

**COVER
THE
BIBLE**

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Unit Forty

**THE BOOKS OF
1 THESSALONIANS
2 THESSALONIANS
PHILEMON**

OUTLINE OF 1 THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION: 1:1

PART 1: COMMENDATIONS TO THE THESSALONIANS

For their faith and steadfast labor—1:2-4

Word received with full conviction—1:5

Became imitators of Apostles and the Lord—1:6

Lived as Christian examples—1:7-9a

Turned from idols to God—1 :9b

Waiting for the coming of Christ—1 :10

PART 2: PAUL DEFENDS HIS CONDUCT

Coming was not in vain—2:1

Gospel proclaimed in boldness—2:2

Words were entrusted to Paul by God—2:3, 4

Delivered not with flattery or greed—2:5

Or from vain glory—2:6

But with gentleness and affection—2:7, 8

And hard labor—2:9

With devotion—2:10

Exhorting and encouraging as a father—2:11

So they might walk worthy of God—2:12

PART 3: PAUL'S CONCERN FOR THE CHURCH

Thanks God for the word received—2:13

Likens their sufferings to the Judeans—2:14a

Condemns the unrepentant Jews—2:14b-16

Blames Satan and Jews for his absence—2:17, 18

The Church his crown, hope, and glory—2:19, 20

PART 4: TIMOTHY'S VISIT

Timothy sent to strengthen and encourage—3:1, 2

Preparing them for afflictions—3:3-5

Timothy's good report of faith and love—3:6

A real comfort to Paul in his afflictions—3:7

Stand firm in the Lord!—3:8

Prayer of intercession—3:9-13

PART 5: PAUL REJOICES and PRAYS FOR THEM

To walk and please God—4:1

By the authority of Jesus—4:2

Abstain from sexual immorality—4:3-5

Not to defraud their brothers—4:6

God called them to sanctification—4:7

Rejecting this word is rejecting God—4:8

Increase your brotherly love—4:9,10

Tend to your own business—4:11,12

PART 6: THOSE ALREADY DEAD TO BE RESURRECTED

Don't grieve as those without hope—4:13

Belief in Jesus' resurrection the key—4:14

Those alive at His coming—4:15

Those dead at His coming—4:16

Those alive "forcefully caught up"—4:17

Use this knowledge as comfort—4:18

PART 7: THE "DAY OF THE LORD"

Coming as a thief in the night—5:1,2

As the birth pangs of a pregnant woman—5:3

Brethren are not of the darkness—5:4,5

Stay alert, sober, faithful—5:6-8

God has destined you for salvation—5:9-10

Therefore, encourage one another—5:11

PART 8: PAUL EXHORTS THEM TO BROTHERLY LOVE

Esteem your church leaders—5:12,13

Admonish the unruly, help the weak—5:14

Repay not evil for evil—5:15

Rejoice always—5:17

Pray continuously—5:18

Quench not the Spirit—5:19

Despise not prophecy—5:20

Examine everything carefully—5:21

Abstain from evil—5:22

PART 9: PAUL'S CONCLUDING REMARKS

For their preservation at His coming—5:23

He is faithful and true—5:24

EPILOGUE—5:25-28

AUTHOR

Paul—as validated by 1:1 and multiple personal references.

DATE

Approximately 52 A.D. We know the young church was established on his second missionary journey (A.D. 51), and that this first letter followed shortly after.

SETTING

Unbelieving Thessalonian Jews, angered by Paul's many Jewish converts, forced Paul to flee the city after he had been there for about three weeks (Acts 17:2). Not content to just chase him from their city, these Jews pursued him to Berea, 50 miles west, and again forced him to leave town. He then went 200 miles south to Athens.

From Athens, a concerned Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to determine how the young church was faring. Timothy made the journey, catching up with Paul in Corinth with a most heartening report. This first letter was sent in response to that good report.

THEME

In many respects, this is a love letter. More than any of his other letters, it is characterized by simplicity, gentleness, affection, and intimacy.

Paul is genuinely pleased with the new church's growth and early maturity. Already they had become shining examples of faithfulness and steadfastness in the face of persecution. Gently, Paul admonishes them to remember how he came to them with affection, hard labor, and devotion, exhorting and encouraging them as a father. His earnest desire was that they might walk worthy of God. He reminds them that he had told them of their coming afflictions, and encourages them to remain steadfast in their faith when the persecution comes. He reminds them again that God will indeed deal with those who persecute His people.

At that point, his letter takes a radical turn. He first pleads with them to walk with God, to abstain from sexual immorality, and not to be guilty of defrauding their brothers. He reminds them that God has called them to sanctification (being set apart as holy vessels), and that those who reject this word are rejecting God Himself, who gave these words to Paul. He encourages them to mind their own business, and to increase in brotherly love.

Then, obviously responding to Timothy's report of his stay with them, he becomes their teacher. Their questions about the return of Christ are answered. He tells them not to grieve over those who have departed: they will be raised up first when Christ returns. Those who are still alive will be "snatched forcefully" from the earth, to meet them with Christ in the air. Therefore, they are not to grieve as the pagans, who see death as the end of relationships with their loved ones. Christ's return will come as a complete surprise to those who live in the darkness. Their prior knowledge should shape the way they will live out their lives.

NOTES

KEY VERSES IN 1 THESSALONIANS

4:16: Note 3 significant words:

"SHOUT"—given by the Lord as His resurrection command to the church.

"VOICE"—the voice of the archangel Michael; signals a gathering is taking place.

"TRUMPET"—in scripture, always signifies judgment.

5:3: NOTE...

" ...like birth pangs upon a woman with child."

This powerful prophetic statement is, in the scripture, always used in conjunction with Jesus' second coming and final judgment. It describes the travail of a pain-filled creation that is similar to childbirth pangs. That is, they start slowly, increasing steadily in intensity and rapidity until the actual moment of birth.

Most Bible scholars agree this accurately depicts the final 3 1/2 years of the "Great Tribulation," when the Lord permits the Antichrist to proclaim himself "god." This momentous blasphemy is the signal for the final countdown to Jesus' second coming. Then, like a woman's birth pangs, the world scene gets continually more wicked. Sin spreads pain in all directions! Jesus appears to herald a new order, a new birth. His coming ushers in a thousand year reign, called the "*Millennium.*"

**THE "MEETING IN THE AIR"
AND THE "RETURN OF CHRIST"**

OUTLINE OF 2 THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION

Thanksgiving and encouragement in their persecution and affliction—1:1-2

God will repay those afflicting you—1:3-5

PART 1: THE DAY OF RETRIBUTION

When Jesus is revealed from Heaven—1:6-7

Delivering destruction to those who know not God—1:8

Those banished forever from His presence—1:9

When He comes to be glorified—1:10-12

PART 2: CORRECTIONS CONCERNING "THE DAY OF THE LORD"

Don't be deceived: it has not come—2:1-2

First must come the "Apostasy"—2:3

The Son of Destruction will be revealed—2:3b-4a

Displays himself as God—2:4b, 5

The "Restrainer" removed—2:6-9

Perishing of the unbelievers—2:10

By delusion from God—2:11

For the unbeliever's judgment—2:12

PART 3: SALVATION OF THE BELIEVERS

Through sanctification and faith—2:13

Called through the Gospel—2:14

Stand firm: be comforted and strengthened—2:15-17

PART 4: EXHORTATION TO PRAYER AND STEADFASTNESS

Pray for the rapid spread of the Gospel—3:1,2

The Lord is faithful and will direct you—3:3-5

PART 5: EXHORTATIONS TO DISCIPLINE

Keep aloof from unruly and undisciplined persons

—3:6,7

As we taught, be an example—3:8, 9

No work, no eat!—3:10

Quit being busybodies—3:11, 12

Don't weary in doing good—3:13

Disassociate yourselves from dissenters—3:14

Admonish them as brothers—3:15

EPILOGUE

Peace and grace to you—in my own hand!—3:16-18

AUTHOR

Paul, as validated by 1:1 and numerous other personal references throughout the book.

DATE

Approximately 53 A.D., certainly not too long after his first letter.

SETTING

Paul hears that the first letter's teaching concerning Jesus' second coming has been misinterpreted by some of the church members. Some, it appears, presumed that the "Day of the Lord" was immediately at hand. Believing this, they were leaving their employment, sitting around, doing little except becoming busybodies and a general financial burden to the members who were employed.

Upon hearing this news, Paul writes the second letter. This time, the words are sterner and more urgent. Nevertheless, his overall approach is one of deep love and praise, with a generous portion of caution sprinkled in for appropriate preventative measures.

Paul opens by thanking them for their increased faith and love towards one another. He again mentions their steadfastness in suffering, and reiterates that God will indeed repay their tormentors with affliction, dealing out retribution to those who knew Him not. He describes the awful price of eternal destruction, separation forever from God's presence and glory.

Paul then focuses on the theme of his second letter: corrections pertaining to their erroneous beliefs concerning the "Day of the Lord."

That day has *NOT* come, he says, and *WILL NOT* come until (1) the "apostasy" comes; and (2) the Son of Destruction takes his seat in God's temple, declaring himself to be God. Further, he explains, the "restrainer" must be taken away so that the lawless one can be revealed—that is, the one who proceeds from Satan with power, signs, and false miracles. These false signs will be believed, Paul says, because God Himself will send upon those unbelieving people a deluding influence so that they might believe a lie, and be judged by their unbelief of the truth and constantly enjoying perverted pleasures.

Paul insists that God has chosen them not for this awesome destruction, but rather for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this, he says, that they were called. They are to stand firm in the truth and the Lord will comfort and strengthen them.

Paul then closes his letter, directing his flock to steer themselves away and remain aloof from any who lead unruly, undisciplined lives. He reminds them of his own disciplined walk while among them. He tells them that if any member of the flock will not work, they are not to eat! Further, he adds, they are to disassociate themselves from all who walk in this way, not to the point of making them an enemy, but for brotherly discipline.

NOTES

KEY VERSES IN 2 THESSALONIANS

1:10: "...when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who believe..."

Paul here plainly teaches that Jesus' glory is in His *saints*; that is, those who choose to follow Him and receive His Gospel. We, who are by His grace, redeemed and given eternal life are His glory. We, in turn, will absolutely marvel at Him "on that day." Nothing we can now comprehend in the ripest fertility of our rich, God-given imaginations can prepare us for the awesome glory of His coming or His appearance.

2:7: "...only he who restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way."

Bible scholars have for years debated over the identity of the "Restrainer." The earliest church fathers thought it was the Roman Empire, which had for so long maintained law and order. However, this was proven to not be so. Today, many scholars point to the Holy Spirit as the Restrainer. However, this teaching presents us with a dilemma: if the Holy Spirit be removed, how can any person be *saved*? Unless we be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we plainly have no chance for sanctification. Yet we know that during the tribulation, multitudes will be saved. Today many are asking, *"Why cannot the Restrainer be the Church?"* It is a case of reverse leavening, where we who are the Church are the "yeast" in the "bread" of humanity. It is the influence and prayer of the Christians that keep the light in the midst of the darkness of unbelief. If the true Church be raptured, what Godly influence will remain? Satan will, at that point, have full reign.

Still, the Holy Spirit *will* linger, waiting for those multitudes who, in the midst of the Great Tribulation, will see Satan and the "Lawless One" for who they truly are. Again, the Spirit will be waiting for the firm conviction of the Jewish remnant. They will be jolted by the unfolding prophecy that has come to pass in a most frightening fashion.

2:13:

"...God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth."

Here Paul refers to predestination. It is important that we understand that when the Bible speaks of predestination it does so in an ultimate sense of God's foreknowledge of events, choices, and decisions. It is crucial we understand the significance of time to God and to us.

God knows no such thing as "time." He Who has always been and always will be, the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, is of infinite existence. Therefore, the concept of time is to Him without meaning.

It is we humans, trapped now inside the envelope of time, to whom this concept is meaningful. In a sense, Adam invented "time." Without sin, he and we would live forever, and therefore would not be subject to such a limiting concept. But with sin came death, finite existence, and the entrance of "time." Now, all mankind is of limited duration.

A thrice Holy God, unable to even bear the sight of sin, has no such limitation. Therefore, He sees at a mere glance what *was*, what *is*, and what *will be*, because all are, to Him, all in the present.

It is from this dual view of "time" that predestination is to be understood. It does not mean that ages ago, before man was created, God selected certain persons for salvation and others for destruction. He simply knows who will, and who won't, be the "God Followers." In that sense, predestination is part and parcel of our existence.

Isn't it amazing? Knowing that man would sin—knowing that He would ultimately have to send His Son—*still* God elected to create mankind! Doesn't this fact fill you with wonder? Doesn't His grace appear, in this light, to be more awesome than we can conceive? The very concept of predestination should make us more appreciative of Him, our love deeper, our wonder more intense. Is it any wonder that "*in that day*" we will behold Him, and marvel?

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

INTRODUCTION AND GREETINGS

From Paul and Timothy to Philemon—1:1

To Apphia and Archippus and the church in their house—1:2

The "Apostolic Benediction"—1:3

PART 1: PAUL PRAISES PHILEMON: 1:4-7

PART 2: PAUL PLEADS WITH PHILEMON

By Christ's authority speaks—1:8

For love's sake pleads—1:9-12

Wanted to keep Onesimus—1:13

But not without consent—1:14

Onesimus' parting providential—1:15-17

Charge any loss or wrong to Paul—1:18-19

Pleads for acceptance and obedience—1:20,21

PART 3: PERSONAL REQUESTS

Prepare a lodging—1:22

Sends greetings from others—1:23,24

Sends grace from the Lord—1:25

AUTHOR

Paul, as verified in 1:1.

DATE

Approximately 62 A.D., from a Roman prison.

SETTING

Onesimus, one of millions of Roman slaves, had stolen from his master, Philemon, and had run away. Providentially, his flight took him to Rome, where he was eventually led to faith in Jesus Christ by Paul. Upon his conversion, he remained with Paul, serving him. Now he has faced his Christian responsibility of returning to Philemon and making restitution.

What a dilemma! Here is Paul, confronted with a situation tailored for explosion or exaltation. A slave (as are we to sin) has stolen from his master (as we have from God), and has run away (as have we). The slave Onesimus has become a willing slave to Jesus, his new Master, and to Paul, his mentor.

THEME

Christian responsibility and restitution are clearly in order, and it is to this issue this letter is addressed.

By Roman law, Philemon has the right to punish, even to put to death, his slave (the just punishment of sin). Would Philemon forgive the errant slave? Paul becomes the advocate (the Holy Spirit's role for us), pleading and persuading on behalf of Onesimus. He writes to a man who is his close friend and who has also been led to Christ by Paul. Thus, Paul finds himself in the place of being an earthly redeemer, but with the added problem of a redeemer trying desperately to serve both this slave and his dear friend.

Paul begins his case by addressing the letter to Philemon as a beloved brother and fellow worker. In addition, he also sends the letter to the local church. (A little peer pressure, perhaps!)

There is no hammer in Paul's words: he is pleading. He explains he could easily command Philemon, but wishes rather for his decision to come from his own free will. It is a letter filled with diplomacy and skill.

Note that Paul does not command or advise Philemon to get out of the business of slavery. Slavery is not the issue. Receiving a Christian slave as a brother is the real issue. The brotherhood in Christ went beyond that of a slave/master relationship. Would Philemon forgive his slave? Would he accept him as a brother, even while he remained as a slave?

The message is sensitive, yet important to the Kingdom! In Christ, there is neither bond nor free, rich or poor. Earthly position or status is of no importance in a Kingdom in which the greatest among us is the one who is a bondsman! With these facts in mind, Paul offers to pay the slave's debt himself.

This is Paul's most personal surviving letter. It shows his character and personality more clearly than any other letter. It also shows his grasp of the eventual impact of such letters being distributed among the young churches. The impact of it would help countless others who face similar circumstances.

KEY VERSE IN PHILEMON

1:14: "...without your consent I did not want to do anything, that your goodness should not be as it were by compulsion but of your own free will."

