

## Introduction to the New Testament

### Texts:

**2 Timothy 2:15, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”**

**2 Timothy 3:15-17, “and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

### Commentary:

I. The last prophetic book of the Old Testament was written by Malachi circa 450 B.C. The events of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther occurred between 536 – 432 B.C. Zechariah and Haggai prophesied during the first part of this period while Malachi prophesied in the days of Nehemiah.

II. At the close of the Old Testament the Persian Empire was the major political power in the eastern Mediterranean world. The Assyrian and Babylonian Empires had declined. Persia was pre-eminent!

A. Persia proper was the mountainous plateau east of the southern end of the Tigris – Euphrates Valley.

B. Persian capitals were Persepolis and Susa, but Persian kings sometimes resided in Babylon.

C. Cyrus conquered Babylon in 536 B.C. making Persia a world empire.

D. Other Persian rulers were: Cambyses (Artaxerxes), Darius I (Hytaspes), Xerxes (Ahasuerus), Artaxerxes I (Longimanus), Xerxes II, Darius II, (Nathius), Artaxerxes II (Mnemon), Artaxerxes III (Ochus), Arses, Darius III (Codomanus).

E. Darius III (Codomanus) was defeated by Alexander the Great in 331 B.C. at the famous battle of Arbela near the site of Ninevah.

III. Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) was born the son of Philip II of Macedon and Olympias.

A. Alexander was king of Macedon by inheritance and became ruler of Southwest Asia, Egypt and the Persian Empire by conquest.

B. Alexander became king upon the murder of his father Philip II in 336 B.C.

C. Alexander died perhaps of malaria in Babylon on June 13, 323 B.C. at 33 years of age.

D. Upon Alexander's death the Greek Empire was divided among four of his generals.

E. Syria was then under the control of Seleucus. Egypt was under the control of Ptolemy.

F. Palestine at first was under the control of Syria, but passed to the control of Egypt in 301 B.C. and remained under Egyptian control until 198 B.C.

G. Antiochus the Great reconquered Palestine in 198 B.C. and control of Palestine returned to the political control of the kings of Syria called Seleucids.

H. Antiochus Epiphanes, 175-164 B.C., was violently opposed to the Jews and made a concerted effort to exterminate them and the Jewish religion.

I. Antiochus Epiphanes devastated Jerusalem in 168 B.C. He defiled the temple, offered a sow on its altar, erected an altar to Jupiter, prohibited temple worship, forbade circumcision on pain of death, and destroyed all copies of the Hebrew Scriptures which could be located.

J. The last Greek king in Egypt was Ptolemy VII, 146-117 B.C. The last Greek king in Syria was Antiochus VIII, 139-130 B.C.

IV. The Maccabean (Asmonean, Hasmonean) Period of Palestine Independence is dated 167-63- B.C.

A. Mattathias, a devout priest and Jewish patriot, led a revolt against the Seleucid King Antiochus Epiphanes.

B. Mattathias had five heroic, warlike sons; viz., Judas, Jonathan, Simon, John and Eleazar.

C. Upon the death of Mattathias in 106 B.C. Judas became the leader of the revolt. He won many battles against impossible odds.

D. Judas took possession of Jerusalem in 165 B.C. and purified and rededicated the temple. This was the origin of the Feast of Dedication, Hanukkah.

E. Judas united both the priesthood and civil authority in himself thus establishing the Asmonean priest-ruler office which, for the next 100 years, governed independent Judea.

F. The Maccabean rulers were: Mattathias, 167-166 B.C., Judas, 166-161 B.C., John Hyrcanus, 135-106 B.C., Aristobulus and sons, 160-63 B.C. Aristobulus and his sons were not of the character of Mattathias, Judas, and other Maccabean leaders.

V. The Roman Empire conquered Palestine in 63 B.C. ending the independent Maccabean rule.

A. The Roman conquering general was Pompey.

B. Antipates, an Idumean (Edomite, descendant of Esau), was appointed ruler of Judea.

C. Herod the Great, the son of Antipates, ruled as king of Judea, Idumea, Samaria, Galilee, Perea (east of southern Jordan River) and Gaulanitis (east of sea of Galilee) 37-4 B.C. To gain favor with the Jews, Herod refurbished the temple.

D. Herod was king when Jesus was born. He was a cruel man who killed the infants in Bethlehem. He orchestrated the deaths of certain members of his own family as well.

E. When Herod died in 4 B.C., Herod's kingdom was divided among his three sons.

F. The relative Roman peace held in Palestine until the death of Nero in A.D. 68 at which time the Jews rebelled and were destroyed along with their temple.

G. Archelaus became ruler of Idumea (Land of Edom, South of Judea), Judea and Samaria. He was called by Roman designation "ethnarch," leader of a nation. He was in office 4 B.C. – A.D. 6.

