writing: 10th Cent. B.C.

The book is occupied with the reign of David. 2nd Samuel begins with an account of the strife that preceded the establishment of the Davidic throne at Jerusalem. The book records David's military victories, his great sin, his flight at the time of Absalom's revolt, his return to Jerusalem, and his sin in numbering the people. The Davidic Covenant is set forth in 7:8-17. David, a less than perfect person, was after God's own heart. **Read this book to see how you, too, can be a person after God's own heart.**

1 KINGS

Author: Unknown

Theme: Kingdom United; Divided

Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

1st Kings covers the reign of Solomon, including an extended account of the building of the temple; the ministry of Elijah; the division of the kingdom into Judah and Israel; and the reign of Ahab. **Read how Elijah proves that God + you = a Majority.**

2 KINGS

Author: Unknown

Theme: Israel and Judah

Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

2nd Kings contains the record of the two great national tragedies – the fall of the northern kingdom, Israel, and the fall of Judah, with the destruction of Jerusalem. The book describes the mighty ministry of Elisha. The book concludes with the people of Judah in captivity in Babylon. **It would be easy to go with the flow in society. God calls you to swim against it as Elisha did. It will not be easy, and you might be alone, but it will be right.**

1 CHRONICLES

Author: Unknown

Theme: Genealogy and History

Date of writing: 5th Cent. B.C.

1st Chronicles is devoted to the history of Judah and was written from a priestly point of view. The book begins with the most extensive collection of genealogical records in the Bible, the purpose of which is to draw all lines of redemptive history to their focal point in David. Much emphasis is placed upon the dedication and services of the temple and the ministry of the Levites. This book is a strong reminder of the necessity to trace our roots and rediscover our foundation. **As you read trace your own godly heritage, be thankful for your spiritual forefather, and recommit to passing on God's truth to the next generation.**

2 CHRONICLES

Author: Unknown

Theme: Judah Greatness

Date of writing: 5th Cent. B.C.

2nd Chronicles like 1st Chronicles is devoted to the history of Judah and was written from a priestly point of view. The book records several reformations, including the most extended account of any revival in Bible history – that under Hezekiah. **In this book God says, "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 will forgive their sin and will heal their land."**

EZRA

Author: Ezra

Theme: Return of the Remnant

Date of writing: 5th Cent. B.C.

Ezra is devoted to events occurring in the land of Israel at the time of the return from captivity and subsequent years. The emphasis in Ezra is on the rebuilding the temple. The book contains extensive genealogical records, principally for the purpose of establishing the claims to the priesthood on the part of the descendants of Aaron. **Read Ezra and remember the man – a humble, obedient helper. Commit yourself to serving God as he did, with your whole life.**

NEHEMIAH

Author: Nehemiah

Theme: Rebuilding Jerusalem's Walls

Date of writing: 5th Cent. B.C.

Nehemiah is devoted to events occurring in the land of Israel at the time of the return from captivity and subsequent years. The emphasis in Nehemiah is on the rebuilding the walls of the city. The walls are still in ruins because of the laziness of the people. Nehemiah works against all odds and leads the people to profound victory. The book contains extensive genealogical records, principally for the purpose of establishing the claims to the priesthood on the part of the descendants of Aaron. **Take your cues from Nehemiah in this book if you want to be a person of strong and courageous character who stands securely against the criticisms of the weak to accomplish great and godly purposes.**

ESTHER

Author: Unknown

Theme: God's Providential Care

Date of writing: 5th Cent. B.C.

Esther records the events that occurred when the Jews were captives in Persia. Esther was a Jewish maiden who, as queen of Persia, was used to deliver her people from massacre. The name of God is never mentioned in Esther, but in no other portion of the Bible is God's providential care of His people more evident. **Is God preparing you to bravely lead in "such a time as this"?**

The Poetical and Wisdom Books

JOB

Author: Unknown

Theme: Problem of Suffering

Date of writing: Oldest book, appr. 2000 B.C.

