

# BIBLE INTRODUCTION #6

## NEW TESTAMENT: EPISTLES AND THE REVELATION

### II TIMOTHY 3:16-17

**“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”**

#### DIVISIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT<sup>4</sup>

GOSPELS<sup>1</sup>  
HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

PAULINE EPISTLES<sup>2</sup>  
GENERAL EPISTLES<sup>3</sup>  
PROPHECY<sup>3</sup>

MATTHEW-JOHN  
ACTS  
ROMANS-PHILEMON  
HEBREWS-JUDE  
REVELATION

<sup>1</sup>Chart 4 <sup>2</sup>Chart 5 <sup>3</sup>This chart

<sup>4</sup>Old Testament charts 1-3

#### THE AUTHORSHIP-DISPUTED EPISTLE

##### HEBREWS

- Author:
  - There is much discussion regarding the authorship of this book; it is probable that Paul wrote the book due to, among other reasons, <sup>1st</sup>the early credit given him as the author, <sup>2nd</sup>the situation of the book's being written by someone who was in Italy (13:24) had been and may still have been in prison (10:34; 13:3,19) and who was a close associate of Timothy (13:23), <sup>3rd</sup>the writer's great concern for his national brethren, <sup>4th</sup>and the fact that Peter said Paul had written to this audience (II Peter 3:15)
  - It is not out of the realm of possibility that another penned the epistle (for example, Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Apollos, Aquila, Mark, et al; though not Clement of Rome for he would have been too late, and not Timothy—as the uninspired postscript supposed—for he was mentioned in the third person in 13:23); the best argument against Pauline authorship has been the lack of his claiming authorship (which could have been motivated by humility or the fear that some might never open the book knowing it was penned by him), which would have included his penning the salutation in his own hand (II Thessalonians 3:17)—though who would know whether he did or not, for he did not claim to have penned the salutation in most books
  - The similarity or dissimilarity of language to Paul's writing is an argument used by both schools of thought; this very fact reveals the difficulty of using that argument at all either way (though were this writer given no alternative but to answer, it would seem to him that the style favored Paul in theme, structure, language, and form of benediction)
  - Regardless, in reality who penned the book is not important, for God wrote it (II Timothy 3:16)!
- From: A Roman prison (10:34; 13:3,19; cf. Acts 28:30-31)
- Date: Around A.D. 57-59, for Paul was apparently

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#### THE AUTHORSHIP-DISPUTED EPISTLE (continued)

- serving his first prison sentence in Rome (4:3,18; cf. Acts 28:30-31)
- Audience: Jewish Christians (1:1-2; cf. Acts 13:32 which was spoken by Paul to “Men of Israel” [Acts 13:16] in Pisidian Antioch [Acts 13:14])
- Purpose: To show the superiority of Jesus over the angels, old law, priests, sacrifices, etc.
- Keys:
  - Words: Faith, Better, Perfect, Promise
  - Phrases: “By faith,” “Let us”
  - Verses: 8:1 (The sum); 9:16 (Death of Testator necessary); 9:22 (Blood must have been shed); 10:9 (Jesus' mission), 10:14 (One offering)
  - Passages: 5:8-9 (Jesus' obedience); 12:1-3 (Supporters and a goal)
  - Chapter: 11 (Faith)
- Lessons:
  - Jesus is better than the angels (1:4)
  - Man has value (2:6-8)
  - The Father and Son suit man's needs (2:10; 7:26)
  - Jesus knows what man has faced and so can comfort man (2:18; 4:15)
  - Anything built must have a builder (3:4)
  - The Bible is active (4:12)
  - No one can hide and nothing can be hid from God (4:13)
  - Christians can approach God confidently (4:16; cf. I John 5:14-15)
  - There is not one greater than God (6:13)
  - God is true to His Word and the hope in Him is sure (6:18-19)
  - Jesus provides a better hope (7:19)
  - Jesus made a better testament (7:22)
  - Jesus makes better promises (8:6)
  - Jesus offers a better sacrifice (9:23-28)
  - Jesus cannot die more than once (9:27-28; cf. 10:26)
  - One should be faithful for himself and his brethren (10:22-26)
  - Sin is a serious thing (10:28-31)
  - Faith is the victory (11; I John 5:4-5)
  - Chastening can be good (12:5-11)
  - One should help others physically, emotionally, and spiritually (12:12-17; 13:1-3)
  - Marriage is an honorable institution which must not be forsaken (13:4)
  - The righteous should remember and obey those over them (13:7,17)

