

A stylized globe composed of thin, light gray lines forming a grid of latitude and longitude. The globe is centered behind the text.

Unit

UNIT ONE: Jesus' Life and Ministry

Lessons

- 1 The New Testament and Its World**
- 2 Jesus and the Gospels**
- 3 Matthew and Mark**
- 4 Luke and John**

1 The New Testament and Its World

The world into which Jesus Christ came had been shaped by three important influences: the power of the Romans, the culture of the Greeks, and the religion of the Jews. In this lesson, you will see how God used each of these to do the groundbreaking work for the time when His Son would begin His earthly ministry. As Galatians 4:4 says, God sent His Son to us “when the time had fully come.”

This lesson will also give you an overview of the New Testament. Through human writers, God formed it and made it into harmonious unity. Its 27 books include several different kinds of writing. They were written at various times and under varying circumstances. Some were written to deal with certain problems; others were written to tell about specific events. But in all of them there is one important message: God has made a new agreement or *testament* with humanity through Jesus Christ.

The facts you learn in this lesson will help you see how God’s hand was behind the events of history. They will also help you gain a deeper understanding of the wonderful New Testament God has given us.

Lesson Outline

- A. The World of the New Testament
- B. The Books of the New Testament
- C. The New Testament and Its World

Lesson Objectives

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to:

1. Name ways in which Roman power made possible the rapid spread of the gospel.
2. Identify the most important way in which Greek culture prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.
3. Identify developments in intertestamental Judaism that prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.
4. Describe the major features of Judaism in New Testament times.
5. Describe the general religious condition that existed at the time Christ came.
6. Identify examples of the four kinds of content found in the books of the New Testament.
7. Arrange the New Testament books by their type and historical period.

Learning Activities

1. Read the introduction to this course and study the lesson outline and objectives. These will help you identify things you should try to learn as you study the lesson.
2. Work through the lesson and do all of the exercises. Check your answers with those given at the end of the lesson. Learn the meanings of any key words you do not know. Their definitions are given in the glossary at the end of this textbook.

3. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers carefully. Review any items you did not answer correctly.

Key Words

Understanding the key words we have listed at the beginning of each lesson will help you as you study. You will find key words listed in alphabetical order and defined in the glossary at the back of this independent-study textbook. If you are in doubt about the meaning of any of the words on the list, you may look them up now or when you come across them in your reading. Please take time to learn the definitions of any new words, since they are important to a complete understanding of this course.

AD	Judaism	proselyte
apocalyptic	Messiah	Sabbath
BC	pagan	Sadducees
chronology	Palestine	Sanhedrin
circumcision	Passover	scribes
diaspora	Pentecost	Septuagint
Hellenist	Pharisees	synagogue
intertestamental period	philosophy	

A. THE WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Several different forces had a part in shaping the world of the New Testament. For instance, though the Romans ruled Palestine when the New Testament was written, the language of the New Testament itself was Greek. Jesus, whose story is told in the New Testament, was a Jew, the Messiah whose coming the Old Testament Scriptures foretold. Furthermore, in the pages of the New Testament are people who followed many kinds of pagan religions and mystery cults. What were the forces that shaped the New Testament world?

Roman Power

Objective 1. *Name ways in which Roman power made possible the rapid spread of the gospel.*

According to Luke 2:1, “Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.” *Caesar* was the title given to the Roman emperors. In some places in the New Testament, the Roman emperor is also referred to as “king” (1 Peter 2:17 for example). At the time the New Testament was written, the Roman Empire extended from the western end of the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River in the near East. All of this great territory was under the rule of the emperor. The Romans divided their empire into provinces—areas with military bases. Several of these provinces are mentioned by name in the New Testament, such as Macedonia, Achaia, Syria, Asia, Galatia, and Pamphylia.

Roman power and political strength brought about political unity, militarily controlled peace, and freedom of trade and travel. The various nations that Rome conquered were brought under one rule. The Roman peace was enforced, and wars between these nations ceased. Roman citizens were given special protection. They could go anywhere in the empire without fear of being wrongly arrested or harmed. The apostle Paul, for example, who was greatly used by God in spreading the message of Christ to new areas, depended at times on the special protection he enjoyed as a Roman citizen (see Acts 16:38, 22:29).