Ordering and commanding is easy, and there are times when safety or timeliness is of such importance that commanding or ordering is the only way to save a life, a soul, or someone from what is beyond his comprehension. God uses both commands and pleas. Clearly, He will always show us which is best. Just as clearly, He tells us that (if necessary) we are to jerk a brother out of the fire for the saving of his soul. God is first a God of love. Those who choose to obey Him because they love Him receive the greater rewards.

NOTES

IN RETROSPECT...

Paul's helpful explanations to the Thessalonians clear up many questions for us about the coming events of history. We are more prepared than ever to move shortly into the book of Revelation, which details the events of the end times.

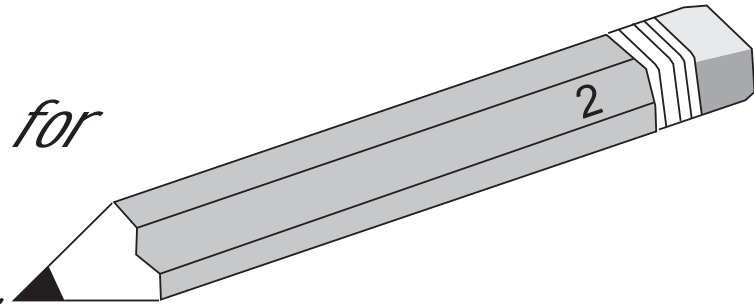
Let us not miss the important stress made by Paul again and again as he wrote these letters: the time is short, and this is a time to live each day in the light of His soon coming.

In these times, we are observing world powers move in uncanny ways to take the positions predicted for them by the holy scriptures. Russia moves closer and closer to her final destiny as the dark force of Satan in the end times. China has come alive with international prominence after being a nonentity for millennia.

Do you realize the importance of using this time of personal Bible study to become equipped for your own personal ministry? *It's an urgent time.* We can ill afford to know more and more *about* the Bible, and be less and less involved in the redemption of our neighbors, our relatives, and our friends.

If these Bible books in Unit 40 make any sense at all, we must realize that the shortness of the days requires longer and longer outreaches of love to the lost!

*Suggestions for
marking
your Bible...*



1. Copy the outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17:

THIS IS ANOTHER EVIDENCE
THAT THE EARLY CHURCH KNEW
NO FORM OF CHURCH LIFE EXCEPT
THE HOUSE CHURCH.

3. Write as a footnote to 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11:

THE SECOND COMING OF
JESUS CHRIST, SEPARATED
FROM THE RAPTURE BY
7 YEARS.

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty One
THE BOOKS OF
1 TIMOTHY
2 TIMOTHY
TITUS

GROUP	SETTING	EPISTLES	DATE	MAIN SUBJECTS	PURPOSES	
Travel Epistles	Between 1 & 2 Journey	Galatians	48	SALVATION PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE	Evangelizing	TO CHURCHES
	2 Journey	1,2 Thess.	52			
	3 Journey	1,2 Corin.	55			
		Romans	56			
Prison Epistles	First Roman Imprisonment	Colossians	61	THE INDWELLING CHRIST AND THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN	Edifying	TO CHURCHES
		Ephesians				
		Philemon				
		Philippians				
Pastoral Epistles	Release	1 Timothy Titus	62	THE CELL CHURCH AND ITS WORKERS	Establishing	TO INDIVIDUALS
	2 Roman Imprisonment	2 Timothy	67		Personal Farewell	

OUTLINE OF 1 TIMOTHY

PAUL GREETSS TIMOTHY—1:1-2

PART 1: TRUE AND FALSE MINISTRY—1:3-20

Warning against false doctrine—1:3-7

The law and the Gospel—1:8-11

Paul's thankfulness for mercy—1:12-20

PART 2: INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

—2:1-15

Paul exhorts to prayer—2:1-8

The place and dress of women—2:9-15

PART 3: THE QUALIFICATIONS OF BISHOPS AND
DEACONS—3:1-13

Qualifications of Bishops—3:1-7

Qualifications of Deacons—3:8-13

PART 4: THE REASON FOR WRITING—3:14-16

Paul hopes to see Timothy—3:14-16

PART 5: ERROR AND ITS ANTIDOTE— 4:1-16

Predictions of apostasy—4:1-5

A good minister of Jesus Christ—4:6-16

PART 6: THE TREATMENT OF WIDOWS, ELDERS, ETC.

—5:1-6:2

Instructions concerning widows—5:1-16

Duty of elders—5:17-25

PART 7: THE TRUE and FALSE TEACHER CONTRASTED

—6:1-21

Warning against false teachers—6:1-10

The good fight of faith—6:11-21

AUTHOR

Paul, as validated by 1:1 and multiple personal references

DATE

Approximately 62 A.D.

SETTING

Paul, having been released from his first imprisonment in Rome, is instructing his beloved associate Timothy. The subject is how to deal with church problems in Ephesus.

THEME

Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus (1:3) to deal with problems, the greatest one being FALSE DOCTRINE (1:3). Note the attacks made by Paul in 1:4, 7, 19, and in 4:1-3, 7, along with 6:3-5. This is a deeply personal letter. His comments about church leadership and structures are vital to our understanding of how the church is to operate.

NOTES

TIMOTHY: A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART!

Timothy was a native of Derbe (Acts 16:1, 20:4). His name means "Honoring God" or "Honored by God." He was the son of a Gentile father and a Jewish mother (Acts 16:1,3). His mother was Eunice, his grandmother Lois (see 2 Tim. 1:5). Paul was 30-35 years old when Timothy was born, causing him to treat Timothy as he would a son (1 Tim. 4:12).

From childhood, Timothy had been taught scripture by his mother (2 Tim. 1:5, 3:14-15). Timothy's Gentile father evidently did not stand in the way of this training.

Timothy and his mother probably were converted when Paul visited Derbe (Acts 14:6-7, 20-21). As we study 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 and 1 Timothy 1:2, we may surmise Paul led Timothy to Christ as a young man, evidently in his late teens.

On the second missionary journey, Timothy was recommended to Paul as an associate (Acts 16:1-2). He was then circumcised. He was also set apart for ministry (see Acts 16:3-5, 1 Tim. 4:14). He served as Paul's assistant, doing many tasks, both significant assignments and simple "housekeeping" tasks (Acts 19:22, 1 Thess. 3:1-2). He served Paul while he was in prison in Rome (Phil. 1:1, Col. 1:1, Philemon 1, Hebrews 13:23). Tradition (not the Bible) tells us Timothy was martyred under Emperor Domitian or Nerva.

THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

The congregations at Ephesus were 5-8 years old when Paul wrote 1 Timothy. Timothy had a full-time job, helping leaders of the various congregations fulfill their ministry. Paul, anticipating a long delay before he could get back there (3:14-15), wrote this letter of instruction.

KEY THEMES

SOUND DOCTRINE

PUBLIC WORSHIP

- Prayer
- Place of women

CHURCH OFFICERS

- Bishops
- Deacons

PASTOR/CONGREGATION RELATIONSHIPS

- Church and widows
- Church and elders
- Slaves and masters

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF TITUS

Greeting—1:1-4

Qualifications of Elders (Bishops)—1:5-9

Warning against false teachers—1:10-16

Domestic relations—2:1-10

The Christian life—2:11-15

Christian citizenship—3:1-2

The basis of the Christian ethic—3:3-8

The disciplining of factious men—3:9-11

Personal plans and greetings—3:12-15

AUTHOR

Paul, as verified in 1:1.

DATE

Approximately 62 A.D., from Rome

SETTING

Paul's young associate, Titus, is the recipient. Unlike his fellow worker Timothy, he was all Gentile. He served at Corinth and Crete. He had a strong and stern personality. He is not mentioned in Acts. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas to the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 (See Galatians 2:1-4). He was Paul's representative in Corinth during Paul's third missionary journey (2 Cor. 7:6, 13-14), and collected money for the poor (2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 23). He was also Paul's representative to the churches in Crete after Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment (1:4-5). He also had a ministry at Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10).

THEME

The theme of the book focuses upon proper relationships within the developing church. This “pastoral” letter speaks to pastors (1:5-9); the ethics of believers (2:1-10); the return of Christ (2:11-14); and, finally, the nature of salvation (3:3-7).

NOTES

ABOUT CRETE:

The towns of Crete were heavily populated. Morally and socially, Cretans had a bad reputation, as evidenced by the comment of Epimenides quoted by Paul in 1:12. Leonides said, “The Cretans are always brigands and piratical, and unjust.”

SIGNIFICANCE OF BOOK:

1 Timothy and Titus are sometimes called “Twin Epistles.” The book of Titus gives significant insights into the doctrine of God. He is shown as manifesting His word (1:3), revealing His grace (2:11) and His kindness (3:4).

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF 2 TIMOTHY

Personal Greeting—1:1-2

Thanksgiving for Timothy—1:3-5

Exhortation to endurance—1:6-18

A good soldier of Jesus Christ—2:1-13

Advice on personal conduct and relationships—2:14-15

People and situations to avoid—2:16-26

Difficult times to come—3:1-13

The central place of scripture—3:14-17

Exhortation to preach the word—4:1-5

Paul's hope—4:6-8

Personal concerns—4:9-22

AUTHOR

Paul, as validated by 1:1 and numerous other personal references scattered through the material.

DATE

Approximately 67 A.D., months or even weeks prior to his death.

SETTING

Paul was released from the imprisonment recorded in Acts 28:30. He then travelled to Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3), Crete (Titus 1:5), Nicopolis (Titus 3:12), Miletus (4:20), and Troas (4:13). He returns to Rome as a prisoner (1:16-17). As he writes, he sees his death as very near (4:6-8).

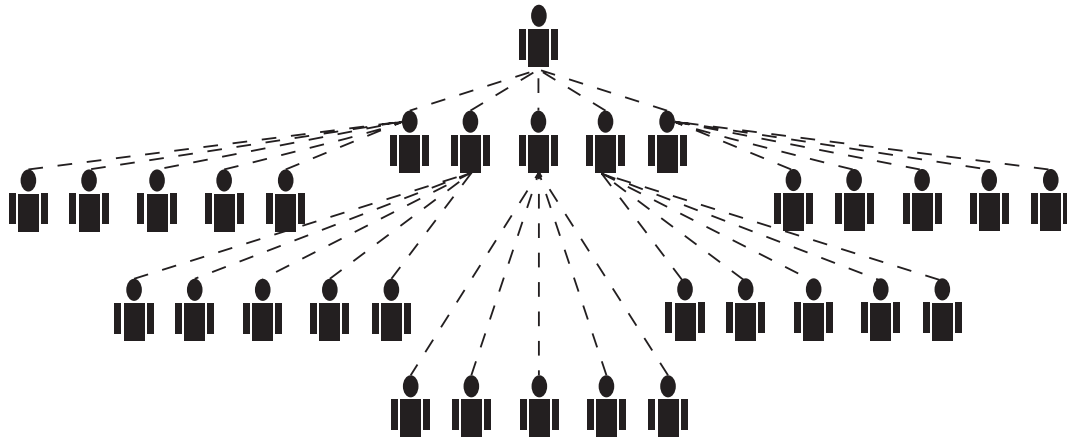
THEME

This letter, Paul's last, gives his final words of instruction and encouragement to Timothy, who had a tendency to be timid (1:7-8, 2:1). He again warns about false teachers.

NOTES

1:6—Laying on of hands: Timothy is told to “stir up the charisma” (grace gift), a Spirit-given enablement for ministry. His usefulness began at the time he was set apart by Paul to be an equipper of the believers. This gift was bestowed by the laying on of hands. This was the symbolical act used by churches when setting apart (making holy) a person for ministry. In this way, the churches recognized the presence of the gifts of the pastor-teacher.

2:2—THE EQUIPPING PATTERN



SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT MODERN DISCIPLESHIP...

Do we grow to go, or do we go to grow?

In today's way of thinking, young Christians should be matured before they are sent to minister. Thus, we have cloistered discipleship groups. Folks learn to memorize a hundred verses, outline their Bible six ways, take sermon notes three ways, and pray five ways. After their "quiet time" is fully developed, some think it might be time to reach out to the unreached persons around them.

The problem is that this form of discipleship has created a group of scholarly Christians who know more about discipleship methods than about people who hurt, and how to help them!

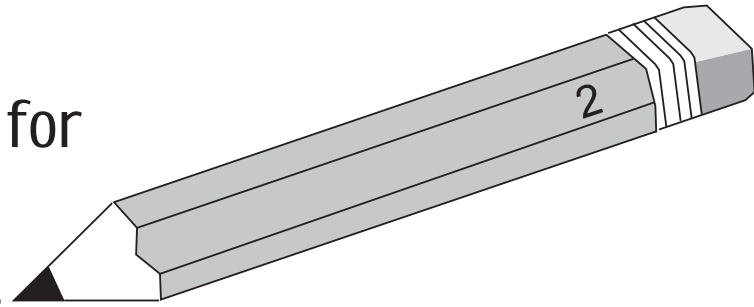
Jesus never gave his disciples a notebook. He never had a classroom. He walked with them for miles, constantly showing them how to heal, how to pray, how to love, how to react to evil.

Paul never gave his men a discipleship course. He took them to Cyprus, to Crete, to Athens, to riots, and to tough situations, but he never took them to a classroom.

Our generation believes you grow to go.
The New Testament pattern is to go to grow.

Cell Group Churches follow that pattern. For that reason, a vital part of your cell group life is reaching out to others through visitation and through Share Groups. (For further information, see my book "Where Do We Go From Here?")

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the Outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside 1 Timothy 3:16:

THESE 6 PHRASES ARE
A QUOTATION FROM AN
EARLY HYMN.

3. Write as a footnote to 2 Timothy 3:16:

LITERALLY, "ALL
SCRIPTURE, BECAUSE IT
IS GOD-BREATHED, IS
PROFITABLE..."

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty Two

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

OUTLINE OF HEBREWS

THEME ESTABLISHED: 1:1-3

FIRST SECTION: INSTRUCTION: 1:4-9:28

(WHAT HAVE WE?)

Christ, greater than the Angels—1:4-14

FIRST WARNING SECTION: 2:1-4

How shall we escape, if we neglect
so great salvation?

Christ, our Redeemer—2:5-18

Christ, greater than Moses—3:1-6

SECOND WARNING SECTION: 3:7-4:13

Harden not your heart, as in the provocation...

Christ, our High Priest—5:1-10

THIRD WARNING SECTION: 5:11-6:20

Leaving the principles, let us go on
unto perfection...

Christ, Priest after the order of Melchizedek—7:1-10

Christ, Priest superior to Aaron—7:11-28

Christ's Priesthood summarized—8:1-5

Christ's New Covenant—8:6-13

Old and New Covenants contrasted—9:1-14

Christ's sacrifice establishes the New Covenant
—9:15-28

The failure of the Old Covenant—10:1-18

SECOND SECTION: EXHORTATION:

10:19-13:25 (HAVING THEREFORE...LET US)

A plea to hold to the new faith—10:19-25

FOURTH WARNING SECTION: 10:26-31

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God

Remember the former days—10:32-39

What is Faith?—11:1-40

Run the race—12:1-2

God's discipline necessary—12:3-11

Walking a straight path—12:12-17

FIFTH WARNING SECTION: 12:18-29

See that you refuse not Him that speaketh

Workings of Faith—13:1-17

Benediction—13:18-25

AUTHOR

The book of Hebrews is anonymous. Many believe its authorship is Paul (see Hebrews 13:19, 23-24). Because its authorship is so uncertain, Martin Luther placed it at the end of Paul's writings and at the beginning of the General Epistles. Thus, it can "fall" into either category. It is not necessary to know its authorship to know its true writer is the Holy Spirit! It is one of the most profound of all New Testament books.

DATE

Since Clement quoted from it in 96 A.D., it cannot be later than that date. However, it seems the Jewish sacrificial system was still functioning (7:8, 8:4, 10:1, 2, 8, 11). If so, no date later than the time of the Destruction of Jerusalem will suffice (70 A.D.).