#### HEBREWS 4:12

**“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”**

# NEW TESTAMENT: EPISTLES AND THE REVELATION

## THE GENERAL EPISTLES

### JAMES

- Author: James, half-brother of Jesus (1:1), who was in a good spot to reach out to those scattered in all directions (Galatians 1:18-19; Acts 8:1)
- From: Jerusalem
- Date: Around A.D. 50s to 60s, for the Jerusalem Christians had scattered (1:1; Acts 8:1) and the name Christian had likely already been given (2:7; Acts 11:26), but before A.D. 70 (5:8-9; Matthew 24:30)
- Audience: Jewish Christians scattered by persecution (1:1; Acts 8:1)
- Purpose: To encourage the scattered brethren to remain faithful in spite of persecution
- Keys:
  - Words: Works, Faith, Wisdom, Patience
  - Phrase: "Faith without works is dead"
  - Verse: 1:22 (Hear and do)
- Lessons:
  - Trials can be beneficial (1:2-4,12; 5:7-8,10-11; Matthew 5:10-12)
  - True wisdom is from God (1:5)
  - Man brings temptations upon himself (1:13-15; 4:1-3,5)
  - All good gifts come from God (1:17)
  - The Word saves when obeyed (1:21-22)
  - Seeming to be religious is not sufficient (1:26)
  - Though most religion is a corrupt pretender, there is religion which is pure and undefiled (1:27)
  - One must not be a respecter of persons (2:1-9)
  - One sin is all that is necessary to destroy a soul (2:10)
  - Works are necessary for salvation (2:14-26)
  - With greater ability come greater responsibilities (3:1; cf. 4:17)
  - One must control his tongue (3:2-12)
  - Heavenly wisdom surpasses earthly wisdom (3:15-17)
  - Christians must seek peace (3:18; cf. Matthew 5:9)
  - Man must be the friend of God (4:4; cf. 2:23)
  - God rewards humility and punishes pride (4:6-10,16)
  - One should not take tomorrow for granted (4:14-15)
  - Christians should be honest, period (5:12)
  - The prayers of the righteous are heard of God (5:16; cf. I Peter 3:12; Psalm 34:15; Proverbs 10:24; 28:9)
  - To save the lost is excellent (5:19-20; cf. Proverbs 11:30; Jude 23)

### I PETER

- Author: Peter (1:1)
- From: Babylon (5:13), literally the one on the Euphrates, for the context is not figurative, neither is there any need to use figurative language—some would have this figuratively represent Rome (thus putting Peter there to establish Roman Catholicism; to be fair, one must admit that in Colossians 4:10 Mark was in Rome, and now he is with Peter in I Peter 5:13 [this is not a great difficulty, for it is conceivable that the better part of a decade separated these two writings and the early missionaries moved quickly!])
- Date: Mid A.D. 60s, for a persecution has recently begun, perhaps Nero's of A.D. 64 (there were other

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## THE GENERAL EPISTLES (continued)

- persecutions which would fit, including persecutions by Jews/Judaizers and even Caligula who died in A.D. 41) and the name Christian has been given (4:16; Acts 11:26)
- Audience: Scattered Gentile Christians (1:1)
- Purpose: Persecution was on its way, so encouragement and grounding were needed
- Keys:
  - Word: Suffer
  - Verses: 1:3 (Lively hope); 3:15 (Sanctify the Lord in the heart); 4:14 (Happy if reproached)
  - Chapter: 4 (Stand through suffering)
- Lessons:
  - Trial can be beneficial (1:6-9; 2:21-23; 3:14-17; 4:12-16; 5:10)
  - Honor must at time be paid to the dishonorable (2:17; cf. 13-14)
  - A godly example can win souls (3:1-2)
  - Baptism saves (3:20-21)
  - One must have the mind of Christ (4:1)
  - One must have the proper authority (4:11)
  - Elders must feed, not fleece, the flock (5:2-3; cf. Ezekiel 34:1-6)
  - Christians can cast their cares upon Christ (5:7)
  - Christians have an active and powerful enemy who must be resisted (5:8-9)
- Miscellaneous: One wonders if the letter were to have been circulated in the order the regions are listed in 1:1

### II PETER

- Author: Peter (1:1)
- From: Likely also from Babylon (I Peter 5:13)
- Date: Mid A.D. 60s, perhaps not too long after I Peter
- Audience: Scattered Gentile Persons (3:1)
- Purpose: To encourage growth and resistance to false teachers and false doctrines
- Keys:
  - Word: Knowledge
  - Verse: 1:10 (Making calling and election sure)
  - Passage: 1:3-4 (Life, godliness, and promises are through the knowledge of God)
  - Chapter: 2 (Threat from false teachers)
- Lessons:
  - Growth precedes fruitfulness (1:5-8)
  - Prophecy was effectual because it was inspired (1:20-21)
  - False teaching is unfruitful (2:17-19)
  - One can fall after he has been saved (2:20-22)
  - Some error springs from willful ignorance (3:5)
  - God wants all to be saved (3:9), but they must act to live (3:10-12)
  - Those who twist Scripture do so to their own destruction (3:16)