The Romans excelled in building good roads and strong bridges. These roads were kept free of robbers. The roads connected the capital city of Rome to every part of the empire; it was said that “all roads lead to Rome.” The seas were cleared of pirates. As never before, there was safety, freedom, and ease of travel and communication.

Application

- 1 After Christ finished His ministry on earth, the gospel spread throughout the world in a short time. One reason this happened is that the Romans built roads that connected Rome to
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Greek Culture

Objective 2. *Identify the most important way in which Greek culture prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.*

Though the Romans were the political rulers of the world, Greek language and thought dominated its culture. *One language and one world!* Such was the motto and ambition of Alexander the Great. When he made his conquests, he took steps to unify all the nations under his control. The Greek language was taught everywhere in his empire. Greek culture was introduced as the pattern for thought and life, and it made a deep impact on the people of the New Testament world. (Greek culture is also called *Hellenistic* culture. This term comes from the word *Hellas*, the original name for the land of Greece. People who were Greek in culture were called *Hellenists*, though they may not have been Greek by birth.)


While Alexander’s political empire was short-lived, its cultural impact was great and long-lasting. For many centuries the whole Mediterranean world had the marks of Hellenistic influence. Greek customs and manners were widespread. Many cities copied the Greek style of architecture. The Greek spirit of inquiry into questions about the origin and meaning of the

universe, God and humanity, and right and wrong were also adopted by the nations that were influenced by Greek culture. Greek became the language of the rulers and the common tongue of the slaves. Letters, poetry, and business communications were all written in Greek. In the New Testament, the term *Greek* was used to refer not only to the people of Greece but also to people who spoke Greek and were of other non-Jewish nations. Greek was used everywhere.

When the Romans came to power, they found in the Greek language an ideal way to communicate with their captured territories. Young Romans were sent to be educated in Greek universities such as those in Athens, Rhodes, and Tarsus. Eventually, Greek was widely spoken in Rome itself.

Application

- 2** Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
- a)** A person had to be born in Greece to be called a *Hellenist*.
 - b)** When the Greek Empire fell apart it lost all its influence.
 - c)** The Romans used the Greek language in dealing with their territories.
 - d)** People of non-Jewish nations are sometimes referred to as *Greeks* in the New Testament, even if they were not Greek in origin.



The Greek language was indeed a matchless vehicle for expressing the Christian message. Because the language was so widely used, the apostles could preach in Greek without needing to use interpreters. The widespread use of the language also explains why all of the New Testament books, written mostly by Jews, were first written in Greek. When Christ came with God's message for the whole world, there was a world-wide language in which it could be communicated.

Application

- 3** The most important way in which Greek culture helped prepare the world to hear the message of Christ was through the Greek
- a)** customs, manners, and styles of architecture, which were adopted in many places.
 - b)** language, which was used throughout the Roman Empire.
 - c)** spirit of inquiry, which sought to understand the meaning of the universe.
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Jewish Religion

We have learned how God used Roman power and Greek culture to prepare the world to hear the message of Christ. God also used the Jewish people and religion for this same purpose. He revealed himself to the Jews and gave them prophecies about the Messiah who would come. These revelations and prophecies were written down and gathered together in the Old Testament. Old Testament teachings spread into many parts of the world as a result of the developments in Jewish life and religion that occurred during the exile and the intertestamental period. You will study these developments in the next section.

Application

4 (Complete the following sentences by writing in the correct names, words, or dates.) After the Jews had been exiled for 70 years, the allowed them to return to Jerusalem. Their empire was later defeated by who died in BC. Then a series of other foreign powers ruled Palestine. The Jews revolted against them in BC. They regained control of Jerusalem and were independent until BC, when Pompey defeated them. Then in 37 BC was appointed ruler of the Jews by



INTERTESTAMENTAL JUDAISM

Objective 3. *Identify developments in intertestamental Judaism that prepared the world to hear the message of Christ.*

Three main developments took place in Judaism during the exile and the intertestamental years. These were the rise of the synagogue form of worship, the conversion of many non-Jews to Judaism, and the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek.