Because the writer seemed to be presenting his materials to "second generation" Christians, a date of 85 A.D. is also possible. Those who see an earlier date would place it about 65-69 A.D. As with the authorship, its date is really unimportant to us as we glean truth from it.

SETTING

The earliest manuscripts have the title *Pros Hebraious* ("To Hebrews") for the title. From the internal study of the book, we learn that it was written to a single congregation of Hebrew Christians, living in a segment of the Roman world (2:3, 5:11-12, 6:9-10, 13:23-24). Some think it was written to the church in Jerusalem.

The readers were in a backslidden condition, in danger of apostasy and departure from the faith. Faith was waning (3:6-14); prayer, public worship, and even basic Bible study were being neglected (2:1, 10:25, 12:12-13). In 5:12, their infant-like state is described.

One of the reasons for their condition was the threat of persecution. They had earlier withstood severe persecution (10:32-34), but now were beginning to weaken before it.

THEME

The purpose of the book is to rekindle embers which are burning low! Dullness of hearing was an alarming condition. The writer carefully alternates between TEACHING and WARNING sections (see outline).

In a glorious declaration of truth, Jesus Christ is exalted as being greater than all, our only hope, our High Priest, and above all, the Son of God.

NOTES

HEBREWS IS A COMMENTARY ON THE PENTATEUCH

Hebrews has been called the New Testament's "Commentary on the Pentateuch," especially the Book of Leviticus. There are 86 direct references to the Old Testament scriptures, traceable to at least 100 passages. This book explains the significance of Old Testament rituals in the light of Christ's coming. The numerous ceremonial laws, the sacrifices, the Priesthood—all are explained as nothing more than "shadows" of Christ. He becomes, for the New Covenant, the Sacrifice, the Priest, and the true Mediator between God and man.

All the TYPES of the Old Testament are revealed as foreshadowing the coming Christ. Hebrews has sometimes been called "The Fifth Gospel," because it tells of Jesus' finished work on earth and His continuing work in Heaven.

KEY PHRASES TO THINK ABOUT AS YOU READ...

"What have we...?" (1:1-7:28)

Found in 8:1, this phrase helps us focus on what we have in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"We have..." (8:1-10:18)

Also found in 8:1, we have a High Priest! But the emphasis is on the word "such!"

"Having, therefore, let us..." (10:19-13:25)

This phrase is found in the section listed above.

NOTE THESE CONTRASTS IN THE BOOK:

- Son and Angels—1:4-2:4
- Son and Moses—3:1-6
- Canaan rest and God's rest—3:12-4:13
- Christ and Aaron—4:14-5:10
- Spiritual infancy and maturity—5:11-14
- Apostasy and faithfulness—5:11-6:20
- Old and New Covenants—8:1-13
- Offerings of the Law and of Christ—9:1-10:18
- Faith and sight—11:1-40
- Mount Sinai and Mount Zion—12:18-29

CHRIST...

- The Son of God—1:1-2:4
- The Son of Man—2:5-4:13
- The High Priest—4:14-10:18

LET'S WALK THROUGH "THE FIFTH GOSPEL..."

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell us all about the life of Jesus from the time of His birth until His resurrection. In Acts, we see Him ascending into Heaven. Paul has told us He is dwelling within us now, that we are literally His new body on this earth, and that He consequently carries on His work through us, flowing His power (spiritual gifts) into His activities.

Now, Hebrews will focus upon the life of Jesus following His ascension. We discovered that He is "seated at the right hand of the Father" in Ephesians, and that He is not only in us, but we are also "in Him," seated with Him in heavenly places.

In Hebrews, we are going to dwell on the life and activity of Jesus in those heavenly places, and see our own situation there as well!

First, we focus upon the character of Jesus...

He is superior to all others!

He is greater than the prophets (1:1-3)

These verses give us the Father's description of Him in the Heavens—appointed by God as heir of all things, the One through whom God made the ages, the total expression of God's character, the One who holds all things together, the purifier of sins, and at God's right hand.

He is greater than the angels (1:4-2:18)

He has, by inheritance as a son, a greater name than angels. He has a greater relationship to the Father. He reigns forever and ever. His righteousness is the sceptre of His Kingdom.

We then are warned not to disregard God's word

Note the five warnings in this book, bracketed in the outline. The first one makes a point flowing from the position of Jesus in the Heavens. If Israel faced punishment in the Old Testament for disobeying the word of angels, how much greater will be the punishment for us if we disobey the word spoken by Jesus!

The author then continues in 2:5-18 to show why Jesus is greater than the angels. The focus is upon the redemptive ministry of Jesus in His earthly life.

Why did He have to come to earth?

First, in order to recapture our lost destiny (2:5-9). Man was originally created to rule over all the earth. He was put into training, positioned a little lower than the angels. Because he sinned, he was unable to rule. Jesus came to make that rule possible again.

Second, in order for us to regain our lost fellowship (2:10-13). Because of His suffering, Christ now unites us to the Father and is our "older Brother."

Third, to deliver us from bondage (2:14-18). The power of death keeps us "locked in" to a bondage that limits our confidence to function properly.

He is greater than Moses (3:1-19)

The reason is that Moses was a servant, while Christ is the beloved Son.

The second warning relates to Moses' not entering the promised land...

Recall that Moses stopped short of entering Canaan because of his disobedience to God. Our writer extends his thoughts about Moses and further reminds us that an entire generation of Israelites died in the wilderness because of unbelief. Sin's deceitfulness can generate unbelief within us. There is a "rest" to the people of God, and we are urged to enter into it.

THE "REST"

The "rest" of Hebrews is "His (God's) rest." He enjoys it, and He gives it! He enjoyed it when creation was finished, and He now has it because of the completed work of His Son's redemption. It is intended for the People of God. See 4:10 for the great conclusion!

There are three "rests" in the Bible:

1. The rest from creation (4:4)
2. The rest from salvation (4:10)
3. The rest from consecration (4:11)

This "rest for the people of God" is a powerful truth. It means there is nothing left for us to do. Jesus has finished the activity required for us to be the children of God. By faith, the opposite of unbelief, we enter into that finished work.

While others may seek to gain "significance" before God, gaining "merit" by their works, we need only rest with Christ in the Heavens. He has completed our salvation and there is absolutely nothing we can add to it by good works.

He is greater than Joshua (4:1-16)

Jesus' rest is greater than the "rest" given to the Israelites by Joshua. The Israelites only had 25-40 years of "rest" in the land, while Jesus gives us a "rest" that is eternal.

Note the power of God's word (4:12-13)

This is a classic statement about the power of God's revealed truth. Think deeply about these verses...

He is greater than Aaron (5:1-10)

Have you noted the pattern used by the writer? He is comparing Jesus to all the “heroes” of the Jews. The comparison with Aaron is leading to a great truth...

Jesus possesses perfectly what Aaron only possessed in part. Like Aaron, Jesus was taken from among men (5:1). He was also like Aaron in that he was chosen (5:4), compassionate (5:2), learned obedience (5:8 and 2:10), prayed (5:7), and suffered (5:8). But, unlike Aaron, Jesus is God’s unique Son, a priest like Melchizedek, and the author of eternal salvation.

The third warning is not to remain undeveloped in your spiritual growth (5:11-6:20)

Our great danger is that we might receive the precious salvation purchased by Christ’s blood on Calvary and then not enter into all the depths of that new relationship! Without any question, this is the warning needed most by the typical Christian in our generation.

Slowly read 5:11-14. Here is a picture of stunted growth. Note that spiritual gifts do not develop (teaching, v. 11; discerning true and false spirits, v. 14). The lesson is powerful—it is not enough to accept Christ as your Savior; but you must also crown Him Lord of all you are. Only when we let Him be Lord, and we become His servants, will we mature in our faith.

If you are among those who have received Christ into your heart through faith, and now have no appetite for Godly things, you are being described in this passage. The writer says (6:1), “GO ON! DON’T STOP HERE!”

His explanation is very simple. Once you have passed certain milestones in the Christian life, there is no way to further develop at that point. For example, if you have already completed Algebra 1, why would you desire to take that class over and over? It would be logical for you to move on to Algebra 2, would it not?

In the opening verses of chapter 6, we are given a list of the truths that babes in Christ need to know about. In verses 4-6, the writer says, "How many times can you go to the cross and be saved by Christ? How many times can you enter salvation?" Only once! Therefore, if you continue to stay at the cross, you are saying, "Jesus, climb back on your cross and die for me again and again. One time was not enough. I have already lost what you gained for me by my first trip to Calvary. I want my salvation back again. Die again for me!"

The writer says, "Friend, if you do that, you put Christ to an open shame! You tell the world the work of Jesus was not a finished work! And, it is a finished work!"

His illustration is in the next verses. How do you know that a piece of ground has been seeded? There is growth as a result. When the rains come, the seeds grow and show the plants. But, if the rains come and nothing has been planted in the ground, only weeds will grow. This is positive proof that no seed was planted.

Now, if the readers have not had the "seed of Christ" implanted within them, then there might be good reason to continue to think about the basic salvation doctrines. But this is not true of them. In verses 9-12, they are told there are signs of spiritual life within them. Therefore, they have no reason to continue to dwell on basic truths.

The writer continues in 6:13-20 by comparing the promise God made to Abraham with His promise to us that He would give us much more than just the salvation experience received at Calvary. All He has reserved for us is waiting for us!

When God made His covenant with Abraham, it was a commitment based upon the integrity of God's own name. It could not be cancelled. Therefore, Abraham's patient waiting was justified. He could not possibly miss receiving God's promises. God could not swear by anything greater than Himself.

God has made an even greater oath than the one He made to Abraham! He has promised us full maturity in His Son. We are to "go on" until we have received it. This hope of full maturity is sure and steadfast.

Further, Jesus (v. 20) is seen as our "forerunner" in this guarantee of the maturity waiting for us. That is an interesting expression... "forerunner!" In ancient times, a large ship would throw its anchor, connected by a rope to its bow, into a smaller ship called the "forerunner." That little tugboat would then draw the ship into the safety of the harbor, carefully pulling it around hidden rocks. Jesus is doing this for us. And, says the author, He is doing it as our everlasting "High Priest...according to the order of Melchizedek."

The Superior Priesthood of Christ (7:1-10:35)

In chapter 7, His priesthood is a royal one. He is a King as well as a priest. Melchizedek was such a person. His priesthood is a timeless one. Melchizedek was such a person. His priesthood is an independent one. So also was the priesthood of Melchizedek.

(On your own, continue to study the comparisons and contrasts of the High Priesthood of Jesus which follows...)

Note the contrast of the COVENANTS of the old and the new priesthods.

Three views concerning the identity of those who are within the new covenant:

1. The church has replaced Israel as the sole participant in this new covenant. (Paul refutes this in Romans 9-11!)
2. The covenant is only with Israel. (Thus, it does not fit chapter 8.)
3. The new covenant includes Israel, with the church a full participant with them in it.

In chapter 9, this new covenant is superior to the old one in the same way that the heavenly "temple" is superior to the earthly temple. In chapter 10, it is superior to the old one because the sacrifice of the heavenly "temple" is the Lamb of God, while the sacrifices of the earthly temple were endless animal lambs.

The fourth warning is about despising God's word (10:26-31)

These verses clearly refer to disobedient Christians. "Papa will spank His rebellious, immature child!"

The final section deals with the Faith Principle.

Chapter 11 is one of the greatest chapters in all of your Bible. Verse 1 tells us that “faith is believing something IS SO because you KNOW God is going to MAKE IT SO!”

In verse 39, we are told the justified will live by faith. Sandwiched between these verses are the heroes of faith in the Bible.

Chapter 12 outlines the pattern of faith. He tells us we are now on the playing field, and all those mentioned in chapter 11 are sitting in the bleachers watching us. We are to lay aside all that would weight us down, and run our race through total faith in Christ.

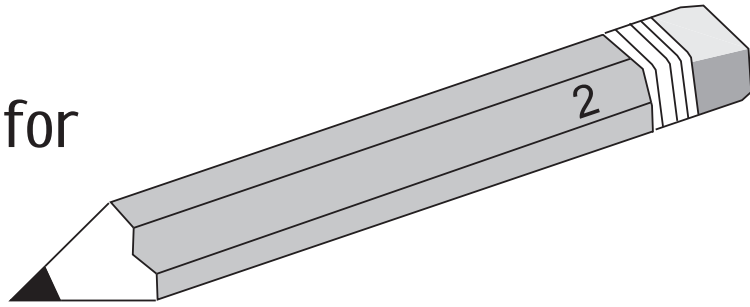
As every runner is disciplined to run more effectively by his coach, even so, our Father will discipline us. If we do not receive it, we are not His children! We can despise this discipline, as did Esau—who despised his birthright—or we can be stimulated by it.

The fifth warning: disagreeing with God’s word (12:25)

The teaching about faith concludes in chapter 13 with a description of the performance of faith. Note the powerful benediction which closes this letter in 13:20-21.

Understanding Hebrews is not easy, but offers more “meat” than any book other than Romans in your Bible!

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the Outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside Hebrews 6:4-6:

IF ONE WERE TO FALL,
REINSTATEMENT WOULD
BE IMPOSSIBLE. FALLING
ITSELF IS IMPOSSIBLE!

3. Write beside Hebrews 11:1:

GREATEST DEFINITION
OF FAITH IN BIBLE

4. Underline 4:16 in your Bible. This verse became the flag of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli during the Reformation. In the margin, write:

NO SACRIFICE BUT
CALVARY; NO PRIEST
BUT CHRIST; NO
CONFESSIONAL BUT THE
THRONE OF GRACE.

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty Three

THE BOOK OF JAMES

OUTLINE OF JAMES

INTRODUCTION: 1:1

FIRST SECTION: GENUINE RELIGION

Purpose of Trials—1:2-4

Asking in Faith—1:5-8

The Rich are Poor—1:9-11

Testings and Temptations Compared—1:12-18

Anger Discouraged—1:19-20

Doing the Word—1:21-25

Bridled Tongues—1:26

Pure Religion—1:27

SECOND SECTION: GENUINE FAITH

Favoritism Attacked—2:1-13

Faith Without Works—2:14-26

THIRD SECTION: GENUINE WISDOM

Teaching an Awesome Task—3:1-2

The Bridling of the Tongue—3:3-12

Bitter Jealousy and Selfish Ambition—3:13-18

FOURTH SECTION: GENUINE HUMILITY

Source of Quarrels and Conflicts—4:1-3

Adulteresses Admonished—4:4-10

Critical Spirits—4:11-12

Life's Length Unpredictable—4:13-17

FIFTH SECTION: GENUINE BEHAVIOR AWAITING THE LORD'S RETURN

The Ugly Rich—5:1-6

The Pricelessness of Patience—5:7-11

Oaths—5:12

Prayer for Healing—5:13-18

Restoration—5:19-20

AUTHOR

The writer of this book is James, the half-brother of Jesus. He was one of four younger brothers of our Lord (see Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3). He was slow to accept Christ (John 7:5), and was converted by the appearance of the risen Lord (1 Corinthians 15:7).

After Peter's activity in converting Cornelius the Gentile, the leadership of the Jerusalem church subtly shifts from him to James. (He never fully recovered from the suspicion left by his obedience to the Lord in that instance!). James then appears as the Bishop of the church in Jerusalem (see Acts 12:17, 15:13-29, 21:17-18, Galatians 1:19, 2:9,12).

DATE

The understanding of this book rests strongly on how we date it. The latest possible date for it must be 62 A.D., the year of his martyrdom. However, the letter does not refer at all to the Council in Jerusalem, held in 50 A.D. (Acts 15). The diaspora (dispersion) of the Jews mentioned in James 1:1 probably took place in 34 A.D. Thus, a dating between 34 and 50 A.D. seems to be in order.