The subject of Job is God's providential and ethical government considered in the light of the age-old problem of the suffering of a righteous man. **It is easy to think we have all the answers. In reality, only God knows why things happen as they do. Read this book and see how to answer that famous question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"**

PSALMS

Author: David and others

Theme: Praise

Date of writing: 10th Cent. B.C. and later

Psalms is a title derived from the Greek psalmos, a poem sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments. The Hebrew title for the book was Sopher Tehillim, meaning "Book of Praises". Psalms arise from a reflection of what God has done in the past, what He will do in the future, and the need for God in the immediate present, with recognition of His sovereignty and goodness. **Let the honesty of the psalmist guide you into a deep and genuine relationship with God.**

PROVERBS

Author: Solomon and others Theme: Wisdom

Date of writing: 10th Cent. B.C.

Proverbs is a collection of brief sayings in which, by comparison or contrast, some important truth is discovered. Knowing God is the key to wisdom. The wisdom contained in these writings are unmatched. **Read one of these chapters every day and watch your life become more successful.**

ECCLESIASTES

Author: Solomon Theme: Man's Reasoning

Date of writing: 10th Cent. B.C.

Ecclesiastes is the book of man's reasoning about life. In it Solomon gets very honest about his emotions and reactions to how life happens to us all. **When you read this you'll quickly see how well you relate with the author and find comfort in his honest assessments of life.**

SONG OF SONGS

(also known as Song of Solomon)

Author: Solomon Theme: The Value of Romantic Love

Date of writing: 10th Cent. B.C.

This book is the expression of pure marital love as ordained by God in creation, and the vindication of that love as against both asceticism and lust. This book is a "steamy" one. Many people are surprised it is even in the Bible. Its inclusion shows how seriously God takes the acts of sex and their implications for a healthy marriage and home. **As you read Song of Songs, commit yourself to seeing life, sex and marriage from God's point of view.**

The Prophetic Books

ISAIAH

Author: Isaiah

Theme: Israel's Messiah

Date of writing: 8th Cent. B.C.

Isaiah was the greatest of the writing prophets. Isaiah contains many important prophecies about Jerusalem, Israel, Judah, and the nations of the earth. The book also sets forth the great Messianic predictions in which are foretold Christ's birth, His Deity, His ministry, His death, and His future millennial reign. **Listen to the message of return, repent, and be renewed. Then trust in God's redemption through Christ and rejoice. Your Savior has come, and He will return.**

JEREMIAH

Author: Jeremiah

Theme: Warning and Judgment

Date of writing: 7th Cent. B.C.

Sometimes called the weeping prophet, Jeremiah was a devoted patriot, wholly committed to God and to holiness. He was persecuted by his own people for his bold proclamation of the impending captivity. After the fall of Jerusalem, he chose to stay and minister to the remnant rather than go to Babylon. He also predicted Israel's return to the land in the end time. **As read Jeremiah, feel with him as he agonizes over the message he must deliver, pray with him for those who refuse to respond to the truth, and watch his example of faith and courage.**

LAMENTATIONS

Author: Jeremiah

Theme: Mourning for Jerusalem

Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

Lamentations is composed of five mournful poems lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem. The deeper significance of Lamentations lies in the fact that Jeremiah's intense burden of sympathy for Jerusalem discloses the love and sorrow of the Lord for the very people whom He is chastening. **Read and learn what it means to grieve with God.**

EZEKIEL

Author: Ezekiel

Theme: Judgment and Glory

Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

The purpose of Ezekiel's ministry was to keep before the generation born in exile the national sins which had brought Israel so low, to sustain the faith of the exiles by predictions of national restoration, of the execution of justice upon their oppressors, and of national glory under the Davidic monarchy. God asked Ezekiel illustrate his message with dramatic object lessons. **God wants you to obey whatever, wherever, and whenever he asks.**

DANIEL

Author: Daniel Theme: Apocalyptic Writing...Rise and Fall of Kingdoms Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

Daniel is a book of kings and kingdoms, of thrones and domination. While including a number of historical records, it embodies prophecies of the sequence of kingdoms in "the time of the Gentiles" and portrays the end period. It voices the only prophecy in the Old Testament that set the time of Christ's first advent. Despite news reports or personal stress, we can be confident that God is in control. This book contains the inspirational stories of "Daniel and the lions den" and "Daniel in the fiery furnace." **As you read, watch God work and find security in His sovereignty and protection.**

HOSEA

Author: Hosea

Theme: Redeeming Love

Date of writing: 8th Cent. B.C.

