

● Lesson 2

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Bible is most often thought of as one book, but in reality it is many books written by various authors from several unique perspectives. When all 66 books are joined together into one volume, they make up the single book that you hold in your hand which is called the Bible. The Bible is divided into two major sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The 39 books of the Old Testament begin with the book of Genesis and end with Malachi.

In the Old Testament, we learn

- how God created a perfect universe.
- how Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God.
- how sin caused a separation between God and man and spoiled God's perfect creation.
- how God made promises or covenants to restore man and God's creation, pointing to the coming **Messiah** who would pay the penalty for sin.
- how God remained faithful to His covenant.

The **New Testament** reveals the fulfillment of God's promises in the person and work of Jesus **Christ** and is the focus of all the lessons in this book. The 27 books of the New Testament begin with the Gospel of Matthew and end with the book of Revelation.

Memory Verse

“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me.”

John 5:39

Sometimes the books of the New Testament are divided into four categories:

1. THE GOSPELS

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

2. HISTORY

Acts

3. EPISTLES

Paul's Epistles: *Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon*

General Epistles: *Hebrews, James, I and II Peter, I, II, and III John, Jude*

4. PROPHECY

Revelation

THE GOSPELS

The **Gospels** record the events surrounding Jesus' miraculous birth and describe His miracles and teachings. They also give a detailed account of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection and proclaim how salvation has been accomplished in Him.

1. According to John 20:31, what is one of the main reasons the Gospels were written? _____

HISTORY

The Book of Acts begins with the ascension of Jesus into heaven, continues with the coming of the Holy Spirit, and then focuses on the spread of Christianity. Just before Jesus' death, He had comforted His disciples by promising they would receive another Helper.

2. Who is that Helper? John 14:16, 26

Now before His ascension into heaven, Jesus reminds them of that promise in Acts 1:8.

3. What would they receive? _____

4. Where would Jesus' followers be His witnesses?

2 B.C.

Birth of Jesus

33 A.D.

Death and resurrection of Jesus

36 A.D.

Conversion of Paul

45 A.D.

Paul's missionary journeys

Life of Jesus (Gospels)

History of the Church (Book of Acts)



5. Since we do not live in Jerusalem or Judea or Samaria, how is it that we have the privilege of hearing about Jesus?

EPISTLES

The **Epistles** are letters written to individuals or congregations. These letters encourage, instruct, and correct believers as they live out their faith in Christ. The Epistles further explain how Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

6. In Colossians 1:28, Paul gave one reason why he and Timothy proclaimed Christ. What was that reason? _____

PROPHECY

The book of Revelation concludes the New Testament, revealing Christ's complete victory over Satan. It also describes events that will take place when Jesus returns to earth to judge the living and the dead. Christ's glorious kingdom will have no end.

7. Use Revelation 22:1-2 to describe the scene around the throne of God. _____

8. What will not be needed in God's glorious kingdom? Why? Revelation 22:5 _____

Label the names of the 27 books in the New Testament, and draw the appropriate symbols on each book.

- Draw a cross (†) on each of the Gospels.
- Draw a fish symbol (α) on the book of History.
- Draw a quill (✍) on all the Epistles.
- Put a "P" by each Epistle written by Paul.
- Put a "G" by each General Epistle.
- Draw an *Alpha* and *Omega* (Α Ω) on the book of Prophecy.

The whole Bible—the Old Testament and the New Testament—is the unchanging Word of the unchanging God. The great truth that Jesus is the way of salvation for all who believe is the central teaching of the Bible. God's promise of a Savior is for all people of all times.

Old Testament believers trusted God and His prophecies about a Savior. They looked to the future for the coming Messiah, knowing that through Him they received the forgiveness of sin (Isaiah 53:5).

The New Testament reveals Jesus as the Messiah, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (Luke 24:44). New Testament believers also knew that only by looking to Jesus could they receive the forgiveness of sin (John 6:68-69).

Today your salvation still comes through faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. Look back at the empty tomb and know that your Redeemer lives! Jesus was and continues to be the Savior for *all* people of all times.

55 A.D.

68 A.D.

90 A.D.

110 A.D.

Paul martyred

John writes Revelation

THE “SILENT” YEARS

There was a period of about 400 years between the events of the Old Testament and the New Testament, which is sometimes called the “400 silent years.” The years were “silent” only because God did not send prophets to the world during that time. However, God was still at work preparing the world for the coming of Jesus the Messiah.

During this gap between the Testaments, the civilized world was ruled for a time by the Greek conqueror Alexander the Great. While Alexander ruled, he forced his subjects to speak the Greek language, live the Greek lifestyle, and learn the Greek philosophy that stressed the greatness of man.

Two Jewish **sects**, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, were established while the Greeks ruled. The Jews also began celebrating the Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah during this time. This national Jewish holiday **commemorates** the repair and rededication of the temple in 164 B.C.

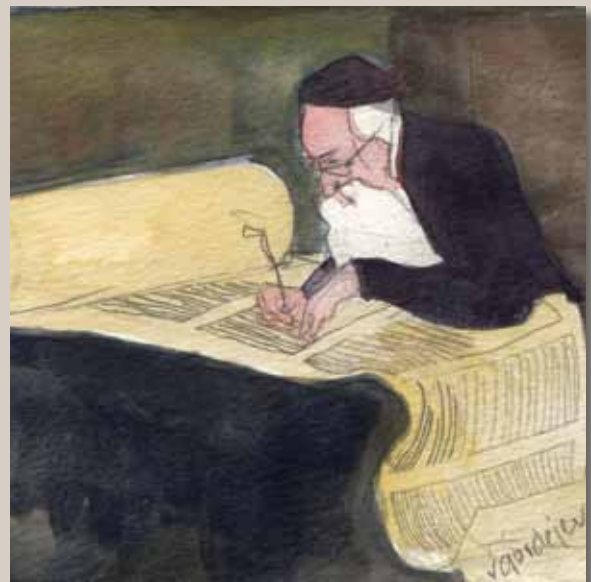
Following the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek empire was ruled by four Greek generals and their descendants, including Cleopatra, until the Greek empire was completely conquered by the Romans in 30 B.C. and Caesar Augustus came to power.

Catechism Corner

1. What are the words of institution? (Q. 359)
“Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying, ‘Take, eat; this is My Body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me.’
“In the same manner, also, when He had eaten, He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the New Testament in My Blood, which is shed for you, and for many, for the forgiveness of sins; this do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’”
2. What is meant by “New Testament” in this connection? (Q. 364)
It is the new covenant which God has made and sealed with the blood of Jesus.
3. In Jeremiah 31:31-34, what in particular is this “new covenant” based upon?

4. How does Jesus want me to respond to His forgiveness? (see Colossians 3:13)_____

Fast Fact: Scribe



- A copyist of Scripture and teacher of the law.
- Scribes were respected community members, often Pharisees, and were utilized to record legal documents. Scribes later became known as lawyers.
- Using reeds or small brushes, a scribe tediously copied the Scripture onto papyrus, leather, or parchment. If a mistake was made, the entire page was discarded and work began again.
- The Scriptures continued to be copied by hand until the invention of the printing press in 1440 by Johannes Gutenberg.
- Ezra, who was a priest, is a noted scribe in the Old Testament and was commissioned by the king of Persia (Ezra 7:6).