

An overview of the New Testament

General epistles – James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude, Hebrews

Possible New Testament Timeline

Christ's Birth through the Revelation of St. John

7-4 B.C.	Christ's birth
26-30 A.D.	Jesus' ministry
Fall of 26	Jesus' baptism and temptation
Most of 27	Early Judean ministry (John 1-4)
28 and early 29	The Galilean ministry of the Synoptic Gospels
Spring to Fall 29	Special training of the Twelve
Fall of 29	Last journeys in Judea and Perea
Spring of 30	Jesus' death and resurrection
30	Pentecost: Birthday of the New Testament Church (Acts 2)
31	Death of Stephen and conversion of St. Paul (Paul spends parts of three years in Arabia.) (Acts 7 and 9)
33	Paul returns to Damascus and has to flee (Galatians 1:7; 2 Corinthians 11:32); he visits Jerusalem and meets Peter and James (Acts 9:26-30, 22:17,18; Galatians 1:17-20); he returns to Tarsus where he remained for 10 years.
43	Founding of Gentile Church at Antioch; Paul summoned to Antioch by Barnabas
44	Death of Herod Agrippa I; Death of James the Son of Zebedee (Acts 12:2)
45-49	EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES
46	Paul's second visit to Jerusalem, fourteen years after his previous visit (Galatians 2:1-3 and Acts 11:30)
47-48	St. Paul's First Missionary Journey (into Galatia)
48/49	EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS
49	Expulsion of Jews from Rome; APOSTOLIC COUNCIL in Jerusalem (Acts 15); decision reported to Galatia by Paul and Silas (Acts 16:4) confirmed what Paul wrote in his letter.
49-52	St. Paul's Second Missionary Journey
50-60	GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW
51/52	Governorship of Gallio in Corinth
51 (early)	1 THESSALONIANS from Corinth
51 (summer)	2 THESSALONIANS from Corinth
53-57	St. Paul's Third Missionary Journey
56 (spring)	1 CORINTHIANS from Ephesus
56 (summer or fall)	2 CORINTHIANS from Macedonia
56-57 (winter)	ROMANS from Corinth (or Cenchrea)
57-59	St. Paul's Caesarean Imprisonment
59	Arrival of Festus in Palestine to assume governorship; St. Paul's voyage to Rome
60	GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE
60-62	St. Paul's Imprisonment in Rome COLOSSIANS (60/61), PHILEMON (60/61), EPHESIANS (61), PHILIPPIANS (62) (The captivity Letters)
62	ACTS
62-64	1 PETER
63	GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK
64	2 PETER
63-67	Paul's final travels and execution 1 TIMOTHY (63), TITUS (63-66), 2 TIMOTHY (67) (Pastoral Letters)
64-67	Fire in Rome, Nero undertakes persecution of Christians
65-69	HEBREWS
68-80	JUDE
70	Fall of Jerusalem
90	GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN
90	1,2,3 JOHN
95	REVELATION OF ST. JOHN

The epistle of James

The author

Acts 12:1-3. The other prominent James, the brother of _____, was killed by Herod.

Acts 12:17; Galatians 1:18,19; Acts 21:17,18. James, the brother of _____, was recognized as the head of the church in _____.

Acts 15:13ff. James made an important speech at the _____.

Why is it remarkable that James wrote this epistle? (See John 7:5.)

His letter

Place: _____, Date: _____

Recipients: Jewish Christians scattered among the nations

Theme: James 1:17,18 – Live holy lives as God has made you / Faith that works

Contents:

A book of various admonitions, similar in many ways to the book of Proverbs

Emphasis on faith showing itself in action

Major themes: wisdom, favoritism, prayer, proper speech, submission to God

Sample: *James 2:14-24*

What relationship do good works have to faith?

Complete the following statement: We are saved through faith alone, but faith is never _____.

Paul and James are not in conflict with each other; they address different attacks.

The epistles of Peter

The author

Galatians 2:8,9. Peter's mission work was carried out primarily among the _____, while Paul's was primarily among the _____.

1 Peter 5:12,13. Peter's ministry took him to _____, which is where he wrote 1 Peter. He probably wrote 2 Peter there and eventually died a martyr's death there.

Peter was assisted by _____ as he wrote 1 Peter, which may account for the major differences between 1 Peter and 2 Peter.

Mark was also with Peter. It is probable that Mark wrote his Gospel in connection to his close association with Peter (See 2 Peter 1:14,15). The recipients were Christians in Asia Minor.

1 Peter

Place: _____, Date: _____

Recipients: Gentile Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor who were facing persecution

Theme: Hope in Christ

Outline:

- Introduction (1:1-2)
- Living hope through Christ's resurrection (1:3-12)
- Hope-produced holiness of living (1:13-2:10)
- Hope-produced submission to one another (2:11-3:12)
- Hope in the midst of suffering (3:13-4:19)
- Elders: Shepherd the flock of God (5:1-11)
- Conclusion (5:12-14)

Sample: **1 Peter 1:3-9**

What is the basis for the Christian's hope of eternal life?

How does Peter describe the blessings that come through suffering and trials?

Why are these truths valuable for us today?

Things to remember about 1 Peter :

- Hope during suffering
- 2:9 – You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood...
- 3:15 – Always be prepared to give an answer.
- 3:19 – Jesus' descent into hell.
- 3:21 – Baptism saves you

2 Peter

Place: _____, Date: _____

Theme: Christian hope strengthened

Outline:

- Introduction (1:1-2)
- Strengthened through the inspired Word (1:3-21)
- Strengthened in spite of false teachers (2:1-22)
- Strengthened as we wait for Christ's return (3:1-18)

Things to remember about 2 Peter :

- 1:21 – Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit
- 3:8-9 – God is not slow; he is patient

The epistle of Jude

The author

Jude 1. Mark 6:3. Jude calls himself a brother of James, which also makes him a brother of _____.

His letter

Place: ??? Date: _____

Theme: Contend for the faith

Contents:

- A severe condemnation of false teachers, specifically libertinism
- Very similar to 2 Peter 2

The epistle to the Hebrews

The author

Origen: "Who wrote the epistle, God only knows certainly."

Theories: Paul, Barnabas, Apollos (Luther), Luke, Silas, Aquila and Priscilla

The letter

Place: ??? Date: _____

Recipients: Jewish Christians, probably those living in Rome.

Theme: Christ is superior

Outline:

Christ is superior as the revealer of the new covenant (1:1-4:13)

Christ is superior as the priest of the new covenant (4:14-12:29)

Concluding admonitions (13:1-19)

Conclusion and greetings (13:20-25)

Sample: **Hebrews 1:1,2**

What two periods of time is the writer comparing?

How did God reveal himself to mankind during the first period of time mentioned? Cite some examples.

How has God revealed himself in the second period of time mentioned?

Sample: **Hebrews 10:11-25**

What characteristic of the work of the Old Testament priests does the writer draw attention to? (v.11)

How does the writer highlight the difference between their work as priests and Jesus' work as Priest? (v.12)

Because of Jesus' work, what are we as New Testament Christians able to do that Old Testament believers were not able to do? (vv.19-22)

How do we as New Testament Christians do this? (v.25)

Why are these truths valuable to us?

For next week:

- Review the general letters (James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Jude, Hebrews)
- Read John's writings (The Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John)