1. *The Synagogue.*

When the Jews went into exile, they took with them the Old Testament Scriptures. These writings formed the basis for their religious practice. During captivity, they could not worship in the temple or offer animal sacrifices. However, their worship of the one true God continued.

They gathered in groups called *synagogues* to discuss and be instructed in the Scriptures. Ten or more male members could

form a synagogue, and there could be more than one synagogue in a city. Synagogue worship included readings from the Law and the Prophets. The prophets had written about the coming of a Messiah who could deliver God's people. As the Jews studied these writings, they began to look for this One who would rescue them from captivity.

2. *The conversion of non-Jews to Judaism.*

During their years of exile in Babylon, the Jews were used by God to make Him known to the Babylonians. The book of Daniel in the Old Testament, for example, records how king Nebuchadnezzar witnessed the power of God in Daniel and his three friends, Jewish youths whom he had captured and brought to Babylon. He was forced to admit that the God of Daniel was “the God of gods and the Lord of kings” (Daniel 2:47). The Jews were given freedom to worship and teach about their God. Though a group of them did return to Jerusalem when they were allowed to, many remained in Babylon and later settled in other places throughout the empire. With them, they carried their beliefs about God and the promise of a coming deliverer. No wonder we read in Matthew 2:1–2 that the Wise Men, led by the star, came from the east to Jerusalem seeking to worship the newborn King of the Jews!

Application

5 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.

- a)** Synagogue worship began during the time the Jews were in Babylon.
- b)** After the exile, the Jews no longer taught the Law.
- c)** Synagogue worship included the study of the Law and the Prophets.

The Jews who did not remain in Babylon or return to Palestine found their way to places such as Egypt, Greece, Macedonia, Rome, and the major cities of Asia Minor. (This scattering of the Jews is referred to as the *diaspora* or *dispersion*, as you learned in the course introduction.) Eventually, there were

settlements of Jews in every nation in the entire area. In fact there were more Jews living outside Palestine than in it.

As a result of the dispersion, the teachings about the one true God and the coming Messiah became widely known. A considerable number of non-Jews in Palestine and elsewhere joined themselves to the Jewish religion, recognizing its superiority to pagan beliefs. These people were called *proselytes* and *God-fearers*. Proselytes submitted to all the requirements of the Law, including circumcision. They were treated as full members of the Jewish community. God-fearers, in contrast, accepted the Jewish teachings but did not take on themselves an obligation to fulfill the Law. They did not have full membership.

3. *The Septuagint.*

Wherever the Jews went, they took their Scriptures and taught them in the synagogues they formed. During this intertestamental time, the Old Testament Scriptures were translated into Greek. This translation was produced in the city of Alexandria in Egypt. It was called the Septuagint, a word meaning “seventy” because, according to tradition, the work of translation was done by seventy-two scholars. This translation helped spread the Old Testament teachings throughout the Greek-speaking world before the birth of Christ. It was used by the Jews, their converts, the writers of the New Testament, and the first preachers of the gospel.

Application

- 6** In your notebook, write a short definition for each of the following.
- a)** Diaspora
 - b)** Proselyte
 - c)** God-fearer
 - d)** Septuagint
 - e)** Synagogue

7 During the intertestamental period, many non-Jews heard about the Messiah who was to come because of the
 of the Jews into
 many nations and the translation of the Old Testament into
 the language.



NEW TESTAMENT JUDAISM

Objective 4. *Describe the major features of Judaism in New Testament times.*

We have learned how the intertestamental developments in Judaism prepared the world for the preaching of the gospel. Now let us consider some specific aspects of the Jewish religion itself as it existed in New Testament times. These are referred to often in the New Testament.