Since the book is almost devoid of doctrinal content, it must have appeared before the writings of Paul (48-50 A.D.). Thus, James must be the earliest book written in the New Testament. When we read 1 Corinthians and see the strife and immorality within that early church, we can understand the emotions in James' heart as he hears of the "falling away" from a vital, true faith which is taking place in these scattered churches.

Assuming that it would take a couple of years for the scattered churches to become so carnal, we may position a date as early as 36 A.D.

THEME

Filled with sadness over the lack of pure love's expression, and concerned over the developing persecution by the Romans, James writes to the Jewish churches. If we assume Paul's ministry has not yet begun and Gentiles are not yet being added in large numbers to the Christian community, the salutation in 1:1 makes sense. In a word, James says, FAITH WITHOUT WORKS? DEAD!

NOTES

TRIALS AND TEMPTATION (Chapter 1)

HEARING AND DOING (James 1:19 ff)

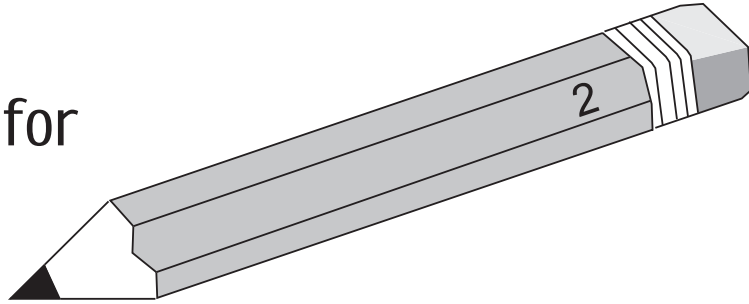
FAITH THAT WORKS (James 2:14ff)

THE TONGUE (James 3:1-12)

THE BREVITY OF LIFE (James 4:13 ff)

HEALING IN THE BOOK OF JAMES (James 5:13ff)

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the Outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside James 1:22:

KEY TO BOOK

3. Write beside James 5:14:

**NOTE: THE SICK
CALL FOR THE ELDERS,
NOT THE ELDERS
CALLING FOR THE SICK!**

4. Add any other notes to your Bible you want to preserve from this study.

Unit Forty Four

1 PETER

2 PETER

OUTLINE OF 1 PETER

INTRODUCTION: 1:1-2

FIRST SECTION: OUR SALVATION

Begotten by the Father—1:3

Provided as an Inheritance—1:4

Preserved by His power, not our works—1:5a

Future salvation—1:5b

Cause for rejoicing—1:6

Purpose of trials—1:7a

Future salvation, ours at His appearing—1:7b-9

Prophesied by Old Testament authors—1:10

Wrote, but did not understand—1:11-12

Our response—1:13-16

Our judgment—1:17

Basis for redemption—1:18-21

Love of the brethren—1:22

Being “born again”—1:23

The authority of the Word—1:24-25

SECOND SECTION: OUR SANCTIFICATION

Change your diet—2:1-3

The Church as “living stones”—2:4-8

The Church as “segullah”—2:9-10

Conduct as Christians—2:11-18

Suffering’s place—2:19-25

THIRD SECTION: HUSBANDS AND WIVES IN CHRIST

Words to wives with unsaved husbands—3:1-6

Words to husbands with unsaved wives—3:7

Words to husbands and wives alike—3:8-12

FOURTH SECTION: HOW TO SUFFER

Suffering for well-doing—3:13-17

Christ's suffering—3:18

His preaching unto the spirits in prison (the dead)
—3:19-20

The meaning of baptism—3:21-22

Suffering without sinning—4:1-5

Commentary on 3:19—4:6

Love and hospitality—4:7-9

Using spiritual gifts—4:10-11

More suffering to come—4:12-13

Suffer for Christ, not because of sin—4:14-19

FIFTH SECTION: GENERAL WORDS TO THE CHURCHES

To the elders—5:1-4

To the members—5:5-7

Resisting Satan—5:8-9

Apostolic Benediction—5:10-11

Final farewells—5:12-14

OUTLINE OF 2 PETER

OPENING BENEDICTION—1:1-4

FIRST SECTION: GROWING AND GROUNDING

The steps of Christian growth—1:5-11

Peter's awareness of his death—1:12-15

The ground for his teachings: his own eyewitness
—1:16-18

BUT...the scriptures even more authoritative!
—1:19-21

SECOND SECTION: ATTACK UPON FALSE TEACHERS

Their danger described—2:1-2

The surety of their judgment: past judgments—2:3-10

The vileness of their inner character—2:11-22

THIRD SECTION: THE EVENTS SURROUNDING "THE DAY OF THE LORD"

Remember Old Testament prophecies—3:1-2

Dealing with the scoffers—3:3-4

The "Word" that spoke creation...—3:5

...and caused the flood...—3:6

...is the "Word" which will act upon it again!—3:7

The time frame belongs to God—3:8

Reason for the delay—3:9

The earth to be burned up—3:10

How shall we then live?—3:11-12

After the fire, a renovation—3:13

Again: How shall we then live?—3:14

Refers to Paul's writings—3:15-18

AUTHOR

Without any dispute, Peter wrote both letters, as evidenced by his many personal references.

DATE

The date for 1 Peter relates to his reference in 1 Peter 5:13, where he says he is writing from "Babylon." Some think Peter was speaking literally, and that he spent his last days in that city. Little evidence exists to confirm this view. The clearer meaning is that this Old Testament city's name has taken on a special meaning. It had always stood for a place of satanic power and deception.

One of the earliest writers of the church, following the death of the Apostles, was Tertullian. He said, "Babylon, in [the writings of] John, is a figure of the city Rome, as being equally great and proud of her sway, and triumphant over the saints."

Thus, Peter is considered by some to have been in Rome when he wrote. If this is true, the date would be during the reign of Nero in 63 or 64 A.D. Nero was responsible for the death by martyrdom of Peter, as Jesus had prophesied (John 21:18-19).

2 Peter was written shortly thereafter, from the same place and possibly within months. It was a final word from Peter to his beloved brothers and sisters as he expected his execution. Considering the fact that Peter had a child at the time he followed Jesus, he probably was in his sixties when death came.

THEME

In 1 Peter, he seems to anticipate the terrible persecution which may be unleashed by Nero, who was literally insane at the time of his rule over the Roman empire. He seeks to strengthen the readers by helping them see there are future aspects to their salvation and that death brings the joy of experiencing them. Many practical “how to walk in Christ” comments are made.

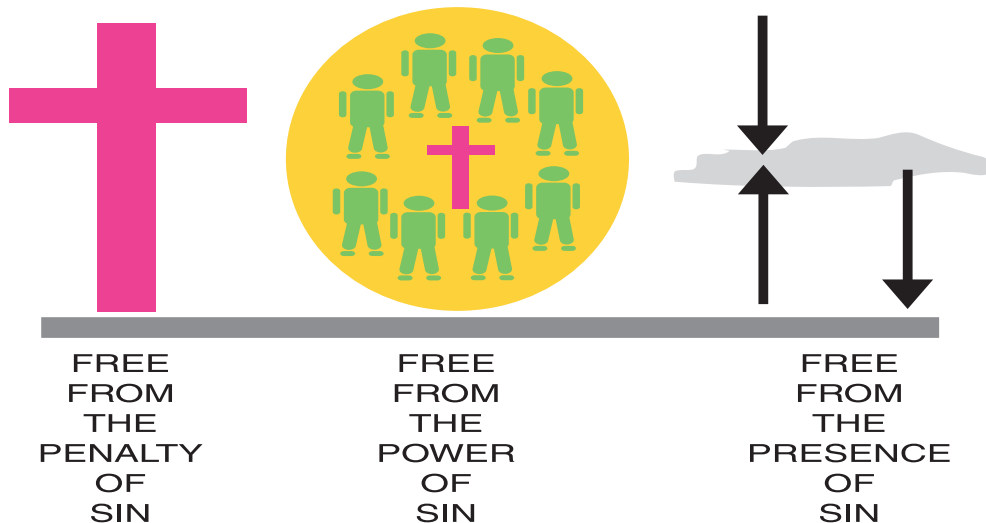
In 2 Peter, he is anticipating his own death, and is sharing three primary things. First, he wants the readers to know their authority is in the written Word of God, and that they should not follow the false teachings of contemporaries. Second, he wants them to face suffering for their faith in a different way than suffering for their own faults. Third, he wants them to recognize that the “Day of the Lord” will change every vestige of earth, and that a new Kingdom will be established here.

THREE ASPECTS OF SALVATION

PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE



THE CHURCH AS LIVING STONES

THE CHURCH AS "SEGULLAH"

LIVING WITH AN UNBELIEVER

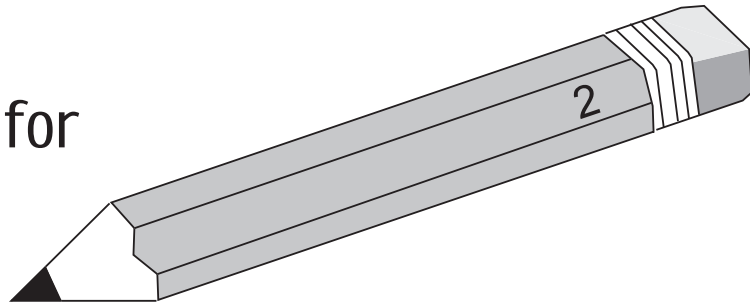
THE USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

“PREACHING TO THE SPIRITS”

PETER’S VIEW OF INSPIRATION

THE “DAY OF THE LORD” AND THE
RENOVATION OF THE EARTH

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside 1 Peter 1:10-12, or as a footnote:

BIBLE AUTHORS READ
THEIR OWN WRITINGS
TO SEE WHAT GOD
HAD SAID THROUGH THEM!

3. Write beside 2 Peter 3:10-14:

THE CLIMAX OF THE
DAY OF THE LORD:
COMPLETE RENOVATION!

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty Five

1 JOHN

2 JOHN

3 JOHN

JUDE

OUTLINE OF 1 JOHN

INTRODUCTION: THE PERSONS OF

THE FELLOWSHIP—1:1-4

Testimony to Christ—1:1-4

FIRST SECTION: THE LIGHT OF FELLOWSHIP—1:5-2:27

God is light—1:5-7

Sin, its reality and remedy—1:8-2:2

Tests of true knowledge—2:3-6

The first love—2:7-17

The danger of antichrists—2:18-27

SECOND SECTION: THE LOVE OF FELLOWSHIP—2:28-4:21

The children of God and righteousness—2:28-3:10

Love one another—3:11-24

Trying the spirits—4:1-6

God is love—4:7-21

THIRD SECTION: THE WAY TO FELLOWSHIP—5:1-12

The New Birth: its threefold proof—5:1-5

The witness concerning the son—5:6-12

FOURTH SECTION: THE CERTAINTY OF FELLOWSHIP

—5:13-21

The knowledge of eternal life—5:13-20

FIFTH SECTION: GENERAL WORDS TO THE CHURCHES

—5:21

AUTHOR

The disciple John is the author. There is a remarkable similarity in vocabulary and style between the Gospel of John and the three letters in this section.

DATE

Writing from Ephesus, the location of John in the later years of his ministry, this letter dates between 85-95 A.D. He wrote to the churches in the region around that city.

THEME

This is a pastoral letter, dealing with several themes:

1. The Gnostic heresy
2. Dealing with sin
3. The marks of the true Christian
4. The assurance of salvation

OUTLINE OF 2 JOHN

INTRODUCTION: 1:1-3

FIRST SECTION: A NEW REASON FOR REJOICING—4

SECOND SECTION: A NEW LEVEL OF LIFE—5-6

THIRD SECTION: A NEW SOURCE OF DANGER—7

FOURTH SECTION: A NEW BASIS OF APPEAL—8

FIFTH SECTION: A NEW NEED FOR WATCHFULNESS—9-11

CONCLUSION: 12-13

AUTHOR

John, the beloved disciple, writing from Ephesus. He ministered to the people in Asia Minor after the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.) until nearly the end of the century.

DATE

All three of these letters were written between 85-95 A.D.

THEME

A Pastoral Letter, written to encourage faithfulness to the truth of God.

OUTLINE OF 3 JOHN

SALUTATION—1-2

WITNESS OF THEIR WALK IN THE TRUTH—3-4

SERVICE TO THE BRETHREN—5-8

REBUKE TO DIOTREPHES—9-10

A GOOD TESTIMONY—11-12

CONCLUSION—13-14

AUTHOR

John, the beloved disciple, writing from Ephesus.

DATE

All three of these letters were written between 85-95 A.D.

THEME

Working together in love.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF JUDE

SALUTATION—1-2

JUDGMENT ON FALSE TEACHERS—3-16

EXHORTATIONS TO CHRISTIANS—17-23

BENEDICTION—24-25

AUTHOR

Jude identifies himself as the brother of James (v.1); thus, he is one of the Lord's half-brothers.

DATE

Possibly between 80-90 A.D.

THEME

The threat of subversive teachers compelled Jude to write a strong letter contending for the faith. The entire letter is a warning against false teachers within the church, and contains strong words!

SPECIAL STUDIES:

ABIDING AND KNOWING

THE HUMANITY OF JESUS

CONFESSION

COMMITTING SIN

PROPITIATION

UNCTION

THE WITNESS CONCERNING THE SON

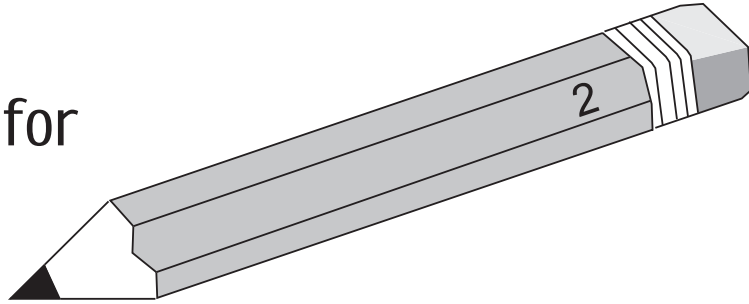
THE ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIFE

THE ELECT LADY

ANGELS WHO KEPT NOT THEIR FIRST ESTATE

FALSE TEACHERS

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside 1 John 1:9
(or footnote if room is needed):

**CONFESS: "TO AGREE WITH
GOD." IT IS VIEWING SIN
AS GOD VIEWS IT AND TO
AGREE WITH HIS JUDGMENT
AGAINST SIN.**

3. Write beside Jude 14:

**THE RETURN OF CHRIST
AFTER THE RAPTURE:
HE COMES WITH HIS SAINTS.**

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty Six

THE BOOK OF REVELATION—I

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

INTRODUCTION: CHAPTER 1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ—1:1-3

Destination: The 7 Churches—1:4

Description: The Bridegroom and the Bride—1:5-8

Author's Explanation—1:9-18

Outline of Book—1:19

Symbolism Explained—1:20

PART 1: THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN:

CHAPTERS 2-3

Message to Ephesus—2:1-7

Message to Smyrna—2:8-11

Message to Pergamum—2:12-17

Message to Thyatira—2:18-29

Message to Sardis—3:1-6

Message to Philadelphia—3:7-13

Message to Laodicea—3:14-22

PART 2: THE THINGS WHICH ARE: CHAPTERS: 4-5

The Throne of God—4:1-4

The Worship of the Creator—4:5-11

The Seven-Sealed Book—5:1-4

Christ, the "Slain Lamb," worthy to open it—5:5-7

The Worship of the Lamb—5:8-14

PART 3: THE THINGS WHICH SHALL TAKE PLACE:
CHAPTERS 6-22

1. THE BOOK OPENED, SEAL BY SEAL
 1. The first seal: False Christ—6:1-2
 2. The second seal: War—6:3-4
 3. The third seal: Famine—6:5-6
 4. The fourth seal: Death—6:7-8
 5. The fifth seal: Martyrdom—6:9-11
 6. The sixth seal: Terror—6:12-17