- H. *Antipas* became ruler of Galilee and Perea. He was designated “tetrarch,” leader of a fourth, here meaning leader of a territory. He ruled 4 B.C. – 39 A.D. and was responsible for the death of John the Baptist.
- I. Philip became ruler of Gaulanitis, (east of sea of Galilee), Batanea, Trachonitis (east of waters of Miriam) and Auranitis. Philip was designated “tetrarch” as well. He ruled 4 B.C. to 34 A.D.
- J. Agrippa I (son of Aristobus, a grandson of Herod the Great) ruled from 34 A.D. until his death in 44 A.D. His territory grew with the passing of time. In A.D. 34 he became ruler of Philip’s territory, of Antipas’ territory in A.D. 40, and finally, the territories of Samaria, Judea, and Idumea in A.D. 41. From A.D. 41-46 Agrippa I governed essentially the same territory over which his grandfather, Herod the Great, had ruled. Agrippa sought to please the Jews, persecuted Christians, and executed the apostle James.
- K. Acts 12:1-3, It was about this time that King Herod (Agrippa) arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- L. Acts 12:20-23, He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. Having secured the support of Blastus, a trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king’s country for their food supply. On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. They shouted, “This is the voice of a god, not of a man.” Immediately,

- because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.
- M. At the death of Agrippa I, his territory was placed under direct Roman rule until A.D. 53 when Agrippa II, the son of Agrippa I, became king. Agrippa II was the last Herod to rule Palestine.
- N. Paul was tried before Agrippa II. Acts 26.
- O. Roman procurators were fully responsible for military, judicial and fiscal matters. They resided in Caesarea, but frequently visited Jerusalem.
- P. False Christs arose among whom was Theudas who gathered followers and attempted to re-establish a Jewish kingdom on earth.
- Q. Three of the best known procurators were Pontius Pilate before whom Jesus was tried, Festus before whom Paul was tried (Acts 25, 26), and Felix before whom Paul was also tried (Acts 24:26).
- R. The Jews rebelled against Rome. Rome under Emperor Nero and General Vespasian subdued Galilee in A.D. 67. General Titus, son of Vespasian, took charge of the Roman Army and completed the subjugation of Palestine.
- S. Upon the death of Nero, Vespasian returned to Rome and became Roman Emperor after three aspirants to the Emperorship had been assassinated in rapid succession.
- T. Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus' army in A.D. 70. Masada fell in 73-74 A.D. The Great Jewish-Roman War of A.D. 66-74 was over! Rome was the absolute victor. Jerusalem was again a leveled ruin.

U. The Jews mustered another unsuccessful rebellion 115-117 A.D. during Emperor Trajan's reign. This rebellion centered on Jewish communities in Egypt, Cyrene, Cyprus, Mesopotamia and possibly in Palestine. This rebellion was quelled within a few months concluding during the emperorship of Hadrian.

V. The Jews rebelled again in the Bar Kosiba War of A.D. 132-135. The Romans destroyed almost 1000 villages in Judea and killed 6,000,000 people. The Jewish nation was no more! The Jews were dispersed through the Mediterranean world.

W. Roman Emperors from just before the birth of Jesus to just after the death of John the Apostle: Augustus 31 B.C. to 14 A.D., Tiberius, A.D. 14-37, Caligula, A.D. 37-41, Claudius, A.D. 41-54, Nero, A.D. 54-68, Galba, A.D. 68, 69, Otho, A.D. 69, Vitellius, A.D. 69, Vespasian, A.D. 69-79, Titus, A.D. 79-81, Domitian, A.D. 81-96, Nerva A.D. 96-98, Trajan, A.D. 98-117, Hadrian, A.D. 117-138.

VI. The New Testament contains 27 books. While, after approximately 2,000 years, some facts may have become obscure, the following information is traditionally accepted. Many opinions exist in these matters!

### **Biblical Order**

A. Matthew, an account of the life of Christ, was written to convince Jewish readers that Jesus is the Messiah. This Gospel was written by the Apostle Matthew, the tax collector, in Hebrew, Aramaic. The Gospel of Matthew was written between A.D. 50-55.

B. Mark, an account of the life of Christ, was written by John Mark. The book was likely written in Rome in A.D. 66.

C. Luke, an account of the life of Christ, was written in Greek by the Gentile physician and associate of the Apostle Paul, Luke, circa A. D. 62.

**Note:** Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the synoptic gospels. These writings are called synoptic from the Greek meaning “seen together.”

D. John, an account of the life of Christ, was written by the Apostle John, a son of Zebedee, near the end of the first century between 90 – 100 A.D.

E. Acts, an account of the spread of Christianity, was written by Luke, physician and associate of the Apostle Paul, A.D. 62-64, during Paul’s first Roman imprisonment.