The groups. There were two main parties or factions within Judaism: the *Pharisees* and the *Sadducees*. The Pharisees considered themselves to be the true Israel. The name *Pharisee* means “separated.” They followed strictly the written Law and the traditions of the elders, and they accepted the prophetic writings. In following the Law, they were assisted by the *scribes*, who interpreted it and helped them apply it to the changing conditions of everyday life. They believed in the existence of angels and spirits and in the resurrection of the dead. They practiced ritual prayer and fasting and gave tithes of their possessions. They would not work nor allow anyone else to work on the Sabbath. The people, over whom they had considerable influence, respected them as holy men. Zealous for Judaism, they won many non-Jews to their beliefs. Before his conversion to Christ, Paul the apostle was a Pharisee. Both the scribes and the Pharisees were active in the synagogues.

The *Sadducees* accepted only the Law as authoritative. They rejected the traditions of the elders and did not believe in angels, spirits, or the resurrection of the dead. They were more open to

Hellenistic influences and were interested in the priesthood, the temple, and political power. Almost all of them were priests.

Though the Romans were able administrators, many Jews in Palestine greatly resented their rule. They hated paying taxes to the Roman government. Yet Roman rule was a fact of life. As a result, there was a constant undercurrent of Jewish rebellion and unrest. As these political tensions increased, many Jewish leaders gave more and more of their attention to dealing with them.

The ruling council. Under overall Roman rule, however, the Jews were given a degree of authority to govern themselves in political and religious matters. This authority rested in a council of seventy members called the *Sanhedrin*. The high priest was the head of this council, and the members were drawn mostly from the priesthood and the wealthy families. The Sanhedrin included a few Pharisees, who were popular with the people, but the Sadducees were the dominant group.

Application

8 Match each sentence (left) to the group it describes (right).

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| ... a) Accepted only the Law as authoritative | 1) Pharisees |
| ... b) Were the dominant group in the Sanhedrin | 2) Sadducees |
| ... c) Believed in the resurrection of the dead | |
| ... d) Their name means “separated” | |
| ... e) Did not believe in angels or spirits | |
-


The temple. There was a magnificent temple in Jerusalem during the time of Jesus’ ministry. It was called “Herod’s temple” after Herod the Great, the ruler who built it. Both Solomon’s temple and the “second temple” had once stood on the place where it was erected. Solomon’s temple, though, had been destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. The “second temple” was the one rebuilt by the exiles who returned to

Jerusalem before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. This was the temple desecrated by Antiochus IV and then cleansed by Judas Maccabeas, as you will remember from the course introduction. Later, it apparently suffered destruction and was rebuilt by Herod around 20 BC.

Herod's temple was similar to the previous ones. It had several gates, an inner wall beyond which non-Jews could not go, and a heavy veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The ceremonies of the temple were carried out by a company of priests headed by a high priest. Each year every male Israelite had to pay a temple tax (an amount equal to two days' wages) for the building's upkeep and the priests' salaries.

Application

- 9 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.
- a) Solomon's temple and Herod's temple were similar.
 - b) The priests and the high priests who served in the temple were paid from money collected through a temple tax.
 - c) Most members of the Sanhedrin were drawn from the common people.
 - d) The temple in Jerusalem during Jesus' ministry was the one rebuilt by the exiles who returned there from Babylon.



The feasts. Though the Jews of the diaspora were widely scattered, they still considered Jerusalem to be their capital. Each year thousands of them, including many proselytes and God-fearers, went there as pilgrims to attend the great religious festivals. There they joined the Jews who lived in Palestine to celebrate the feasts that marked important events in their history. Two of the seven feasts held each year were particularly important in New Testament times. These were the *Passover* and *Pentecost*.

The Passover was the most important feast. It marked the anniversary of the deliverance of the Jews from the Egyptians and their beginnings as an independent nation. Exodus 11–12 tells how God brought about a final plague (punishment) upon

the Egyptians so they would allow the Israelites to leave Egypt and go to the land God had promised to them. By following the instructions God gave them, the Israelites were spared from the plague in which all the firstborn sons and animals of the Egyptians were killed in one night.