FIRST INTERLUDE—7:1-17

2. THE SEVENTH SEAL: SEVEN TRUMPETS SOUND
 7. The breaking of the seventh seal—8:1

Seven angels with seven trumpets—8:2

The prayers of the saints at the altar—8:3-5

The angels begin sounding the trumpets—8:6

1. First trumpet: 1/3 of earth burned up—8:7
2. Second trumpet: 1/3 of sea becomes blood, 1/3 of marine life and ships destroyed—8:8-9
3. Third trumpet: 1/3 of waters made bitter—8:10-11
4. Fourth trumpet: 1/3 of universe smitten—8:12

3. THE LAST 3 TRUMPETS: THE THREE "WOES"

Announcing of the three woes—8:13

5. Fifth trumpet, First Woe: bottomless pit opened; locusts bring torment—9:1-12

6. Sixth trumpet, Second Woe: army from the East
—9:13-21

SECOND INTERLUDE—10:1-11:14

The angel and the “Little Book”—10:1-11
The Two Witnesses—11:1-14

4. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET: SEVEN PERSONS

1. First person: Israel—12:1-2
2. Second person: Satan—12:3-4
3. Third person: Christ—12:5-6
4. Fourth person: Archangel Michael—12:7-12

Satan persecutes Israel—12:13-16

5. Fifth person: Jewish remnant—12:17
6. Sixth person: Beast out of the Sea—13:1-10
7. Seventh person: Beast out of the Earth
—13:11-18

THIRD INTERLUDE: 14:1-15:8

Vision of the Lamb and the 144,000—14:1-5

Vision of the Angel with the Everlasting Gospel
—14:6-7

Fall of Babylon announced—14:8

Doom of the Beast-worshippers announced—14:9-12

Blessedness of the holy dead—14:13

Vision of Armageddon—14:14-20

Before the Throne of God—15:1-8

5. THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH

Bowls released—16:1

1. First bowl: sores—16:2
2. Second bowl: Sea turns to blood—16:3
3. Third bowl: Rivers turn to blood—16:4-7
4. Fourth bowl: Sun scorches earth—16:8-9
5. Fifth bowl: Darkness and pain—16:10-11
6. Sixth bowl: Euphrates dries up—16:12

Armageddon—16:13-16

7. Seventh bowl: Hailstones—16:17-21

6. THE SEVEN DOOMS

1. The doom of "Babylon"—17:1-19:19

A divine view of Babylon—17:1-7

Interpretation of the symbolism—17:8-18

Warning to God's people to get out—18:1-8

A human view of Babylon—18:9-19

An angelic view of Babylon—18:10-24

FOURTH INTERLUDE: 19:1-10

Fourfold Hallelujah—19:1-6

Marriage of the Lamb—19:7-10

Second Coming of Christ—19:11-19

2. The doom of the Beast—19:20
3. The doom of the False Prophet—19:20
4. The doom of the kings—19:21

Satan bound—20:1-3

First resurrection—20:4-6

5. The doom of Gog and Magog—20:7-9
6. The doom of Satan—20:10
7. The doom of the unbelieving dead—20:11-15

7. THE SEVEN NEW THINGS

1. New Heaven—21:1
2. New Earth—21:1-2
3. New Peoples—21:3-8
4. New Jerusalem—21:9-21
5. New Temple—21:22
6. New Light—21:23-27
7. New Paradise—22:1-7

FINAL INTERLUDE: 21:8-21

THE LAST MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE—21:8-19

THE LAST PROMISE AND PRAYER
OF THE BIBLE—21:20-21

AUTHOR

Five times the book is declared to be the writing of John, the beloved disciple: 1:1,4, 9; 21:2; 22:8.

An attestation to John's authorship also comes from these disciples:

JOHN disciplined POLYCARP, the pastor of the church in Smyrna;

POLYCARP disciplined IRENAEUS, who died in 190 A.D.;

IRENAEUS of Lyons, in documents written by him which we possess today, attested to John's authorship.

DATE

Revelation was written during the latter time of Domitian's reign (95-96 A.D.). One of the characteristics of this Caesar's determined attempt to destroy Christianity was the exiling of its leaders. Thus, John (the leader of Christianity at this time in Asia Minor) writes from the island of Patmos. It is a horseshoe-shaped rock island about 6 miles wide and 10 miles long. It is about 25 miles off the coast, due west of Miletus. He was a prisoner required to chip out rocks used for state buildings and pagan temples. John was a very old man, perhaps in his eighties, at the time of writing.

THEME

The Greek title is APOKALUPSIS: "Unveiling." At the heart of this book is our Christ. It unveils the future in much the same way the book of Daniel did. We may attest to the accuracy of this book by noticing the precision in forecasting the future found in that Old Testament book!

THE READERS

The letter is to be cycled among seven churches in Asia Minor. These churches are in their third generation of life, and have faced the vileness of a pagan culture since their beginnings. Slavery, idolatry, sexual promiscuity, and delusions of the Mystery Religions have always surrounded them. In addition, the terrible persecution of the Roman government is now at its height. Emperor Worship had been set forth in earnest; any who refused to worship Domitian were considered subversive.

APOCALYPTIC WRITING

Apocalyptic writing has well-marked characteristics:

- Figurative style
Many of the phrases are drawn from Biblical writings.
- Supernatural conveying of information
The announcements are made by angels, visions, and other supernatural means. The unseen world that lies behind the action of this present world is highlighted.

NUMERICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The use of numbers in Revelation is obviously a part of the symbolisms which must be understood. In Scripture, the numbers which commonly contain symbolic value include:

- 1: Unity, oneness (Deuteronomy 6:4)
- 2: Strength (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)
- 3: God, the Trinity (Matthew 28:19)
- 4: The World (Revelation 7:1)
- 5: Man (Leviticus 14:14-16)
- 6: Evil, Satanic (Revelation 13:18)
- 7: Perfection, completeness (Revelation 1:4)

- 10: Five doubled; hence, completeness (Revelation 2:10)

- 12: God's perfection revealed to the created order (Revelation 21:12)

HOW TO INTERPRET

1. Take everything literally unless there is an obvious symbolism intended. (Example: 1:1-3)
2. Look for an explanation of the meaning within the book itself. (Example: Revelation 1:20)
3. Look for a further explanation of the meaning within the Bible itself.
(Example: Revelation 4:3 with Ezekiel 1:26,27)

THE OLD TESTAMENT BACKGROUND OF REVELATION

This book assumes a good understanding of the Old Testament by the reader. Three hundred and forty-eight references to it are to be found! Of these, 95 are repeated more than once, so the actual number of different Old Testament passages are two hundred and fifty—an average of more than TEN for EVERY CHAPTER in Revelation.

Only a small number of these references include more than three or four words in sequence. One authority points out that of the 404 verses of the Apocalypse, 278 refer to the Old Testament.

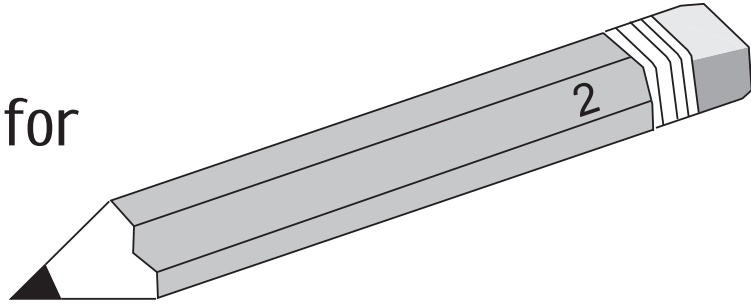
SOME FINAL THOUGHTS ...

Revelation is the only book of prophecy in the New Testament, in contrast to seventeen in the Old Testament! It is also the only one in the entire Bible that promises a special blessing on those who study it, and a judgment on those who add or take away from it.

COMPARISONS WITH DANIEL

ITEM	DANIEL	REVELATION
ISRAEL	3:6	Chapter 12
ANTICHRIST	3:1-7 7:7,8,24-25 9:27 11:36-45	Chapter 13
LENGTH OF THE TRIBULATION	9:24-27	11:2 12:6 13:5 Chapter 14

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside Revelation 1:19:

KEY TO OUTLINE
OF REVELATION

3. Write beside Revelation 22:17:

THE FINAL INVITATION
OF A LOVING DEITY!

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty Seven

THE BOOK OF REVELATION—II

CHAPTERS 1-5

OUTLINE OF REVELATION 1-5

INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION: CHAPTER 1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ—1:1-3

Destination: The 7 Churches—1:4

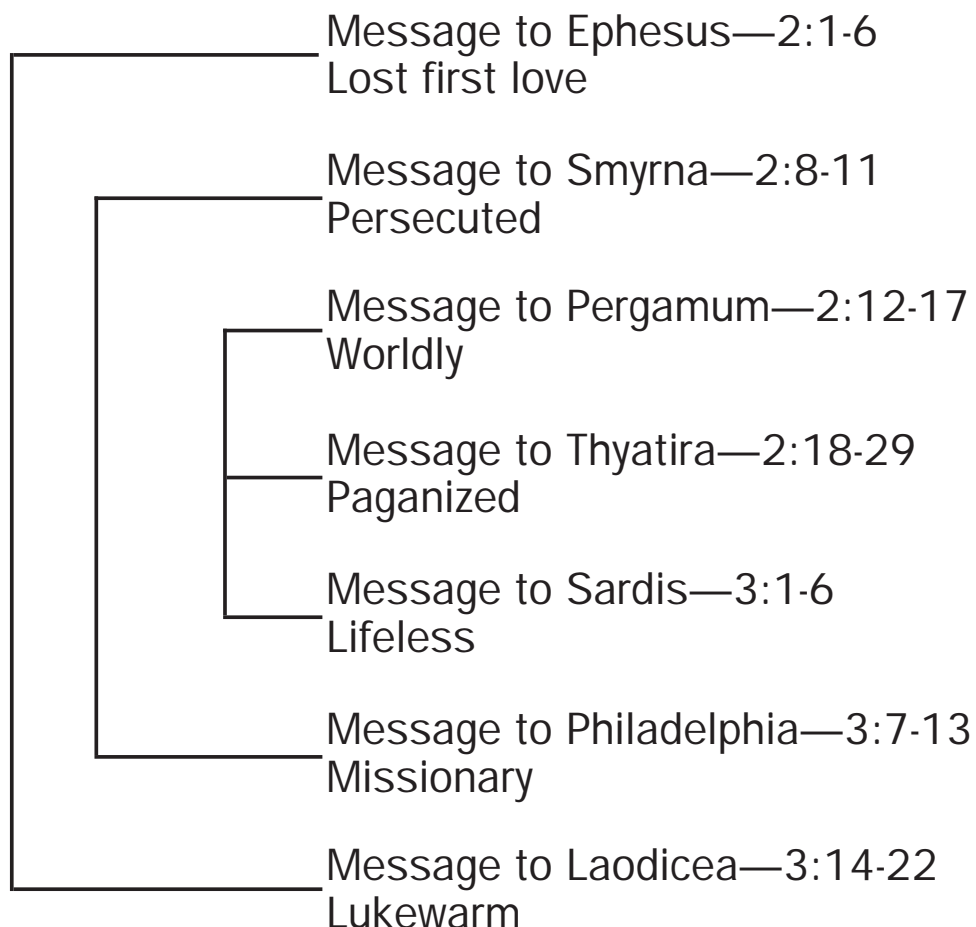
Description: The Bridegroom and the Bride—1:5-8

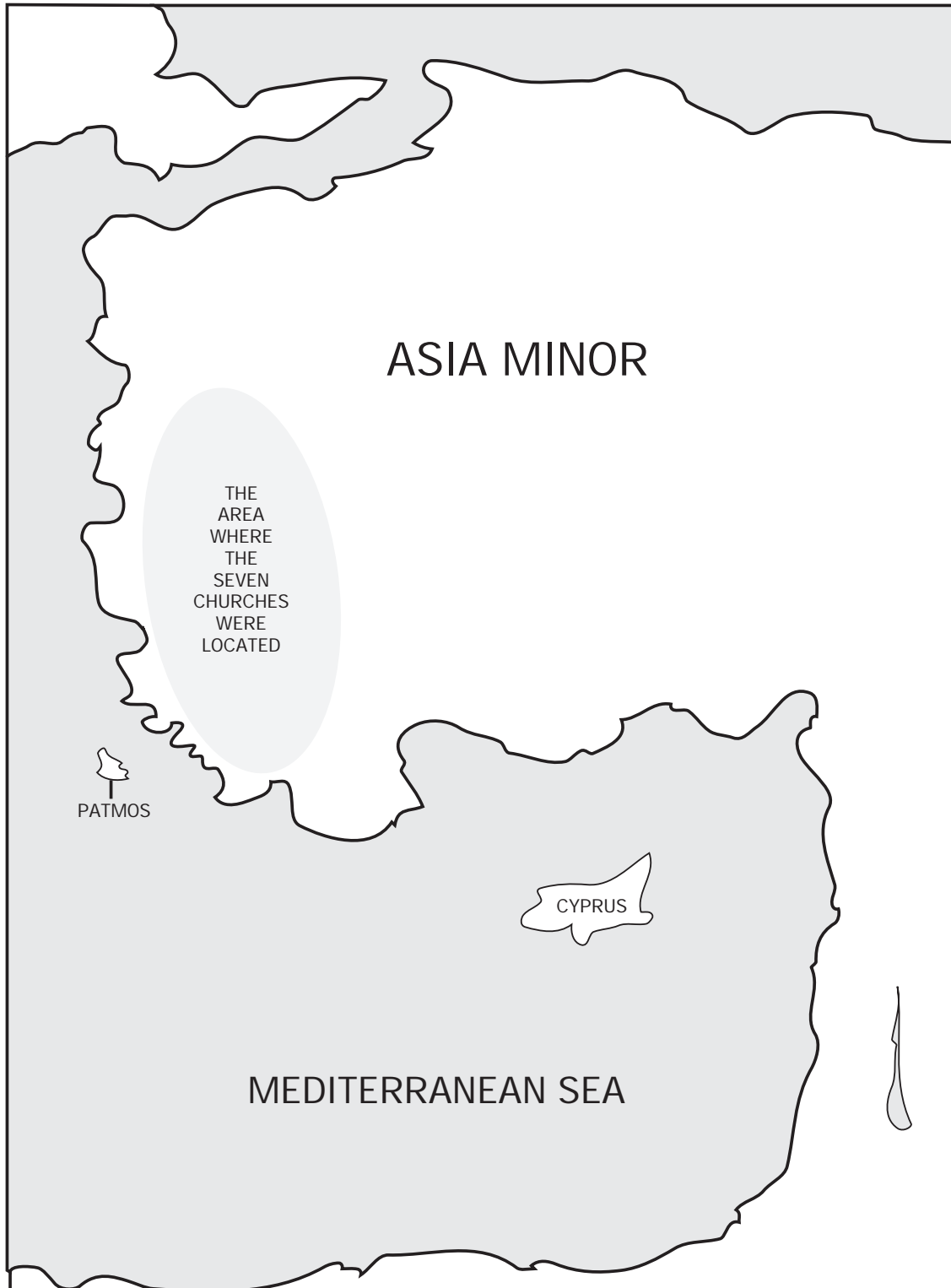
Author's Explanation—1:9-18

Outline of Book—1:19

Symbolism Explained—1:20

PART 1: THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN: CHAPTERS 2—3





FROM PATMOS, John could see Asia Minor. In his heart, he could see the spiritual condition of the seven church bodies he had nurtured for so many years. He felt their future was threatened by their poor relationships with their Lord, and saw their future in a vision.

PART 2: THE THINGS WHICH ARE: CHAPTERS: 4—5

The Throne of God—4:1-4

24 Elders: see 5:10. They are the Church, the Bride of Christ.

The Worship of the Creator—4:5-11

4 Living Creatures: see Ezekiel 10:20.

They are the Cherubim. Numerous eyes indicate spiritual perception. Both men and angels worship God!