The theme of Hosea's prophecy is the unfaithfulness of Israel, as it relates to marriage, a familiar figure of speech depicting God's relation to His people. The truths of the book are: 1) God suffers when His people are unfaithful to Him; 2) God can not condone sin; and 3) God will never cease to love His own and, consequently, He seeks to win back those who have forsaken Him. **This book dramatically portrays God's constant and persistent love even in the face of our rebellion against Him.**

JOEL

Author: Joel

Theme: Day of the Lord

Date of writing: 9th or 8th Cent. B.C.

The book describes the invasion of Judah by a plague of locusts that destroys everything in its path. Joel urges the people to turn to the Lord. God accepting the repentance of the people and promises that He will not only remove the locust, but restore all that was destroyed. This is taken as prophecy of things yet to come and the great blessings which God will pour upon His people in the latter days. **As you read Joel, catch his vision of the power and might of God and of God's ultimate judgment of sin.**

AMOS

Author: Amos

Theme: Judgment on sin

Date of writing: 8th Cent. B.C.

Amos was burdened over the sin of the northern kingdom. He was outraged at the violence they had done to the justice and righteousness of God. Amos message was social justice is inseparable from true piety. **Have you grown complacent? Have other concerns taken God's place in your life? Do you ignore those in need or oppress the poor? Read Amos and see a man not only devoted to serving the Lord, but whose lifestyle reflected this devotion.**

OBADIAH

Author: Obadiah

Theme: Doom of Edom

Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

The book, which is in the form of a "doom song" has a single theme – judgment upon Edom, the nation descended from Esau. **As you read, catch a glimpse of what it means to be God's child, under His love and protection.**

JONAH

Author: Jonah

Theme: God's Mercy

Date of writing: 8th Cent. B.C.

The Book of Jonah is full of the supernatural; the great fish, the vine, the worm, the east wind, and the greatest of all the repentance of the entire city of Nineveh. Jonah's character and God's dealing with him foreshadow the history of Israel: outside the land, a trouble to the Gentiles, yet witnessing to them; cast out, but miraculously preserved; in deepest distress calling on the Lord as Savior; deliverance and then missionaries to the Gentiles. And wait till you see Jonah's reaction at the end! How telling it is of our humanness and short-sightedness. **See the full picture of God's love and compassion and realize that no one is beyond redemption.**

MICAH

Author: Micah

Theme: Judgment and Kingdom

Date of writing: 8th Cent. B.C.

Micah's messages are particularly to the capital cities as centers of influence in the nation. God pleads with Israel and Judah to turn to Him from their sin, setting the Assyrian as the rod of His wrath, and He concludes with promises of future glory under the Messiah and His righteous reign. **In Micah you'll see God's anger in action as he judges and punishes sin. Then you'll see his love in action as he offers eternal life to all who repent and believe.**

NAHUM

Author: Nahum

Theme: Nineveh's Doom

Date of writing: 7th Cent. B.C.

Nahum's book forms the sequel to the Book of Jonah. The repentance under Jonah delayed judgment for a century. Nahum prophecy was the capture of Nineveh by the Babylonians and their allies. **The message is clear – disobedience, rebellion, and injustice will not prevail but will be punished severely by a righteous and holy God.**

HABAKKUK

Author: Habakkuk

Theme: From Doubt to Faith

Date of writing: 7th Cent. B.C.

Habakkuk prophesied to Judah concerning the impending invasion by Babylonians. The conditions of moral and spiritual decline marked the life of the nation. The prophet was perplexed over God's permission of the evil in Judah, and even more the use of the Babylonians as His rod of correction for His people. God's answer was "trust in God brings life, pride leads to death, because it will not accept by faith the grace of God". **Habakkuk boldly complains and asks God profound and difficult questions. You can also bring your complaints and inquires to God.**

ZEPHANIAH

Author: Zephaniah

Theme: Day of the Lord

Date of writing: 7th Cent. B.C.

Zephaniah foresaw the fall of Jerusalem which, in his inspired vision, became a figure of the day of the Lord. He also looked forward to the judgment of the Gentiles and the restoration of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. **God does not take sin lightly and it will be punished, but rejoice – Our God reigns and will rescue His own.**

HAGGAI

Author: Haggai

Theme: Rebuilding the Temple

Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

His ministry was to rebuke the returned exiles for their delay in rebuilding the temple and encourage them to set to work. **Can you hear Haggai speaking to you to reorder your priorities in accordance to God's will?**

ZECHARIAH

Author: Zechariah

Theme: Messiah's Advents

Date of writing: 6th Cent. B.C.