Application

10 Read Exodus 12. Then answer the following questions in your notebook.

- a)** What were the Israelites to do (v. 7)?
 - b)** What did God say He would do (v. 13)?
 - c)** What was the result (vv. 29, 31)?
-



The Israelites were commanded to observe the Passover Feast each year “as a lasting ordinance” for them and their descendants (Exodus 12:24). All Jewish males living in or near Jerusalem were required to attend the Passover Feast unless they were physically unable to do so. Many Jews of the diaspora, as well as proselytes and God-fearers, also came to Jerusalem for the event. The women also participated. Jerusalem teemed with the huge crowd that gathered for the celebration.

Pentecost was also an important festival in New Testament times. During the intertestamental period, this feast came to be celebrated as the anniversary of the giving of the Law to Moses (Exodus 19). In the Jewish community, the Law and its observance were a powerful, unifying force. The Jews considered the Law to be God’s greatest gift to them (see Psalms 1, 19, and 119). The festival was named Pentecost, a word meaning “50 days,” because it was held 50 days after the Passover.

Application

11 Match each phrase (left) to the feast or feasts it describes (right).

- | | | |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ... a) | Feast commanded in Exodus 12:24 | 1) Passover |
| ... b) | Attended by Jews, proselytes, and God-fearers | 2) Pentecost |
| ... c) | Name means “50 days” | 3) Both Passover and Pentecost |
| ... d) | Held to commemorate the giving of the Law | |
| ... e) | Reminder of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt | |

Other Religions

Objective 5. *Describe the general religious condition that existed at the time Christ came.*

God had revealed himself to the Jewish people. As a result of the diaspora, many non-Jews had been converted to Judaism and Judaism was widespread. However, it appears that by New Testament times, Judaism was becoming dominated by an increasingly narrow, racial spirit. For evidence of this, one has only to search the New Testament and observe the attitudes shown by the Jewish leaders described there. It seems that their own politics and affairs had begun to absorb most of their attention.

While the Jews were occupied with their concerns, other religions also claimed the people’s allegiance. Many people followed religions from the east, Egypt, and Asia Minor. Others became involved in the Greek mystery religions, which emphasized the ideas of resurrection and purification. Still others followed cults dedicated to deities and spirits associated with certain places and occupations. There was also the Roman state religion, in which statues of Roman emperors were worshipped as symbols of Roman power.

These factors show that there was a general interest in religion and a search for meaningful answers. People began to wonder if perhaps there was only one universal god. Many wanted to find cleansing from guilt, and there was a great desire to know what happened to people after death. The philosophies of the time had not provided acceptable answers, and people were unsatisfied with the conclusions reached by reason. Many lived lives of hopelessness, spiritual emptiness, corruption, and immorality. What a time for Jesus Christ to come—who would illuminate people’s darkened hearts and minds with the full radiance of God’s glory!

Application

- 12** Circle the letter in front of the sentence that describes the general religious condition at the time Christ came.
- a)** The great majority of people gave allegiance to the Roman state religion because Rome was the dominating political force.
 - b)** Most people followed Judaism, which was well on its way to becoming a worldwide religion.
 - c)** There was a great variety of religions, and people were seeking in different ways to find satisfying answers.
 - d)** The philosophies of the day provided almost everyone with acceptable conclusions regarding God and the meaning of life.



B. THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

We have become acquainted with the world of the New Testament—its religions, culture, and politics. Now let us turn our attention to the New Testament itself, the account of the great miracle of God becoming man to bring humanity back to God. It is the *New Testament*, for it announces the new agreement God made with humanity through Christ. While the Old Testament revealed God’s righteousness through the Law, the New revealed it through the grace and truth of Jesus Christ. We will examine

the kinds of content, the authors, and the chronology of the 27 books that make up the New Testament.

The Content of the Books

Objective 6. *Identify examples of the four kinds of content found in the books of the New Testament.*

There are four basic kinds of content in the New Testament: historical, doctrinal, personal, and prophetic. Each of these has certain features. In regard to content, the New Testament books are classified according to the main kind each contains. The Gospel of Matthew, for example, has some prophetic sections. However, most of its content is historical, so it is included among the historical writings.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

The historical books include the four accounts of the life of Christ (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and the account of the beginning of the church (Acts). They are called historical books because their primary purpose is to record events and give facts. They include the names of many people and places. Often, they report words that were said on certain occasions. Many times, they give detailed descriptions of the circumstances and the results of specific actions.