The Seven-Sealed Book—5:1-4

This is the record of history yet unrevealed. It is not under the power of any man!

Christ, the "Slain Lamb," worthy to open it—5:5-7

V. 6 in the Greek describes a lamb with its throat slit, the head hanging awkwardly.

The Worship of the Lamb—5:8-14

Overwhelming! All creatures everywhere join in the mighty song of praise to the Lamb!

NOTES

THE FOUR MAIN SCHOOLS OF INTERPRETATION OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

SYMBOLIC, OR IDEALIST

PREMISE: Revelation is seen as only a series of pictures teaching spiritual truths. It sees no prophecy of specific historical events. It is held by those who have a low view of inspiration of scripture.

PRETERIST

PREMISE: All of the prophecies in Revelation were fulfilled in the First Century, with eternal destiny taught only in the last two chapters. It also is held by those who have a low view of inspiration of scripture.

CONTINUOUS-HISTORICAL

PREMISE: All of Revelation up to 19:1 applies to the centuries since the time of Christ. Only chapters 19-22 foretell events after Christ's second coming. Those who hold this view are widely scattered in their interpretations. For example, the Reformation is the mighty Angel in Chapter 10. Chapters 12-18 deal with the church internally, not chronologically. This view is typical of those who come to the book with prior decision to interpret it by personal projection, not by the direction of scripture itself.

FUTURIST

PREMISE: All of Revelation from chapter 4 speaks prophetically of "The Day of the Lord." It is the only interpretation that truly perceives the prophetic nature of the Old and New Testaments, and the perfect harmony which exists between them where prophecy is concerned.

Futurists divide into two camps in interpreting the Letters to the Seven Churches. One sees these churches representing seven periods of church history, leading up to the rapture in 4:1. The other sees these churches as describing literal churches in John's day, but descriptive of churches in all ages of history, up to the end times.

THE 3 VIEWS OF THE MILLENNIUM

POSTMILLENNIAL

PREMISE: Virtually extinct today, this view was popular among Heilsgeschichte scholars (do you remember what that means?) in the 1800's. It held that the Millennium was an age of peace and enlightenment, followed by the return of Christ. "Bringing back the King" would be done by educating the illiterates of the earth: literate people would be civilized to the point that they would no longer follow their animal instincts. World War I popped this bubble!

AMILLENNIAL

PREMISE: Commonly held today among neo-orthodox scholars, this view says there is NO (A) Millennium. The Millennium is a spiritual thing, taking place as Christ reigns with His saints in heaven at the present time. Further, God has ended all covenant commitments with the Jew. The church has replaced Israel as the chosen people. There is only the "spiritual Jew" today.

PREMILLENNIAL

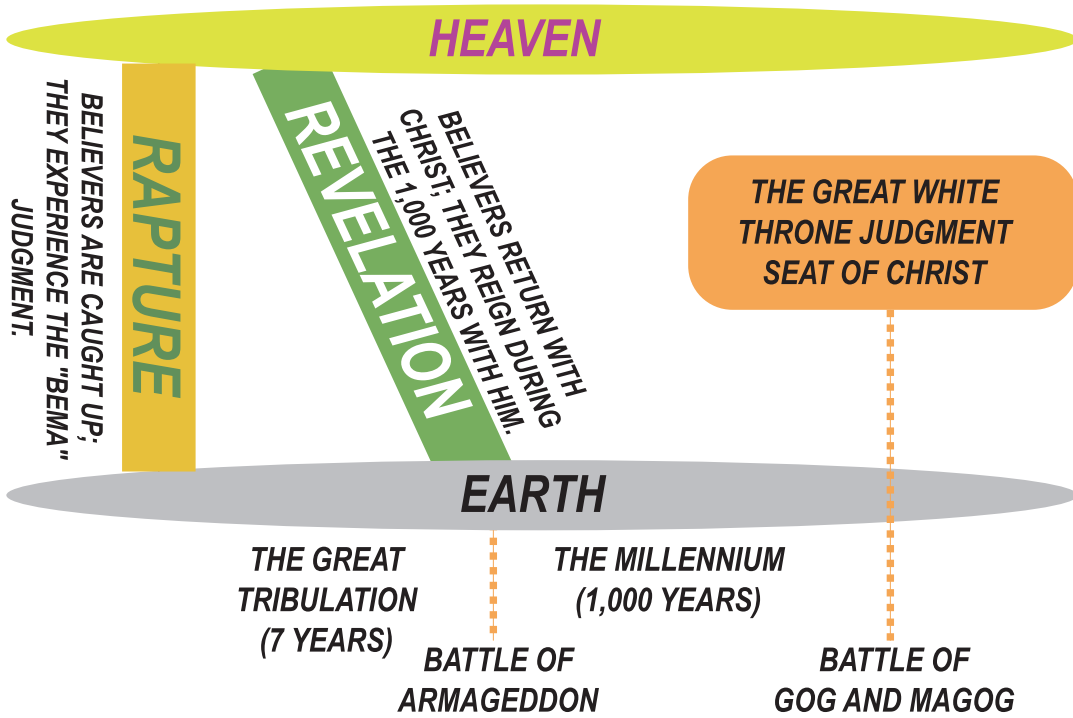
PREMISE: Christ will come to the earth BEFORE (PRE) the Millennium begins, to rule the world with His saints, for a literal 1,000 years. Satan is bound and powerless during this time.

The period called The Great Tribulation precedes this Millennial reign. Its duration is 7 years, broken into two halves of 3 1/2 years (42 months).

The rapture, or taking away of the Church, is usually seen as taking place at the start of The Great Tribulation. While some minor schools of Bible scholars see the rapture as taking place in the middle (Mid-Tribulation) or the end (Post-Tribulation) of the period, the vast majority hold to the first view.

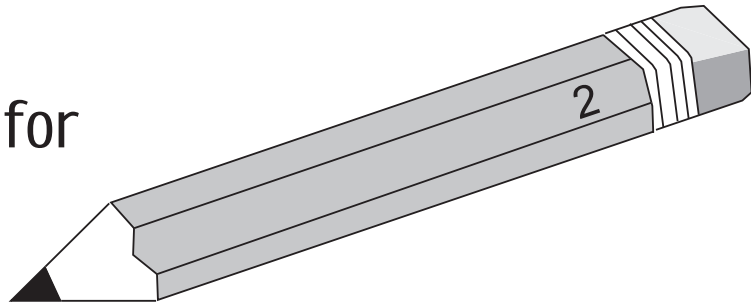
NOTES

THE WORLD'S LAST TWO BATTLES



NOTES

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside Revelation 1:6:

**SEE 4:4 AND 5:10,
ALONG WITH 1 PETER 2:5**

3. Write beside Revelation 1:18:

**HADES — LIT., "GEHENNAH" —
THE PLACE OF ETERNAL
CONFINEMENT FOR THOSE
WHO HAVE REJECTED GOD.**

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty Eight

THE BOOK OF REVELATION—III

CHAPTERS 6—16

PART 3: THE THINGS WHICH SHALL TAKE PLACE: CHAPTERS 6—22

AN OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS 6-16

In chapters 6 through 11, we read about the breaking of the Seven Seals on the Book of History. The broken seventh Seal introduces us to 7 Trumpets, which sound in turn. The sequence of these two series is uninterrupted. They flow out of chapters 4 and 5.

THE SEALS deal with broad principles of judgment: war, poverty, pestilence, etc., true of all periods in history.

THE TRUMPETS deal with specific, concrete judgments, set into a more narrow interval of time than the seals. The first 4 trumpet judgments are physical in character; the last 3 are produced by spiritual forces.

BOTH deal with a real order of events. The seventh trumpet (10:7, 11:15-19) marks the establishment of the Kingdom of God over all lesser powers. With it, the period of the Great Tribulation comes to a conclusion.

In chapters 12 through 16, we find a detailed treatment of "signs," describing certain aspects of this period of Tribulation. In these signs "the wrath of God is finished" (15:1). There are three main "signs:"

1. The woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet
2. The great red dragon (12:3)
3. The final judgments of the 7 bowls (15:1)

Thus, chapters 12-16 are a more detailed presentation of the period generally described by the trumpets. We see a powerful dictatorship uniting politics, commerce, society, and cults. It deals with the conflict between the dictatorship of the Dragon and the first Beast, and the loyalty of God's servants.

In chapters 12-16, we are introduced to a period of time described as 1,260 days (12:6), "a time, times, and half a time" (12:14), or 42 months (13:5). This measures the final 3 1/2 year span of the 7-year Tribulation period, a period in which the Woman (Israel) is persecuted by the Dragon (Satan).

THE DATING OF THIS PERIOD

These chapters cover a 7 year period, The Great Tribulation. With the completion of chapter 3, we leave the age of the Church, the time period in which we now live. In 4:1 the removal of the church, described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, takes place: "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things."

1. THE BOOK OPENED, SEAL BY SEAL

1. The first seal: False Christ—6:1-2
The Antichrist has appeared! He assumes the posture of the Christ, who is the true wearer of the Crown.
2. The second seal: War—6:3-4
He throws the world into war, taking peace “from the earth.”
3. The third seal: Famine—6:5-6
World famine follows...
4. The fourth seal: Death—6:7-8
In the Greek, this horse is the color of green, rotted flesh. A fourth of the population dies...
(Four=partial).
5. The fifth seal: Martyrdom—6:9-11
This takes place in the middle of the Tribulation. These martyrs are also described in 20:4...
6. The sixth seal: Terror—6:12-17
This passage introduces a dramatic, natural upheaval in the trauma of the Tribulation.

FIRST INTERLUDE—7:1-17

Back to the Throne (chapters 4-5) we go! Four angels are holding back the next holocaust. There we see 144,000 Israelites who have been martyred, along with a countless multitude of Gentiles. In this first period of Tribulation, Israel has recognized Jesus as the Messiah; the nation is sending Jewish missionaries to the ends of the earth. Finally, finally, the nations of the earth will receive the message of God’s love, grace, and redeeming power through Israel.

2. THE SEVENTH SEAL INTRODUCES SEVEN TRUMPETS, SOUNDING JUDGMENT

7. The breaking of the seventh seal—8:1

“Silence”—awe because of what will take place!

Seven angels with seven trumpets—8:2

Each angel’s trumpet will release judgment.

The prayers of the saints at the altar—8:3-5

Do you recall our Tabernacle studies, and the fire taken from the altar where the lamb was slain? The Priest used it to ignite the incense, which burned inside the Tabernacle on the Altar of Incense (prayer).

The angels begin to sound the trumpets—8:6

1. First trumpet: 1/3 of earth burned up—8:7

In the context of Ezekiel 38:22, we see God’s judgment falling through natural calamities upon the wickedness of those on earth.

2. Second trumpet: 1/3 of sea becomes blood, 1/3 of marine life and ships destroyed—8:8-9

The judgment spreads from land to sea...

3. Third trumpet: 1/3 of waters made bitter—
8:10-11

Could this polluted water result from atomic fission?

4. Fourth trumpet: 1/3 of universe smitten—8:12

This is unprecedented in history!

3. THE LAST 3 TRUMPETS: THE THREE “WOES”

Announcing of the three woes—8:13

Into this awesome scene comes the warning that the worst is yet to come!

5. Fifth trumpet, First Woe:

Bottomless pit opened, locusts bring torment—9:1-12

These represent demonic angelic forces—(Jude 6, 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7)—which are released to infect the activity of men with their evil power.

6. Sixth trumpet, Second Woe:

Army from the East—9:13-21

This army of 200 million comes from China. They currently possess the largest army of footsoldiers on the face of the earth.

SECOND INTERLUDE—10:1-11:14

The angel and the “Little Book”—10:1-11

In Greek, a “scrap of paper,” not a “book” as we think of one. It is the Gospel: sweet to the mouth, bitter to the stomach, speaking of the judgment it brings to those who do not confess Jesus as Lord.

The Two Witnesses—11:1-14

While some suggest these are Moses and Elijah, it is not necessary to identify them. Their death occurs in Jerusalem.

4. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET: SEVEN PERSONS—11:15-19

Once again, we start from the throne of God. In the introductory verses, we see the activity of the twenty-four elders. Then, in 12:1, we return to the earth's trauma. Note the "signs" referred to earlier in this lesson. We are not continuing a chronology of the Tribulation in this section. Rather, we are returning to specific persons who must be considered as important in the events already described.

1. First person: Israel—12:1-2
Israel, pictured as the "mother" of Jesus...
2. Second person: Satan—12:3-4
He awaits Christ's coming, to destroy Him...
3. Third person: Christ—12:5-6
A panorama of messianic history is unfolding...
4. Fourth person: Archangel Michael—12:7-12
In the panorama, an explanation of how Satan was cast out of heaven. The method of "overcoming" is the atonement of Christ!

Satan persecutes Israel—12:13-16

Worse than Hitler's persecution by far, Satan is determined to exterminate Israel from the face of the earth!

5. Fifth person: Jewish remnant—12:17
These Jews remain faithful to Jesus in spite of the persecution.

6. Sixth person: Beast out of the Sea—13:1-10
We are now introduced to two “Beasts.” See Daniel 7:7, 24-27. This is a revival of the ancient Roman Empire, greatly expanded. In Revelation 17, a “scarlet woman” will ride this beast. This world power will be the tool of Satan. Verses 1-3 refer to the empire; 4-10 to the emperor. He will be called “The Beast” in Revelation 19:20.

7. Seventh person: Beast out of the Earth—
13:11-18

This deceitful beast is the False Prophet, the world leader of an apostate religion. He will align his evil powers to force allegiance to the Kingdom described in verses 1-3. He is the Antichrist.

NOTE: The “Unholy Trinity” is made up of Satan, plus these two evil beings...

THIRD INTERLUDE: 14:1-15:8

In the midst of this trauma, John is again transported to the Throne of God! No matter how bad things look here, there is always a heavenly side to it...

Vision of the Lamb and the 144,000—14:1-5
These who have been martyred are lovingly portrayed in their purity, before the Throne of God.

Vision of the Angel with the Everlasting Gospel—
14:6-7
There is a sense of excitement! We are now drawing close to the “invasion” of earth by God’s people...

Fall of Babylon announced—14:8

“Babylon” is Rome, the seat of the Antichrist and the world government controlled by Satan.

Doom of the Beast-worshipers announced—14:9-12

A judgment upon the wicked is coming!

Blessedness of the holy dead—14:13

...But precious are those in Christ.

Vision of Armageddon—14:14-20

Here is our first vision of the battle of Armageddon.

Before the Throne of God—15:1-8

This scene in heaven prepares us for the final “sign,” the bowls of wrath...

5. THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH

Bowls released—16:1

Direct judgment falls upon the evil of earth. We are reminded of the plagues which fell on Egypt!

1. First bowl: sores—16:2
Some interpreters see this as referring to serious emotional disorders...
2. Second bowl: Sea turns to blood—16:3
Note this is parallel to the Second Trumpet.
3. Third bowl: Rivers turn to blood—16:4-7
Note this is parallel to the Third Trumpet.
4. Fourth bowl: Sun scorches earth—16:8-9
The possibilities for explaining this are many!
5. Fifth bowl: Darkness and pain—16:10-11
Is “Aids” a harbinger of things to come?

6. Sixth bowl: Euphrates dries up—16:12
Preparatory for the marching of an army...

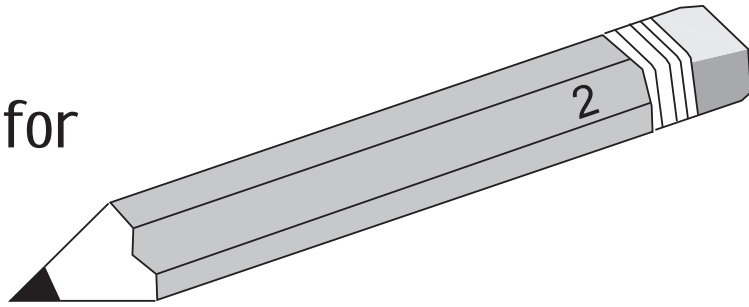
Armageddon—16:13-16

Once again, we come to Armageddon. Three unclean spirits inject a spirit of unrest and reprisal in the kings of the earth. They come from the mouth of the Dragon (see 13:4).