### I JOHN

- Author: John, for his students Polycarp and Papias credited him with authorship and the beginning, 1:1-3, is similar to John 1:1,14
- From: Probably Ephesus
- Date: Probably around the A.D. 80s, for this appears to have been between persecutions
- Audience: Churches of Asia

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# NEW TESTAMENT: EPISTLES AND THE REVELATION

## THE GENERAL EPISTLES (I JOHN continued)

- Purpose: To answer Gnosticism
- Keys:
  - Words: Know, Light, Word, Beloved
  - Verses: 1:1 (The Word: genuine and unique); 3:18 (Love in deed and truth); 5:4 (Faith is the victory)
  - Passages: 1:6-10 (Assurance for the faithful); 4:7-8 (Love is of God; God is love)
- Lessons:
  - The Christian and Christ work together to keep the Christian saved (1:6-9)
  - Calvinism just misses it (1:7-10; 2:1; 3:4)
  - It is not enough to just profess Jesus as propitiation, must obey (2:3-5)
  - One must “walk the walk” (2:6)
  - One must be in accord with his brethren to be in accord with his God (2:9-11; 4:20-21)
  - One must not have an inordinate love of the world (2:15-17)
  - The antichrist is anyone who denies the Christ (2:22)
  - The world hates the Christian (3:1,13)
  - One must help the helpless (3:17-18)
  - The prayers of the righteous are answered (3:22), so he can ask in confidence (5:14-15; cf. Hebrews 4:16)
  - Christians must try the spirits of teachers to see if they are genuine (4:1)
  - One must love his brethren to know his God (4:7-8)
  - The Christian has no reason to fear (4:18)
  - God’s commands are able to be obeyed (5:3)
  - One has eternal life—in prospect—if he is righteous (5:11); therefore, one can know he is saved (5:13)
  - The righteous will strive to sin not (5:18)
  - The Christian must put nothing else in the place of God (5:21)
- Miscellaneous: 5:7 is in no Greek manuscripts; it is an interpolation which first appeared in A.D. 895

## II JOHN

- Author: John
- From: Probably Ephesus
- Date: Probably around the A.D. 80s, for this appears to have been between persecutions
- Audience: The elect lady and her children (1)
- Purpose: To encourage their faithfulness and to warn of false teachers
- Keys:
  - Words: Truth, Love, Commandment
  - Phrase: “In truth”
  - Verses: 4 (Reason to rejoice), 7 (Gnosticism identified)
  - Passage: 9-11 (Beware false teachers)
- Lessons:
  - Faithful children are a blessing (4; cf. III John 4)
  - Love, manifested in obedience, has always been expected (5-6)
  - One must reject error and those promoting it (9-11)

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## THE GENERAL EPISTLES (continued)

### III JOHN

- Author: John
- From: Probably Ephesus
- Date: Probably around the A.D. 80s, for this appears to have been between persecutions
- Audience: Gaius (1)
- Purpose: To encourage Gaius, denounce Diotrephes, and promote Demetrius
- Keys:
  - Words: Truth, Good
  - Phrase: “In truth”
  - Verse: 11 (Follow good)
- Lessons:
  - Faithful children are a blessing (4; cf. II John 4)
  - Must be kind, gentle, and hospitable to all, even strangers (5; cf. Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:1-2)
  - One can influence the lost through benevolence (6)
  - Some Christians run more people away from the church than they lead to it (9-10)
  - Evil should not be imitated (11)

### JUDE

- Author: Jude (1:1)
- From: Perhaps Jerusalem alongside his brother, James (1)
- Date: Mid A.D. 60s, certainly pre-A.D. 70 with no mention of the destruction of Jerusalem
- Audience: The church in general (1)
- Purpose: To denounce false teachers
- Keys:
  - Word: Keep, Ungodly
  - Phrase: “Once for all”
  - Verse: 3 (Contend for the faith)
- Lessons:
  - The system of faith has been once for all delivered (3)
  - False teachers do not typically advertize that they are such (4)
  - The same God who blesses will punish those whom He has blessed if they forsake Him (5)
  - Even the angels could apostatize (6)
  - Evil has been and, therefore, will be punished (7,11,15)
  - False teachers are motivated by selfishness, not godliness (16,18)
  - Hell is a real terror! (23)
- Miscellaneous: Some wonder if Jude quoted the apocryphal works Assumption of Moses (9) and Enoch (14); likely, the writers of these saw what Jude had written and recognized opportunities to capitalize on an inspired work which made reference to things that the Holy Spirit knew had been taken place and/or been said—it should be remembered that Jude was writing this being inspired (II Timothy 3:16); however, even if these books were quoted, their use was illustrative not doctrinal just as the use of the sayings/writings of Aratus (Acts 17:28), Meander (I Corinthians 15:33), Euripides, and Epimenides (Titus 1:12-13) by the equally-inspired Paul