F. Romans is an epistle written by the Apostle Paul to the church at Rome from Corinth in the spring of A.D. 56 or 57 while Paul was on his third missionary journey.

G. First Corinthians was written to the church in Corinth by Paul from Ephesus during Paul’s third missionary journey in A.D. 53 or 54.

H. Second Corinthians was written by Paul some 12 or 15 months after the writing of First Corinthians. Second Corinthians was written from Macedonia in A.D. 54 or 55.

I. Galatians was written to the churches of Galatia by Paul the Apostle in A.D. 48.

J. Ephesians was written to the church in Ephesus by the Apostle Paul in the late 50s or early 60s A.D. from Rome. Some believe

- Paul wrote this book as a general epistle to Ephesus and other groups of Christians in areas surrounding Ephesus.
- K. Philippians was written by the Apostle Paul to the church in Philippi from Rome circa A.D. 60.
- L. Colossians was written by Paul to the church in Colosse from Rome in the late A.D. 50 or early 60s.
- M. First Thessalonians was written by the Apostle Paul to the church in Thessalonica from Corinth in late A.D. 50 or early A.D. 51.
- N. Second Thessalonians was written by the Apostle Paul to the church in Thessalonica from Corinth in late A.D. 50 or early A.D. 51.
- O. First Timothy, a pastoral epistle, was written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy after Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome circa 64 or 65 A.D. The book was probably written from Macedonia.
- P. Second Timothy, a pastoral epistle, was written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy from Rome in A.D. 67 after Paul had again been arrested.
- Q. Titus, another of the pastoral epistles, was written by Paul after his release from his first Roman imprisonment circa 65 or 66 A.D.
- R. Philemon was written by the Apostle Paul from Rome during his imprisonment there on behalf of Onesimus in the late 50s or early 60s A.D. Onesimus was a runaway slave whom Paul had converted.

- S. Hebrews was addressed to Jewish Christians. While the author is not definitely known, Paul appears to be the most likely author. Apollos and Barnabas are also thought to be the possible authors. The exact date and place of writing are unknown. Hebrews was probably written prior to A.D. 70.
- T. James was written by James the brother of Jesus before A.D. 62.
- U. First Peter was written by the Apostle Peter probably from Rome circa 64, 65 A.D.
- V. Second Peter was written by the Apostle Peter circa A.D. 65 shortly before his martyrdom during the reign of the Roman Emperor Nero.
- W. First John was written by the Apostle John from Ephesus toward the close of the first century.
- X. Second John was written toward the end of the first century by the Apostle John from Ephesus.
- Y. Third John was written toward the end of the first century by the Apostle John from Ephesus.
- Z. Jude was probably written by Jude, the brother of James and the brother of Jesus Christ in circa A. D. 66. Mark 6:3, "Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us? And they took offense at him.
- AA. Revelation was written by the Apostle John from the Isle of Patmos which is located off the west coast of Asia Minor (Turkey). The book was written during the latter years of the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian. (A.D. 81-96).

VII. Approximate order in which the books of the New Testament were written:

<b>New Testament Books</b>	<b>Approximate Date When Written</b>
Galatians	A.D. 48
1 Thessalonians	late A.D. 50 or early 51
2 Thessalonians	late A.D. 50 or early 51
Matthew	between A.D. 50 – 55
1 Corinthians	A.D. 53 or 54
Romans	A.D. 56 or 57
2 Corinthians	A.D. 54 or 55
Ephesians	late A.D. 50s or early A.D. 60s
Colossians	late A.D. 50s or early A.D. 60s
Philemon	late A.D. 50s or early A.D. 60s
Philippians	A.D. 60
Luke	A.D. 62, (perhaps between A.D. 58-60)
James	A.D. 62
Acts	A.D. 62 – 64
1 Timothy	A.D. 64 or 65
Titus	A.D. 65 or 66
Mark	A.D. 66 (some date Mark 45 A.D.)
Jude	A.D. 66
2 Timothy	A.D. 67
1 Peter	A.D. 64 or 65
2 Peter	A.D. 65
Hebrews	before A.D. 70
1 John	toward the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> century
2 John	toward the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> century
3 John	toward the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> century
Revelation	toward the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> century
John	toward the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> century between 90-100 A.D.