7. Seventh bowl: Hailstones—16:17-21
To the very end, nothing deters evil men from cursing God and living in rebellion against Him! The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked...

NOTES

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside Revelation 7:17:

THE PRECIOUS PROMISE
ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH

3. Write beside Revelation 15:3:

NOTE THE USE OF
"BONDSERVANT" HERE,
REFERRING TO MOSES

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you now wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Forty Nine

THE BOOK OF REVELATION—IV

CHAPTERS 17—22

AN OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS 17—22

Revelation 17:1-21:8 and 21:9-22:21—there are significant differences between these two sections of Revelation.

In the **FIRST** section, we deal with the forces of evil; in the **SECOND** section, the Glory of God. The **FIRST** section focuses on Babylon, the evil center for the final world power of Satan. The **SECOND** section ends with the New Jerusalem, the glorious capitol of God's eternal reign.

Note these contrasts:

SETTINGS: A Wilderness, 17:3; A High Mountain, 21:10

A WOMAN: A Harlot, 17:3; A Bride, 21:9

SUMMARY

The figure of the great harlot occupies chapters 17 and 18. Chapter 19, verses 1-10 are transitional.

The woman's identity is clear: she is a city, a ruling center described as "Babylon," the apocalyptic word for the city of Rome (17:18-19). But see also the spirit of rebellion connected to this city from the beginning of time, described in Genesis 11:4. It is revealed again in Daniel 4:30, where Nebuchadnezzar said Babylon existed to reveal his might, his great power, and "the glory of his majesty."

Harlotry in the Old Testament is used over and over to describe infidelity of man to God, especially in connection with idolatry (See Isaiah 1:21, Jeremiah 2:20). Thus, the description fits the world capitol of the Antichrist.

The Beast of Revelation 17 is identical with the first Beast of chapter 13. He is the dominating figure of the final world empire, evil to the core.

Chapter 18 deals at length with the overthrow of Babylon. A dual viewpoint of heaven and earth is shown. Note that the people of God are told to separate themselves from her.

Chapter 19 presents a scene of joy! The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is presented. The Second Coming of Christ follows. Such a full description is found in no other place in the Bible.

Chapter 20 shows the thousand year period known as the Millennium. Satan is bound in the "bottomless pit." Believers reign with Christ. Unregenerate men live in this period, but with their evil restrained. The curse of sin is removed from the earth. All the unfulfilled prophecies in scripture are now completed. Isaiah's vision of the Messianic period has come! The lion lies down with the lamb; men beat their swords into plowshares.

Among other facts demonstrated within the Millennium is that a perfect environment will not produce a perfect heart. In 20:7, the basic spirit of rebellion among unregenerate men (which has been latent for the Millennium) again erupts. The Battle of Gog and Magog takes place, the last war of history. Christ ends, for all time, the spirit of rebellion on this earth.

There follows the permanent abolition of Satan, along with the Beast and the False Prophet (Antichrist). They are thrown into the lake of fire. Then, all those from all time who lived in rebellion against God are brought to trial at the Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15).

Think of the Millennium as the "Kingdom of Christ" (read carefully 1 Corinthians 15:23-28), which is to be followed by the "Kingdom of God." According to Paul's explanation, Christ must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. Then, the Son shall surrender Himself and all the earth, "that God may be all in all." Thus, at the end of the Millennial period there follows the eternal Kingdom, with the total renovation of the earth.

Chapter 21:8 ends this first section, and we are introduced to this final, eternal period. The earth is destroyed by fire and renovation begins. The eternal Kingdom of the Father will have its headquarters not in Babylon, but in the New Jerusalem, described in 22:9ff. This awesome city is hard to imagine! It is 1,500 miles long, wide, and high.

Even the concluding verses (22:6-21) are charged with drama and power.

6. THE SEVEN DOOMS

1. The doom of "Babylon"—17:1-19:19

A divine view of Babylon—17:1-7

Babylon is pictured as a corrupt and immoral political system, godless and blasphemous. The "ten horns" send us back to Daniel. The awful persecution of believers is highlighted.

Interpretation of the symbolism—17:8-18

The beast is identical with the one in 13:1. Read 13:14, 17:8 and 11...note its parallel to the One "who is, who was, and who is to come" (1:8). The beast is the dominating figure of the earth's last empire.

"Seven heads" are seven kings, one still to come. Various attempts have been made to identify these world empires. It is best to leave it to the future...

The "waters" are people (17:15)

Warning to God's people to get out—18:1-8

Judgment "has" fallen in heaven upon Babylon before the fact! The people of God are told to separate themselves from the values of this society. Her culture originated in disobedience to God; she is doomed. The creation of a civilization pleasing to God must begin with a new life; it cannot ever be a revision of the old one!

A human view of Babylon—18:9-19

Note the suddenness of her destruction: “one hour!” Those who sorrow at her parting are those who lived for the luxuries within her.

An angelic view of Babylon—18:20-24

Six times the phrase “not beany longer” is used! While evil men weep, the angel says, “Rejoice!”

FOURTH INTERLUDE: 19:1-10

Fourfold Hallelujah—19:1-6

This occurs after Babylon has been destroyed. We are again at the Throne. The first announcement (v. 1, 2) declares the bride of the Lamb is ready, and the wedding is to begin. From this point, God will bring to pass His purposes which have been so carefully developed from before the foundations of the earth.

Marriage of the Lamb—19:7-10

“Bride” can scarcely mean anything other than “church” (see Ephesians 5:23-32). Note the awesome contrast between the previous stormy chapter and the peace of this one!

Second Coming of Christ—19:11-19

He is followed by the armies of heaven. The next series of events hardly needs comment: it flows from the event of His return...

2. The doom of the Beast—19:20
3. The doom of the False Prophet—19:20
4. The doom of the kings—19:21

Satan bound—20:1-3

Temporarily (1,000 years), Satan's presence is removed from the earth. The Kingdom of Christ will not involve conflict with this fallen angel!

First resurrection—20:4-6

It would seem that those in the Church Age are resurrected from the dead at the time of the Rapture, and come with Christ. Now, those from the Tribulation Period who were martyred are brought to life, and reign alongside those from the Church Age for a thousand years.

5. The doom of Gog and Magog—20:7-9

Satan's release proves that an unregenerate heart never changes. His attempt to rally another rebellion is permitted to develop only long enough to reveal those who will follow him. There is no "battle" between the saints and those in rebellion. God swiftly deals with it!

6. The doom of Satan—20:10

Note the fact that there is no slight hint of a termination to this torment! Beware of all who teach such. It is in direct conflict with Scripture. Prevalent among all cults is the belief that the dead are simply annihilated...

7. The doom of the unbelieving dead—20:11-15

This judgment closes all accounts, and brings ultimate responsibility to be faced by all who have lived in rebellion against God. Note the careful records of all deeds which are used, and the final destination of those whose names are not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

7. THE SEVEN NEW THINGS

1. New Heaven—21:1
God's eternal renovation includes the universe! By then, man's clutter will be everywhere...
2. New Earth—21:1-2
This new city, Jerusalem, is built by God!
3. New Peoples—21:3-8
Once again, the promise of no more tears. The medical profession will have to be retrained for more suitable work!
4. New Jerusalem—21:9-21
Nothing in our experience can prepare us to take this in. Some may ask, "Is this figurative?" Why should it be so interpreted...certainly not because it would seem more "rational" for us to do so!
5. New Temple—21:22
God Himself is the Temple!
6. New Light—21:23-27
God Himself is the Light! (He always has been...)
7. New Paradise—22:1-7
The Bible began with a garden, and it ends with one.

FINAL INTERLUDE— 22:8-21

THE LAST MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE— 22:8-19

Tenderly read these verses. Catch the spirit of our God,
who is not willing that any should perish!

THE LAST PROMISE AND PRAYER
OF THE BIBLE—22:20-21

Oh, come, Lord Jesus! Our hearts long for you!

NOTES

THE END OF YOUR SURVEY IS THE BEGINNING OF YOUR LIFETIME OF STUDY!

God's Word is so very, very rich! The treasures in it are not exhaustible. Those who have spent the most time in the study of it are those who continue to study it the most. You are now equipped, through the deliberate survey you have completed, to begin a book by book study.

As you close the book of Revelation, note the urgency of the final verses. Christ is coming soon! Even as we wait for His coming, we are told that the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!"

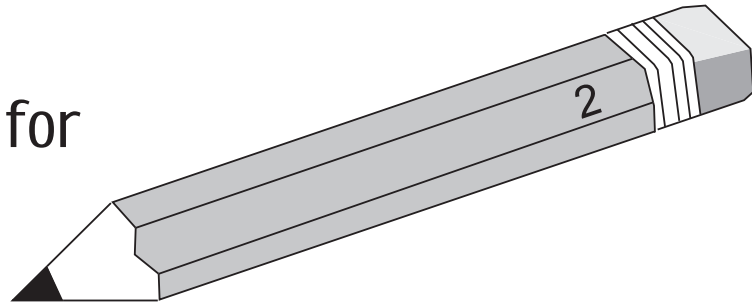
Are you a part of that Bride? Are you a child of God?

Have you made that personal decision to confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord, and to entrust the ownership of your life to Him?

If not, the study of this inspired book has not penetrated your eternity. You stand in need of the blood of the Lamb of God we have studied about, and that precious blood is ready to cleanse you and make you God's child.

You are lovingly encouraged to share with your cell group if there is any area of your personal walk with Christ which disturbs you. Your cell group is ready to listen with concern, ministering to meet your needs.

Suggestions for marking your Bible...



1. Copy the outline into your Bible.
2. Write beside Revelation 20:11:

**THE GREAT WHITE
THRONE JUDGMENT**

3. Write beside Revelation 22:19:

**A WARNING TO THOSE
WHO MIGHT TAMPER
WITH THIS BOOK...**

4. Add any other notes from the explanations which you now wish to preserve in your Bible.

Unit Fifty

THE FIRST 300 YEARS AFTER THE BIBLE

PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS

Nero, having burned Rome, made the Christians the scapegoats. Some were sewn inside the skins of animals and torn apart by dogs. Others were crucified or doused with oil and burned as torches. Peter and Paul are described as being martyred during this period.

EARLY EVENTS

The collection of the writings of the Apostles began in earnest with the deaths of these two men.

Thomas went to India to preach the Gospel message. The Indian Church of Mar Thoma, numbering several million adherents, exists today as the oldest continuing church in history.

The earliest known Christian writing outside the books of the New Testament which we can date with certainty is 1 Clement, A.D. 96-97. It is a letter from the church in Rome to the one in Corinth, and describes a schism between the young men and the established presbyters. The rebels claimed special spiritual gifts and words of knowledge. Clement urges harmony among them.

A.D. 98-180

Trajan was the Roman Emperor. Martyrdom of Christians was a common occurrence during this time. Intense persecution of Christians broke out in Asia Minor, where Pliny was Governor. He writes of his orders to kill all those who will not recant their faith: "in any case obstinacy and unbending perversity deserve to be punished."

Ignatius of Antioch was a Christian sent to Rome as a condemned gladiator. He wrote seven letters while being taken in chains from Syria to Troas. At this time, Polycarp was the bishop of Smyrna. He also wrote letters which are in existence today, including one to the Philippian Christians. He was burned at the stake in A.D. 155-156 because he would not deny the Lord and King, "who has never done me ill during eighty-six years."

The next emperor was Hadrian. A brilliant defense of the Christians was written to him by Quadratus about 125 A.D. He wrote, "Christians are in the world but not of the world...Do you not see how (Christians) are thrown to wild animals to make them deny the Lord, and how they are not vanquished? Do you not see that the more of them that are punished, the more do others join their ranks?"

In 132, Hadrian decided to rebuild Jerusalem as a Roman city with temples to Roman gods. Jews in Judea revolted. Roman soldiers retreated from Jerusalem's area, and the Jews took it over. This was a brief rebellion, crushed as the Romans destroyed 985 villages and killed more than a million people in Israel. Jews were banished from the entire area of Jerusalem. The rebuilt city was called Aelia. The church within it was composed only of Gentiles.

JEWISH ANTI-CHRISTIAN SENTIMENT

It is about this period of time that the Talmud begins to record anti-Christian sentiment. Jesus' miracles were attributed to Egyptian magic; He was described as the illegitimate son of an adulteress. From this time forward, Christianity grew primarily among Gentiles, not Jews.

MARCION HERESY

About 139 A.D., a heretic named Marcion appeared within the church in Rome. He taught that the God of the New Testament was not the same God as in the Old Testament, and that Jesus was not born of a woman. He demanded that true Christians stop eating meat. He was excommunicated, gathered his followers in a separate church, and compiled a special "Bible."

Once when Marcion met Polycarp, he asked, "Do you know us?" Polycarp replied, "I know you, the firstborn of Satan."

JUSTIN MARTYR

Emperor Antoninus reigned from 138-161 A.D. During his reign, Justin Martyr, about 155 A.D., stands out among the early apologists (a defender of the faith). He had been a philosopher, whose search for truth brought him through several Greek philosophical systems before he became a Christian. His First Apology rejected the current teaching that Christians practiced gross immoralities under the guise of religious rites. He tried to reconcile faith and reason for those who considered it to be irrational. He also wrote Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, which sets Christianity as flowing naturally out of Jewish religious thought.

Marcus Aurelius reigned from 161-180. Justin tells of three Christians executed for nothing except their faith. He himself was beheaded in Rome about A.D. 165.

In the period immediately following the New Testament, a "bishop" and a "presbyter" were terms used interchangeably. In the second century (100-180 A.D.), the term "bishop" was considered to be above the "presbyter," who was, in turn, above the "deacon." The supervision of the clergy in the area became one of the chief functions of the bishop's duties. His territory was called a "diocese."

THEOPHILUS

Theophilus was born of pagan parents, converted to Christianity, and became the bishop of the diocese of Antioch about 168 A.D. He was a prolific writer, loved the churches and sought to protect them from the heresies of Marcion and others. He was the founder of Biblical chronology, dating the time of the Biblical record from his own era backward 5,698 years to Genesis 1:1.

By 180, the church was established in all parts of the Roman Empire and beyond its borders to the south and east. Missionary activities were carried out by the members and clergy of the local congregations through personal witness.

In London, Peter-upon-Cornhill is claimed to have been the site of a Christian church since 179 A.D. Ancient Christian ruins abound in Scotland.

IRENÆUS

Irenaeus grew up in Smyrna, where he saw and heard “the blessed Polycarp.” Later, he moved to Lyons in Gaul (France), where there was a colony of Christians. He was ordained a Presbyter. He died about 200 A.D. He belongs among the outstanding theologians of the church’s history.

MONTANISM

Montanism was a movement in the early church similar to modern day Pentecostalism. It was launched by Montanus in Phrygia. Their teachings looked toward an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the establishment of a heavenly Jerusalem. They claimed the gift of “prophecy,” involving continuing revelation beyond scripture. It was legalistic, commanded fasting, forbade remarriage. Penance was imposed on those who sinned, and those who lapsed from the faith would find no forgiveness. The movement was condemned by all of the Christian community. In one form or another, it continued as a submovement through the eighth century.

Actually, all we know about this movement is from its foes. Some feel it was a sincere desire to correct the stagnant forms which began to smother New Testament life, and the movement should be treated with respect.

TERTULLIAN, CLEMENT, AND ORIGEN

Tertullian of Carthage was the son of a pagan centurion. He was trained as a lawyer. He returned from Rome to Carthage after his conversion to Christ in 195 A.D. He was a prolific writer, and converted to Montanism in 207 A.D.

Clement of Alexandria (220 A.D.) and Origen (254), his pupil, are noted for their scholarship. They were the first “university men” of the early church. They were associated with the Catechetical School in Alexandria. This school combined philosophy, science, and theology, viewing all from a Christian perspective.