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# NEW TESTAMENT: EPISTLES AND THE REVELATION

## THE BOOK OF PROPHECY

### THE REVELATION

- Author: John (1:1,4,9; 21:2; 22:8)
- From: Patmos (1:9)
- Date: A.D. 95 or 96, as Irenaeus indicated around the end of Domitian's reign
- Audience: The seven churches of Asia (1:4,10,11; 2; 3) which represented the whole of the church in that persecution-threatened province
- Purpose: To encourage Christians in Asia to remain faithful in the face of terrible persecution which was soon to come to pass (1:1)
- Keys:
  - Words: Revelation, Blessed
  - Phrases: "I Am," "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches"
  - Verses: 1:1 (How inspiration works); 14:13 (Blessed are the dead)
  - Chapters: 2-3 (Letters to the churches); 4 (A glimpse into the throne room of God); 21 (A glimpse into heaven)
- Lessons:
  - God's Word must be read and kept (1:3)
  - God has control over the kingdoms of men (11:15; cf. Daniel 4:32)
  - Jesus knew He would have to die before the world even existed (13:8)
  - God's Word is not subject to revision (22:18-19)
  - GOD WINS—SO DOES HIS CHURCH! (20:11-15; cf. 2:10)

## SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDYING THE BIBLE

- Appreciate that Scripture is from God (II Timothy 3:16-17) and so must be shared (II Timothy 4:1-5)
- Rightly divide the Word (II Timothy 2:15)
- Appreciate other Biblical accounts which are parallel and/or supplementary
- Be consistent
  - Keep literal contexts literal
  - Keep figurative contexts figurative
- Respect the silence of the Scriptures
- Know that Scripture must not be manipulated in any way (Revelation 22:18-19; II Peter 3:16)
- Understand that an explicit New Testament command is binding even if some passages may be skewed as to appear to be at odds with it
- Know that something can be said just once and be authoritative
- Study daily
  - The Bereans did so to confirm that what they were being taught was Truth (Acts 17:10-11)

## THE BIBLICAL PICTURE OF THE ONE JUDGMENT

### THE JUDGE

The Son of Man (Matthew 25:31)  
The King (Matthew 25:40)  
Jesus the Christ (John 5:30; Acts 10:42; II Timothy 4:1)  
The Word spoken by Jesus (John 12:48)  
God (Acts 17:31; Hebrews 12:23; 13:4)  
God by Jesus Christ (Romans 2:16)  
The Righteous Judge (II Timothy 4:8)  
The Lord (Hebrews 10:30)  
He is ready (I Peter 4:5)  
Faithful and True (Revelation 19:11)

### THE JUDGED

All Nations (Matthew 25:32)  
Sheep and Goats (Matthew 25:32-33)

### THE SAVED (ON THE JUDGE'S RIGHT HAND)

The Sheep (Matthew 25:32-33; John 10:1-38; Romans 8:35-37; Hebrews 13:20; I Peter 2:25)  
The Righteous (Matthew 25:37; I Peter 3:12; 4:18)  
Would Inherit the Kingdom (Matthew 25:34)  
Would Go into Life Eternal (Matthew 25:46)

### THE LOST (ON THE JUDGE'S LEFT HAND)

The Goats (Matthew 25:32-33; John 10:26)  
The Cursed (Matthew 25:41)  
Would Depart into Everlasting Fire (Matthew 25:41)  
Would Go Away into Everlasting Punishment (Matthew 25:46)

*Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not (Malachi 3:18)*

**"Watch** therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have **watched**, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up" (Matthew 24:42-43)

**"Watch** therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:13)

**"Watch** ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, **Watch**" (Mark 13:35-37)

**"Therefore watch**, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31)

**"Watch** ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (I Corinthians 16:13)

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;" (Colossians 4:2)

**"Therefore let us not sleep**, as do others; but let us **watch** and be sober" (I Thessalonians 5:6)

**"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard**, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not **watch**, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Revelation 3:3)

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