His message covers events beginning with the rebuilding of the temple and concluding with the millennium. He predicts the second coming of Christ, His reign, His priesthood, His kingship, His Deity, His building of the temple of the Lord, His coming in lowness, His rejection and betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, His return to Israel as the crucified One, and His being smitten by the sword of the Lord. **Read Zechariah and strengthen your faith in God – he alone is your hope and security.**

MALACHI

Author: Malachi

Theme: Formalism Rebuked

Date of writing: 5th Cent. B.C.

Malachi contains the prophecy of John the Baptist's ministry. The main theme of Malachi is the corruption of the priest and the sins of the people against the family and their miserliness toward God. **Malachi will have you evaluate the depth of your commitment, the sincerity of you worship, and the direction of your life.**

THE NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW

Author: Matthew

Theme: Christ, the King

Date of writing: 50 A.D.

Written originally for the Jews, Matthew presents Christ as the Son of David and the Son of Abraham. Matthew, more than any of the Gospel writers, connects events and utterances in the life of our Lord with Old Testament predictions. **As you read Matthew discover that Christ is the King of kings, Lord of lords, the Messiah.**

MARK

Author: Mark

Theme: Christ, the Servant

Date of writing: 68 A.D.

Written principally for the Roman world, this Gospel presents Christ as the servant of the Lord, sent to accomplish a specific work for God. Therefore it is a book of deeds more than words. **As you read Mark, be ready for action, both in the Gospel and your life.**

LUKE

Author: Luke

Theme: Christ, the Man

Date of writing: 60 A.D.

Written principally for the Gentiles, this Gospel emphasis is upon the perfect humanity of Christ. Christ is presented as the Son of Man, the human-divine Person, and whose genealogy traces to Adam. Luke is the Gospel of compassion, stressing the Lord's sympathy for the brokenhearted, sick, mistreated, and the bereaved. It also shows the ministry to women to Christ. **Luke was a physician and his trained observation is evident through out the Gospel. Read Luke's beautifully written and accurate account of the life of Christ.**

JOHN

Author: John

Theme: Christ in His Deity

Date of writing: 85 - 90 A.D.

Written principally for new Christians, John's purpose in this Gospel was, as he plainly declares, "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name". In every chapter Jesus' deity is revealed. Jesus' true identity is highlighted in titles He is given – Word, the One and Only, Lamb of God, Son of God, true bread, life, resurrection, and vine. **John, the devoted follower of Christ, has given us a personal and powerful look into the private and public person of Jesus Christ.**

ACTS

Author: Luke

Theme: First Century Church Affairs

Date of writing: 60 A.D.

This book is of the highest importance because it is the only inspired account of the beginning and early work of the Church. It clarifies some of the historical references in the Pauline epistles. Acts is the primary textbook for the study of missionary principles, defense of the faith, the Person and work of the Holy Spirit, and the method and the themes of Christian preaching. **As you read, watch the Spirit – led boldness of these believers, who through suffering and in the face of death take every opportunity to tell of their crucified and risen Lord.**

ROMANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Central Truths of Christianity

Date of writing: 57 - 58 A.D.

This Epistle (letter) of Paul is the most complete explanation in the New Testament of the central truths of Christianity. This is the widest possible designation of the whole body of redemption truth. It relates to the world because there is “no favoritism” with Him who is “the God of Jews” and “of Gentiles too”. **Read as Paul presents the Good News – salvation is available to all, regardless of a person’s identity, sin, or heritage.**

1 CORINTHIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Christian Conduct

Date of writing: 56 A.D.

The Christians in Corinth were struggling with their environment. Surrounded by corruption and every conceivable sin, they felt pressured to adapt. They were free in Christ, but what did this freedom mean? The church was being undermined by immorality and spiritual immaturity. The believers’ faith was being tried in the crucible of immoral Corinth, and some of them were failing the test. Paul confronted them with their sin and their need for corrective action and clear commitment to Christ. **How true is this in our own environment? Are you listening as Paul confronts you with your sin and need for corrective action and commitment to Christ?**

2 CORINTHIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Paul’s Authority

Date of writing: 57 A.D.