In general, historical writings give information that answers questions such as *What happened? Where did it happen? When did it happen? Who did it? What was said? What was the result?* But the New Testament historical books give much more than the answers to such questions. The Son of God himself is revealed to us through the record of the things He said and did.

Application

13 Read Luke 4:31–37. Then in your notebook, write an answer to each of the following questions. Beside each answer, write the number of the verse where the information is given.

- a)** What did Jesus do?
- b)** Where and when did He do it?
- c)** What did the people say about Jesus as a result?
- d)** Who else heard about the thing that happened?



THE DOCTRINAL BOOKS

Most of the doctrinal books were letters written to certain groups of believers. They often dealt with specific problems that some of these groups were having as they tried to follow the Christian way of life. In writing to these believers, the authors of these books explained great truths about Jesus Christ and His work for them that they needed to understand. The authors also described the relationship believers have with Christ and how they should live as a result of it. The powerful messages God inspired them to write were not only for those first believers, but for “all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:2).

The doctrinal books include the following: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, and 1 John.

Application

14 Read each Scripture from one of the doctrinal books (left). Match each one to the phrase that describes the kind of information or message it gives (right).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| a) Galatians 1:1–2 | 1) A reference to a problem the believers had |
| b) Galatians 1:6 | 2) The name of the writer or receiver of the letter |
| c) Ephesians 1:11 | 3) Some instructions on Christian living |
| d) Colossians 3:13 | 4) A statement of a truth about Christ |
| e) Hebrews 1:3 | |
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THE PERSONAL BOOKS

In addition to the doctrinal and historical books, there are others that could be described as *personal*. These books were letters written to individual believers rather than groups. They are the Epistles of 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and 2 and 3 John. Since they were written to leaders in the church, however, they became important to the whole Christian community. They contain guidelines for choosing church leaders, instructions for the management of church matters, personal advice for those to whom they were written, and other requests and comments.

Application

15 Read the following sections of 1 Timothy. Which one contains guidelines for choosing church leaders?

- a)** 2:1–7
 - b)** 3:8–10
 - c)** 4:11–16
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THE PROPHETIC BOOK

In general, the prophetic books of the Bible are those in which God has spoken concerning both present and future events. Thus, prophetic writings have two main purposes: 1) to give people a message about their present situation and how they should respond to it, and 2) to reveal future events and God's plan for the world. Though almost all the books of the New Testament contain some prophecy, the book of Revelation is given completely to it.

Revelation had a message for the seven churches of Asia to whom it was written. It also describes the final destiny of the people of God, Satan and his followers, and the heavens and the earth. It shows that Christ, the Lamb who was slain, is completely victorious. It is an example of a special kind of prophetic writing, called *apocalyptic*. This means that its message reveals truth by using symbols and vivid word pictures. For example, the seven churches of Asia are pictured as lampstands (1:12, 20), and Satan is pictured as a dragon (12:7–9).

Application

- 16** Read Revelation 6:12–14. This passage can best be described as having a message concerning
- a)** events that will occur in the future.
 - b)** the response the church should make to present circumstances.

17 Review this section on the New Testament books. Then match each verse (left) to the word that describes the kind of writing of which it is an example (right).

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| ... a) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. | 1) Historical |
| ... b) Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. | 2) Doctrinal |
| ... c) From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace. | 3) Personal |
| ... d) Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. | 4) Prophetic |
| ... e) Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. | |



Authors of the Books

The New Testament books were written by eight (or possibly nine) men: Matthew, Peter, John, Mark, Jude, James, Luke, Paul, and the writer to the Hebrews (some Bible scholars believe that Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews). Of these men, all were Jews except Luke. Matthew, Peter, and John were members of Jesus' original group of twelve disciples. Mark, Jude, and James had associated with the disciples and were part of the Early Church. Luke and Paul knew those who had witnessed Jesus' earthly life and ministry. The following chart lists each book of the New Testament beside the name of the person who wrote it.