Although Clement was a brilliant theologian, he was outdone by his pupil, Origen. Some regard him as the most profound mind in the history of the church. Because of persecution, he had to flee to Caesarea. He wrote many volumes which have been lost. His Principles is a systematic presentation of Christian beliefs about God, man, free will, and the scriptures. He defended the faith against Celsus, who was a true “theological liberal.” Celsus opposed the incarnation and criticized believers for looking to the cross for forgiveness.

As a result of Gnosticism, Marcionism and Montanism, there was a growing desire to settle the limits of inspired writings, called the Canon (Rule). In addition, as the church grew, there was more and more need for organization. The educating of future leaders began to take place in special schools like the one in Alexandria.

180-313 A.D.

With the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180, the Roman Empire entered 100 years of tempest. Corruption, pride, licentiousness, and cruelty marked the emperor’s life styles. Heavy taxation destroyed the middle class. Inflation soared.

This same period among Christians was marked by the church becoming institutionalized. Marriages between Christians were solemnized by the church for the first time about 200 A.D. Veneration of martyrs and their remains became a cult. Penance was developed. Between 180-250, the bishop's power was increased significantly. The chief bishoprics were in Rome, Alexandria, Carthage, Ephesus, and Antioch. Rome was first because it was the seat of the Empire, but the Roman papacy would not develop for two more centuries. Power-hungry bishops were now on the scene—a far cry from the devoted men who had first led the churches.

A distinctive clerical class developed, all subordinate to the bishops. In Asia Minor, groups of bishops and clergy first met in synods to discuss points of doctrine and coordinate activities. This quickly spread to the other parts of the Empire. Alexandria and Rome were further elevated to the status of "Patriarchates."

DECIAN PERSECUTIONS; CYPRIAN

The time of the Decian persecutions began in 249. Many Christians were put to death. Many others denied the faith. Some Christians purchased certificates of participation in pagan sacrifices and did not actually participate in them.

Cyprian was elected Bishop of Carthage just 2 years after his conversion (248 A.D.). He died in 258. Although he violently opposed the power of the Roman bishop, his contributions to the development of Roman Catholicism were very great.

Due to the Decian persecutions, he fled from Carthage, only to give himself up later. He favored a lenient position toward Christians who had purchased the certificates of participation, suggesting a period of penance and probation. He was martyred in Carthage on September 14, 258 A.D.

NOVATIAN AND THE ROMAN CHURCH

Novation was elected as a rival bishop in Rome, and opposed Cyprian's leniency. He demanded that purchasers of certificates should be subjected to lifelong excommunication from the church. His position was known as "Novatianism." He himself died as a martyr, and his followers continued in small groups for 200 years.

Rome had the richest and largest Christian congregation from 200-313 A.D. Victor I, Bishop of Rome (189-198), demanded the bishops of Asia Minor surrender to him. Extensive church properties in Rome developed, along with a far-reaching ministry to the poor.

The voluminous writings of Cyprian make it clear that the church was neither pure nor orthodox at this time. Schisms, heresies, arguments, and defections under persecution were frequent.

Late in this century, there was a phenomenal mass conversion of Armenians. Gregory, an Arminian aristocrat, was converted in Caesarea. Upon returning home, he won the king to personal faith. Following his lead, much of the population converted to Christianity.

The political situation of the Empire was crucial as 300 A.D. approached. Chaos in government and society ruled. It was considered necessary for religion to be unified in order to stabilize the state. It was this conviction that triggered the Decian persecutions. The demands for an outward agreement with paganism was pressed by the Emperor. Where Christians refused to conform, persecutions were terrible.

UNPRECEDENTED PERSECUTIONS

After Decius came Valerian (253-260 A.D.). He made it illegal for Christians to assemble. The deaths of church leaders were by torture.

Following his death, 40 years passed without further persecution. Then came Diocletian! From 284-305, an unprecedented persecution of Christians took place.

Diocletian was determined to restore the glory of Rome. In 303, all churches were ordered to be destroyed. All Christian books, including Bibles, were to be burned. All gatherings were banned. Church leaders were ordered to be put to death. These persecutions continued to 312 A.D. For a decade, Christians were under the constant fear of death for their faith.

CONSTANTINE BRINGS PEACE

In the struggle for the throne which followed Diocletian's abdication, Constantine emerged as victor on October 28, 312. His first act was to issue the Edict of Milan, which made Christianity a legal religion alongside non-Christian cults.

Perhaps 10% of the Empire was Christian at this time. He triggered the beginnings of what would eventually emerge as the "Holy Roman Empire." (It was neither holy, nor did it remain Roman, nor was it long to be an empire.) As he began his reign, he merged Christian and pagan festivals and calendars, thus creating a syncretized Christianity which laid the foundations for the Catholic church to emerge 150 years later.

Unit Fifty One

HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN REFERENCE LIBRARY

1. LIST THE BOOKS YOU NEED

Study Bible

A leather bound copy. Wide margins! References are helpful but not as important as plenty of space to write, to underline. Suggested text: New International Version Study Bible (NIV).

Concordance

Get one to match your NIV translation. You can purchase a King James Concordance cheaper, but it's a problem using it with a modern translation.

Bible Dictionary

Many are on the market. The NIV Dictionary of the Bible is a good buy. Use mainly for quick references when the Encyclopedia will be too detailed for your question.

Commentary (Build slowly!)

You can purchase entire Commentaries. They will be heavy in spots, and thin in spots. Most Bible scholars prefer to purchase the best volume for each Bible book, instead of investing money in a full commentary. For example, Leupold's commentary on Genesis is without peer for conservative, scholarly study of the book. Perhaps no one has ever written a better commentary on Galatians than Martin Luther. Get the best! How will you know what is the best? Ask a Pastor who is a scholar of the Word of God. His eyes will light up and he will share gladly! Or, find a Christian book store with a "bookworm" on the staff, and you will get more help than you need!

Special Bibles

You may wish to add to your basic study Bible one or more of the following:

Nave's Topical Bible

The Bible, rearranged by topics. Great to follow themes through scripture.

The Layman's Parallel Bible

Combines four of the best known and most used translations in a 4-column parallel format which allows for easy comparison.

Paraphrases

A "paraphrase" is not a direct translation of the Bible. It is good to use for comparison, but not for a study Bible. Examples are the Living Bible and the Phillips Translation.

Amplified

The Amplified Bible gives several parallel words for the text of the Bible. It is slow to read but rich in study value! It's an excellent addition to your library.

Bible Encyclopedia

The best is, without question, the Zondervan Bible Encyclopedia. This five volume set has been written by over 200 of the most outstanding evangelical scholars. Photographs, illustrations, maps, and articles on practically any question you will ever ask when reading your Bible are all included. No library is complete until it includes this set!

Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

Vine's Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words and Wilson's Old Testament Studies are most helpful. They will explain many of the words of the Hebrew and the Greek, and you can forgo the pain of learning those languages!

Bible Handbook

This is a small book that you can take to a group Bible study, containing many key facts about the books of the Bible. Two books here would be helpful: Unger's Bible Handbook (better than the others!), and the more detailed Eerdmans Bible Handbook. You may eventually want to own both.

Bible Atlas

A Bible Atlas is a good choice. It gives lots of maps of Bible times, and is most helpful in learning your Bible geography.

2. SET A SCHEDULE FOR THEIR PURCHASE

1. Budget on a monthly basis for a year.
2. Buy a book at a time.

3. AVOID "IMPULSE BUYING" UNTIL YOU HAVE PURCHASED THE BASIC BOOKS

1. Get the basic books first!
2. Setting priorities will make it easier to get the full library sooner.

4. SET ASIDE A REGULAR TIME TO USE YOUR REFERENCE LIBRARY

1. It's foolish to buy these books and not use them
2. How will you do it? Daily? Weekly?
3. Have a special place where they will be handy to take down and use. Avoid halls, living rooms, etc., where books are "stored." Don't "store" them...USE them!

5. KEEP A NOTEBOOK OR A REFERENCE FILE

1. A file, with one folder for each Bible book, is great! You can throw notes, sermon outlines, etc. into it.
2. A loose leaf notebook with dividers can serve much the same purpose.
3. Preserve your study!

6. DON'T ASK FOR HELP UNTIL YOU HAVE SEARCHED BY YOURSELF

1. From now on, don't "ask the preacher" until you have assured yourself you can't find the answer in your own library of reference books.
2. When you DO ask, try to find out the source for the answer you have been given. Consider adding that particular book to your library.

7. ADD SPECIAL BOOKS AS YOU STUDY

1. When you are going to study one special book of the Bible, purchase at least one good commentary for your library.
2. When you find a special reference book, buy it on the spot! (If you don't, it may be gone when you go back.)

8. MEDITATE AFTER EACH PERIOD OF STUDY ABOUT WHAT THE SPIRIT HAS TAUGHT YOU

1. You will appreciate the opportunity to simply sit and reflect on the new light you have gained by your study. Often the greatest value comes from these "Selah" periods!
2. Remember to write each reflection in your notes or file.

9. BECOME FAMILIAR WITH PUBLISHER'S DOCTRINAL POSITIONS

1. Avoid doctrinal type books which are published by presses which have a strong theological bias...at least in the beginning!
2. Learn which publishing houses you can trust, and which are unpredictable.

NOTES

TOUCH OUTREACH MINISTRIES PROVIDES ADDITIONAL DISCIPLESHIP TOOLS!

Dr. Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr. is the author of the widely used TOUCH BASIC TRAINING materials, which equip persons like yourself to effectively share their faith with friends.

Particular emphasis is placed in this equipping course in the most effective ways to share your faith with friends who have no interest in the church and who know little about the Bible. Your continuation of training through TOUCH BASIC will put you "light years" ahead of most of your Christian friends!

Remember...it is simply not enough to know what is IN the Bible. It is crucial that each one of us go beyond knowledge to the practice of Bible truths. Therefore, you may desire to secure the special TOUCH BASIC TRAINING self-study course, and convert your knowledge to a personal ministry!

Unit Fifty Two

PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Study your Bible in the same manner you would explore a magnificent mansion:

1. CAREFULLY SELECT YOUR GUIDE.

We have discussed the books you should add to your library. These “guides” should be trustworthy. As you build your commentaries and dictionaries, be sure you get ones you can trust.

2. USE THE RIGHT KEY TO ENTER.

Each book has a “key” which unlocks the theme or the outline for you. An example of this is in the book of Revelation, where we discovered the outline in 1:19.

Sometimes there are several “keys” which unlock intertwining themes. An example of this is 1 John, where “know,” “love,” “abide,” etc., each present a new way to view the book.

In your class notes, you will find many of these “keys” included for your use. Pay attention to them.

3. BE FAMILIAR WITH THE FLOOR PLAN.

The divisions of each book are critical to understanding it. This is also true of the subdivisions, and frequently true of individual thoughts within a chapter. For example, our study of Revelation and Hebrews both required us to consider the “parentheses,” or “interludes,” inserted in the flow of the material.

The Psalms are grouped into sections. On a broader basis, the books themselves fall into sections: “The Pentateuch,” “Minor Prophets,” “Pauline Epistles.” Knowing where you are in the outline of the book is important!

Do you recall the divisions of Ephesians?

- “Sit”—Chapters 1-3;
- “Walk”—Chapters 4-5;
- “Stand”—Chapter 6.

What about Genesis? ...Ten divisions, with each one introduced by the phrase “These are the generations of...”

What are the two major divisions of Joshua?

How many “Books” are there in the Psalms?

What is the outline for Daniel?

What are the four “Beholds” for the four Gospels?

What chapters in Romans deal with the place of the Jew?

4. KNOW WHO LIVES IN EACH "ROOM."

The Bible is written to, or about, distinct classes of people.

In 1 Corinthians 10:32, Paul refers to Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God. Each passage in the Bible is written about or to one of these three classes of persons. Sometimes a passage will be addressed to all three, or have application to all of them. But there are books which belong to one class, rigidly excluding the others. Knowing the priority the writer has in mind as he writes is important!

This does not mean, however, that some scriptures "are for the Jew, and have no meaning for me!" For example, if a Jewish friend of mine is sent a letter, the primary meaning is for him. But, as he hands the letter to me and I read it, I may find some segments of it that speak directly to my own situation.

Failing to do this creates many of the problems found in different interpretations of the scriptures. For example, one of the basic errors of the Seventh Day Adventists results from their taking all the Jewish patterns of the Old Testament and applying them to Gentiles and the church!

Most of the Amillennial positions are developed by ignoring this principle. Promises given to Israel are taught as though they belonged to the church.

An example of this is to be found in treatments of Isaiah 60. This chapter speaks of the time when the Jew shall be the head and no longer the tail of the nations. Jerusalem will be exalted as the capitol of the whole earth, and the wealth of the Gentiles shall pour into it as a tide rises in the ocean. It is common to find teachers who will take all this and apply it to the church, and to Christians!

There is no reason for this. The Jew is never called a Christian any more than he is known as a Gentile. Mount Zion is no more the "church" than Mount Rushmore symbolizes Westminster Abbey in London.

When you enter a book or a section of a book, consider the people the book is written to or who are being talked about. For example, the book of Ecclesiastes is written by Solomon to describe a special kind of person: the man who tries to find meaning in life without recognizing the place of God. To develop theology about the Christian life from such teachings is deadly.

The Jehovah's Witnesses take you to Ecclesiastes to prove there is no hell, no life beyond the grave. They take you to Revelation and describe themselves as the Woman of chapter 12! Sad to say, it is not just cult groups who take such license with the texts. This is why it is important to know the credentials of your "guides" (commentaries).

5. CAREFULLY EXAMINE ALL THE "FURNISHINGS."

In each passage, phrases which may be similar to others should be prayerfully examined. An example of this is to be found in 2 scriptures:

Luke 21:24—"...Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Romans 11:25—"...a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in..."

The "times of the Gentiles" signifies the rule of the Gentile nations. That rule began with Nebuchadnezzar, as God set aside the Jews because of sin and evil, and brought in the Gentile governmentally. It will continue until Christ and His Church come to the Mount of Olives and overthrow it, bringing in "The Times of the Jew." (Study Zechariah 14:1-11, Zechariah 8:23, Deuteronomy 28:13).

On the other hand, the "fulness of the Gentiles" is referring to the filling up of God's purposes in this age, as He takes out of the Gentiles a people for His name: "...God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name." (Acts 15:14)

The passage in Acts goes on to say, "After these things I will return, and I will rebuild the Tabernacle of David which has fallen, and I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, in order that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name..." (verses 16-17).

Thus, the Times of the Gentiles began centuries before the birth of Christ and will end only at His appearing to set up the Kingdom of Israel. The Fullness of the Gentiles began only after the resurrection of the Lord and may end at any moment, as the sudden secret rapture of the church takes place.

NOTES

6. CARRY IN LIGHT FROM OTHER PLACES.

In the study above, we have just seen how one section of the scripture (in Acts) sheds light on our study. If you have not yet discovered for yourself the thrill of suddenly getting insights into one passage of scripture through previous study, you will! As catching a 7-pound bass sends the fisherman back to the lake, so these insights send the Bible student back, again and again, for deeper looks at "familiar things."

NOTES

BIBLE STUDY

Passage: _____

1. CAREFULLY SELECT YOUR GUIDE:

Texts I will use in my study:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. USE THE RIGHT KEY TO ENTER:

The key scripture that unlocks this passage is...

3. BE FAMILIAR WITH THE FLOOR PLAN:

The outline I will use is found:

___ In my Cover the Bible Notes

4. KNOW WHO LIVES IN EACH ROOM:

This book/chapter/passage is written to or about:

___ The Jew

___ The Gentile

___ The Church

___ General; applies to all

___ Other: _____

5. CAREFULLY EXAMINE ALL THE FURNISHINGS:

Word/phrase studies:

6. CARRY IN LIGHT FROM OTHER PLACES:

Other scripture references I found to help me:

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