In addition to the problems Paul had to deal with in his first letter to the church of Corinth, a wave of distrust in relation to Paul himself had now swept through the church. Some said he was not sincere; others questioned his apostolic authority. Paul defends his authority by placing before the church the overwhelming evidence of his sincerity in serving God. This Epistle is very personal and autobiographical. **Could you, as Paul does, place before the church evidence of your authenticity in serving God?**

GALATIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Salvation by Grace

Date of writing: 49 or 52 A.D.

Paul writes this letter to the churches in Galatia. The churches are torn by extremist Jewish faction within the church. This faction taught that Gentile Christians had to submit to Jewish laws and traditions in addition to believing in Christ. Paul refutes these factions and calls believers back to the pure Gospel. The Good News is for all people – Jews and Gentiles alike. Salvation is by God’s grace through faith in Christ Jesus and nothing else. **Can you, like Paul, defend the truth of the Gospel and reject all those who would add to or twist this truth?**

EPHESIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: The Church, Christ’s Body

Date of writing: 60 A.D.

Ephesians is a letter of encouragement. In it Paul describes the nature and appearance of the church, and he challenges believers to function as the living body of Christ on earth. **Read this excellent description of the church and be thankful to God for your brothers and sisters across the world that form the body of Christ.**

PHILIPPIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Christian Experience

Date of writing: 60 A.D.

This is a tender letter to a group of Christians who were especially close to Paul. The right Christian experience is the outworking, whatever our circumstances may be, of the life, nature, and mind of Christ living in us. Paul expresses beautifully his desire to know Christ above all else. This letter contains practical relationship advice second to none. **Read and share Paul's aspiration to know Christ more personally as well as those he has put close to you in your daily life.**

COLOSSIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Christ's Preeminence

Date of writing: 60 A.D.

Paul writes this letter to combat false teachings which had infiltrated the church. The problem was "syncretism", combining ideas from other philosophies and religions with Christian truths. The resulting heresy became known as "Gnosticism" and is the basis for much heretical teaching even today. Paul combats this devious error by stressing Christ's deity – His connection with the Father – and His sacrificial death on the cross for sin. **Read Colossians as a book for an embattled church in the first century, but also for its practical applications today.**

1 THESSALONIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Christ's Return

Date of writing: 51 A.D.

Paul's message in this letter is to challenge and comfort these young Christians of strong faith and good reputation. His challenge to them is to please God in their daily living by avoiding sexual immorality, loving each other, and living as good citizens in a sinful world. He comforts them by reminding them of the hope of the resurrection. Paul emphasizes that when Christ returns, those alive and those who have died will be raised to new life. **Read Paul's practical advice for Christian living.**

2 THESSALONIANS

Author: Paul

Theme: Day of the Lord

Date of writing: 51 A.D.

Some in Thessalonica had a misunderstanding of Paul's teaching about the second coming of the Lord. His announcement that Christ could come at any moment had caused some to stop work and just wait. Paul quickly responds with this letter. In it he gives further instruction concerning the second coming and the day of the Lord. **2000 years later we stand closer to the time of Christ return. Reading this Epistle lets us see clearly the reality of His return and our responsibility to live for Him until that day.**

1 TIMOTHY

Author: Paul

Theme: Church Order

Date of writing: 64 A.D.

Paul gives us warnings about heresy in doctrine and life. He instructs about prayer and the place of women in the church. The qualifications of elders and deacons are listed here. Paul discusses the walk and work of a good minister and provides healthy warnings. **Read Paul's handbook of church administration and discipline.**

2 TIMOTHY

Author: Paul

Theme: Perseverance

Date of writing: 67 A.D.

This Epistle contains the most detailed account from Paul of conditions that will prevail upon the earth during the last days. In it he reveals his heart and his priorities – sound doctrine, steadfast faith, confident endurance, and enduring love. **Read the last great words of one of the most knowledgeable, influential, and beloved men in the history of the church.**

TITUS

Author: Paul

Theme: Church Order

Date of writing: 65 A.D.

This Epistle lists the qualifications of elders; stresses sound doctrine; states the ethical obligation of elderly men and women, young men and women, and servants; and warns against false teachings. **Read and gain insight into the organization and life of the early church and how it applies to today's churches.**

PHILEMON

Author: Paul

Theme: Love Exemplified

Date of writing: 60 A.D.