Author	Book	Author	Book
Matthew	Matthew	Peter	1, 2 Peter
Mark	Mark	?	Hebrews
Luke	Luke Acts	Paul	Romans 1, 2 Corinthians

Author	Book	Author	Book
John	John 1, 2, 3 John Revelation	Paul	Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians
James	James	Paul	1, 2 Thessalonians
Jude	Jude	Paul	1, 2 Timothy Titus Philemon

Application

18 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.

- a)** Each New Testament book was written by a different person.
- b)** The author of 1 John was one of Jesus's 12 disciples.
- c)** The apostle Paul wrote the book of Acts.
- d)** Of the known New Testament authors, only Luke was not a Jew.



Chronology of the Books

Objective 7. *Arrange the New Testament books by their type and historical period.*

In the New Testament, the books are grouped according to their content. That is, the historical books are first, the doctrinal and personal books next, and the prophetic book last. However, we will not study the books in this order but in their *chronological* sequence. This means that we will study them according to the specific years of history with which they deal. This procedure will help us gain knowledge of the events that happened in their historical setting.

C. THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS WORLD

The historical events mentioned in the writings of the New Testament took place within a span of approximately 100 years,

from 6 BC to AD 95. This span of time can be divided into three periods: 1) the life and ministry of Jesus, 2) the beginning and growth of the church, and 3) the continued growth and persecution of the church. The following chart shows these three periods and lists in order the books associated with the events of each one.

1. The life and ministry of Jesus: 6 BC–AD 29	
Matthew	
Mark	
Luke	
John	
2. The beginning and growth of the church: AD 30–AD 60	
Acts	Romans
James	Colossians, Ephesians
Galatians	Philemon
1, 2 Thessalonians	Philippians
1, 2 Corinthians	
3. The continued growth and persecution of the church: AD 60–AD 95	
1 Timothy	Hebrews
Titus	Jude
1 Peter	1, 2, 3 John
2 Timothy	Revelation
2 Peter	

Application

19 In your notebook, make a chart listing each New Testament book by its type and historical period. You will need to review the previous sections to do this. Copy the following model, making it several times larger so you will have space to write the name of each book. The first one is done for you. (The spaces grayed out will have no books listed in them.)

Period	Historical	Doctrinal	Personal	Prophetic
6 BC–AD 29	Matthew			
AD 30–AD 60				
AD 60–AD 95				



Congratulations! You have now come to the end of the first lesson of this course. You have learned many facts about the forces that shaped the world into which Jesus Christ was born and in which He carried out His ministry. You have also studied some of the general features of the books of the New Testament. The following lessons will build on the truths you have learned. Before you take the self-test, review the lesson and be sure you can fulfill each objective.

Self-Test

1 Galatians 4:4 says that Christ came into the world “when the time had fully come.” In your notebook, list four important facts about the New Testament world that give evidence for this truth and show that Christ came at a time when His message could be rapidly communicated. Name the one main fact associated with each of the following:

a) Roman power

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b) Greek culture

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c) Jewish religion

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d) Other religions

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2 Match the name or term (right) to each sentence that describes or defines it (left).

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| a) A group of ten or more Jewish men who met to discuss the Scriptures | 1) Caesar
Augustus |
| b) The Greek translation of the Old Testament | 2) Alexander the Great |
| c) A non-Jew who submitted to all the requirements of the Law and became a member of the Jewish community | 3) Hellenist |
| d) Roman emperor at the time of Christ | 4) Synagogue |
| e) The Jews who were scattered among the nations | 5) Diaspora |
| f) A Jewish group who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead | 6) Proselyte |
| g) Conqueror who had the Greek language taught everywhere | 7) Septuagint |
| h) Festival celebrating Israel's deliverance from Egypt | 8) Sanhedrin |
| i) Builder of the temple that stood in New Testament times | 9) Pharisees |
| j) A person who was Greek in culture | 10) Sadducees |
| k) A Jewish group who believed in the resurrection of the dead | 11) Pentecost |
| l) Festival celebrating the giving of the Law to Moses | 12) Passover |
| m) Jewish group who accepted the writings of the prophets | 13) Herod the Great |
| n) Council that ruled Jewish politics and religion | |

3 Complete each of the following sentences, which refer to the books of the New Testament. Use your notebook for your answers.