## VIII. Biblical Canon:

### **The Books of the Old Testament:**

Genesis	Song of Solomon
Exodus	Isaiah
Leviticus	Jeremiah
Numbers	Lamentations
Deuteronomy	Ezekiel
Joshua	Daniel
Judges	Hosea
Ruth	Joel
Samuel	Amos
2 Samuel	Obadiah
1 Kings	Jonah
2 Kings	Micah
2 Chronicles	Nahum
2 Chronicles	Habakkuk
Ezra	Zephaniah
Nehemiah	Haggai
Esther	Zechariah
Job	Malachi
Psalms	
Proverbs	
Ecclesiastes	

### **The Books of the New Testament**

Matthew	1 Timothy
Mark	2 Timothy
Luke	Titus
John	Philemon
Acts	Hebrews
Romans	James
1 Corinthians	1 Peter

2 Corinthians	2 Peter
Galatians	1 John
Ephesians	2 John
Philippians	3 John
Colossians	Jude
1 Thessalonians	Revelation
2 Thessalonians	

IX. Greek and Roman deities, the Pantheon, Belief systems faced by early Apostles and evangelists.

<b>Greek</b>	<b>Roman</b>
Zeus	Jupiter
Hera	Juno
Poseidon	Neptune
Athena	Minerva
Aphrodite	Venus
Ares	Mars
Apollo	Apollo
Artemis	Diana
Hermes	Mercury
Hestia	Vesta
Demeter	Ceres
Hephaestus	Vulcan

## X. Jewish Months/Calendar

<u>Luna Calendar</u>	<u>Solar Calendar</u>
1. Nisan (Abib)	March-April
2. Iyyar	April-May
3. Sivan	May-June

4. Tammuz	June-July
5. Ab	July-August
6. Elul	August-September
7. Tishri	September-October
8. Marcheshvan	October-November
9. Chislev	November-December
10. Tebeth	December-January
11. Shebat	January-February
12. Adar	February-March

## XI. Glossary

Apocalyptic – (literally: “revelation”) a term used to describe a type of literature which claims to be revelations of hidden knowledge written by an inspired seer, an uncovering.

Apocrypha – (literally: “hidden”) a term used by Protestants to denote those books appearing in the Roman Catholic Old Testament which they do not accept as canonical.

Canon – (literally: “a measuring stick”) a closed body of writings considered to be inspired and authoritative.

Diaspora – (literally: “dispersion”) the dispersion of Jews from Palestine into the Greco-Roman world.

Eschatology – (literally: “study of the end”) the study of the end-time, for Christians, the second coming.

Hasmonean – the family of Hasmon, the best known figures of which are Mattathias and Judas Maccabeus.

Hanukkah – (literally: “dedication”) the Feast of Dedication began when Judas Maccabeus recaptured and cleansed the temple.

Pseudopigrapha – (literally: “false writings”) those ancient Jewish texts, often with Christian interpolations, not accepted today in any canon.

Septuagint – (literally: “seventy”) the Greek translation of the Old Testament supposedly done by seventy translators.

Talmud – (literally: “learning”) the Jewish oral law in its final form, including both Mishnah and Gemara. Completed by A.D. 500.

Targum – (literally: “translation”) translation of the Old Testament into Aramaic, originally done orally, later written down.

Torah (literally: “instruction”) The Old Testament Law; also (for Pharisees) the oral law.

Vulgate – (literally: “common”) Jerome’s Latin translation of both the Old and New Testaments.

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## Introduction

### Questions

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ are able to make us wise unto \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The last book of the Old Testament was written by \_\_\_\_\_ about \_\_\_\_\_ B.C.
3. At the close of the Old Testament period the \_\_\_\_\_ was the major political power in the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Darius III was defeated by \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ B.C. at the battle of \_\_\_\_\_ near the site of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Following the death of Alexander the Great, the Grecian Empire was divided among \_\_\_\_\_ of his generals.
6. Syria was under the control of \_\_\_\_\_ while Egypt was under the control of \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Antiochus Epiphanes devastated \_\_\_\_\_ in 168 B.C.
8. Judas Maccabeus took control of Jerusalem in 165 B.C. and purified the temple. This was the origin of the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The Roman Empire conquered \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ B.C. under general \_\_\_\_\_.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ was king when \_\_\_\_\_ was born.

11. When Herod the Great died his kingdom was divided among his three sons, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

12. Three of the best known Roman procurators to rule Palestine were \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

13. Jerusalem was destroyed in \_\_\_\_\_ A.D. under the Roman general \_\_\_\_\_.

14. The books of the New Testament **in order** are:

_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____

15. The synoptic gospels are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

16. Paul wrote \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ of the New Testament books, John wrote \_\_\_\_\_, Peter wrote \_\_\_\_\_ and Luke wrote \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus wrote \_\_\_\_\_ books of the New Testament.

17. The first book of the New Testament to be written was probably \_\_\_\_\_ and the last to be written was \_\_\_\_\_.

18. There are \_\_\_\_\_ books in the Old Testament. There are \_\_\_\_\_ books in the entire Bible.

19. Our calendar is \_\_\_\_\_. The Jewish calendar was \_\_\_\_\_. This is the reason Jewish holy days do not occur on the same date each year by our calendar.

20. Another name for Hanukkah is the \_\_\_\_\_.

**Finished exam can be mailed or dropped off at:  
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