This letter contains Paul's loving intercession on behalf of a slave named Onesimus. Onesimus had been unprofitable for his master, Philemon, and fled to Rome. Paul converted Onesimus and is now sending him back to his master with this letter. **This letter is of priceless value as instruction in practical righteousness, Christian brotherhood, Christian courtesy, and the law of love.**

HEBREWS

Author: Unknown

Theme: Priesthood of Christ

Date of writing: 68 A.D.

The purpose of this book was to confirm Jewish Christians by showing that Old Testament Judaism had come to an end through the fulfillment by Christ of the whole purpose of the law; to warn some against falling back into Judaism or pausing short of true faith in Christ; and to bring attention to all Christians the preeminence of Jesus Christ. The concept of an earthly, human priest is completely done away with in this book as it presents Christ as the only High Priest that anyone will ever need. **The message is that Jesus is better, Christianity is superior, and Christ is supreme and completely sufficient for salvation.**

JAMES

Author: James

Theme: Practical Christian Living

Date of writing: 45-50 A.D.

Welcome to one of the most practical books you'll ever read. The advice contained in this short letter will radically change your life for the good. The object of this book was to instruct about the nature of genuine salvation, to motivate them to follow the precepts of true religion, to warn them about false belief and immoral conduct, and encourage them to follow God's wisdom and morality. **This letter is the how-to book on Christian living.**

1 PETER

Author: Peter

Theme: Suffering and Glory

Date of writing: 65 A.D.

Peter is the apostle of hope. In his epistle he offers encouragement to the suffering Jewish Christians who were exiled and dispersed throughout the world. **As you read remember that trials will come to refine your faith. When they come, remain faithful to God.**

2 PETER

Author: Peter

Theme: Last Days

Date of writing: 66 A.D.

The trust of the Epistle is the eloquent and comprehensive denunciation of heresy in doctrine and life. But there are other important matters in the letter also; Peter's insistence upon the validation of the Christian's "calling and election" by the practice of Christian virtues; his personal recollection of the transfiguration of Christ; his teaching about inspired authenticity of prophecy and the coming of the Lord; and his exhortation to spiritual diligence and steadfastness. **Listen closely to Peter's warning to grow in your knowledge of Christ and to reject all those who preach anything inconsistent with God's word.**

1 JOHN

Author: John

Theme: Fellowship

Date of writing: 90-95 A.D.

John is the apostle of love. This epistle is written as a family letter from the Father to His "dear children" who are in the world. It was written to reassure Christians in their faith and to counter false teachings. **Read as John leads us across the threshold of the Father's house and makes us at home there.**

2 JOHN

Author: John

Theme: Christ's Commandment

Date of writing: 90-95 A.D.

Brief though it is, the Epistle is not insignificant. Its message centers on the "truth" in its relationship to Christian living. It emphasizes the basics of following Christ – truth and love - and to warn against false teachers. **2 John will take a few minutes to read, but its message will last a life time.**

3 JOHN

Author: John

Theme: Walking in Truth

Date of writing: 90-95 A.D.

This Epistle is a personal letter from John to his friend Gaius. It commends Gaius for his hospitality and encourages him in his Christian life. It characterizes Demetrius as a believer of lofty reputation based on living the truth. It rebukes Diotrefes, who has usurped the leadership in one of the churches, rejected John's authority, refused to welcome traveling ministers, and excommunicated those who did welcome them. **Reflect on Christ's values in your relationships, opening your homes and touching others with his love.**

JUDE

Author: Jude

Theme: Contending for the Faith

Date of writing: 68 A.D.

Jude is one of the most severe messages in the New Testament. Jude wants to remind the church of the need for constant vigilance - to keep strong in the faith and to oppose heresy. **Read Jude and determine to stand firm in your faith and defend God's truth at all cost.**

REVELATION

Author: John

Theme: Consummation

Date of writing: 95 A.D.

This book unfolds the great events bringing history to consummation, including the revelation of Jesus Christ at His second advent. The main purpose of the book is to provide a setting for the revelation of Jesus Christ. Principal attention is given to the tribulation. Revelation is written in "apocalyptic" form – a type of Jewish literature that uses symbolic imagery. **As you read and interpret Revelation, remember two passages of scripture: 1 Peter 1:12 and 2 Peter 1:20-21...*Much that is now obscure will become clear to those for whom it was written, as the time approaches.***