- a)** The content of a *historical* book deals mainly with . . .
- b)** The content of a *doctrinal* book deals mainly with . . .
- c)** The content of a *personal* book deals mainly with . . .
- d)** The content of a *prophetic* book deals mainly with . . .

4 Match each book (left) to the name of the person who wrote it (right).

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| . . . a) The Gospel of John | 1) Luke |
| . . . b) Acts | 2) John |
| . . . c) 2 Thessalonians | 3) James |
| . . . d) Revelation | 4) Paul |
| . . . e) Titus | |
| . . . f) James | |

5 Write the name of each book of the New Testament listed in the space on the chart where it belongs. The first one is done for you.

Matthew

Romans

Philemon

Mark

Galatians

Hebrews

Acts

1, 2 Timothy

Revelation

Period	Historical	Doctrinal	Personal	Prophetic
6 BC–AD 29	Matthew			
AD 30–AD 60				
AD 60–AD 95				

Answers to Application Questions

The answers to your study exercises are given in a different order so you will not easily see the answer to your next question ahead of time. Look for the number you need, and try not to look ahead.

- 10 a)** They were to smear the blood of the lamb on the tops and sides of the door frames of their houses.
- b)** He said that the blood would be a sign for them and He would pass over them.
- c)** The firstborn Egyptians were killed, and the Egyptians told the Israelites to leave.
- 1** every part of the empire.
- 11 a)** 1) Passover
- b)** 3) Both Passover and Pentecost
- c)** 2) Pentecost
- d)** 2) Pentecost
- e)** 1) Passover
- 2 c)** and **d)** are true.
- 12 c)** There was a great variety of religions, and people were seeking in different ways to find satisfying answers.
- 3 b)** language, which was used throughout the Roman Empire.
- 13 a)** He cast a demon out of a man (vv. 33, 35).
- b)** He did it in a synagogue in Capernaum on the Sabbath (vv. 31, 33).
- c)** The people said that He had authority and power to cast out evil spirits (v. 36).
- d)** The people throughout the surrounding areas heard about it (v. 37). (Your answers should be similar.)
- 4** Persians, Alexander the Great, 323 BC, 167 BC, 63 BC, Herod the Great, Rome.

- 14 a)** 2) The name of the writer or receiver of the letter.
b) 1) A reference to a problem the believers had.
c) 4) A statement of a truth about Christ
d) 3) Some instructions on Christian living.
e) 4) A statement of a truth about Christ
- 5 a)** and **c)** are true.
- 15 b)** 3:8–10.
- 6 a)** The scattering of the Jews among the nations
b) A convert to Judaism who was circumcised and obeyed the Law
c) A person who accepted Judaism but did not try to fulfill the Law
d) The Greek version of the Jewish Scriptures
e) A group of at least ten Jewish men who met to study the Scriptures
- 16 a)** events that will occur in the future.
- 7** dispersion (or scattering), Greek.
- 17 a)** 4) Prophetic (Revelation 21:2)
b) 2) Doctrinal (1 Corinthians 12:27)
c) 1) Historical (Acts 16:11)
d) 3) Personal (2 Timothy 4:11)
e) 2) Doctrinal (Romans 6:8)
- 8 a)** 2) Sadducees
b) 2) Sadducees
c) 1) Pharisees
d) 1) Pharisees
e) 2) Sadducees
- 18 b)** and **d)** are true.
- 9 a)** and **b)** are true.

19 Your chart should have the books written in as follows
(within each section the books may be in any order):

Period	Historical	Doctrinal	Personal	Prophetic
6 BC– AD 29	Matthew Mark Luke John			
AD 30– AD 60	Acts	Romans 1, 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1, 2 Thessalonians James	Philemon	
AD 60– AD 95		1, 2 Peter Hebrews Jude 1 John	1, 2 Timothy Titus 2, 3 John	Revelation