

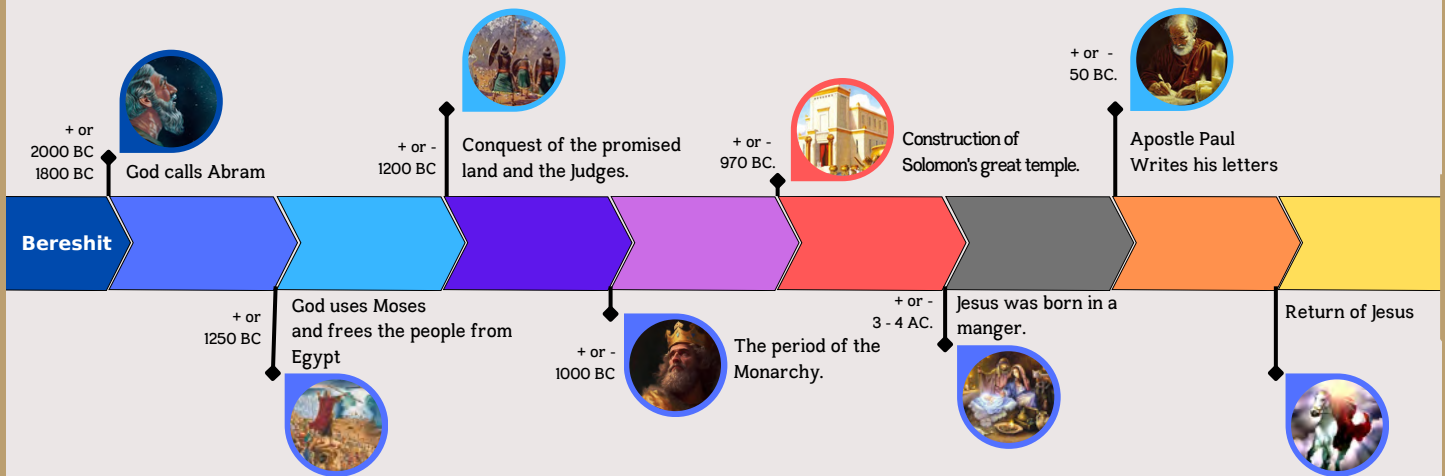
# Historical and Chronological Panorama

of  
the

# BIBLE

New Version

By Pastor Antonio Junior



## From Genesis to the Primitive Church.

A Didactic Journey illustrated by the most impacting stories in the Bible.



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The Historical and Chronological overview does not replace reading the Bible, it complements it as support material.

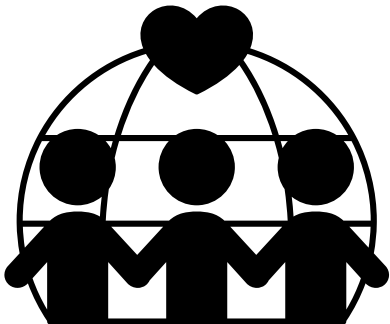
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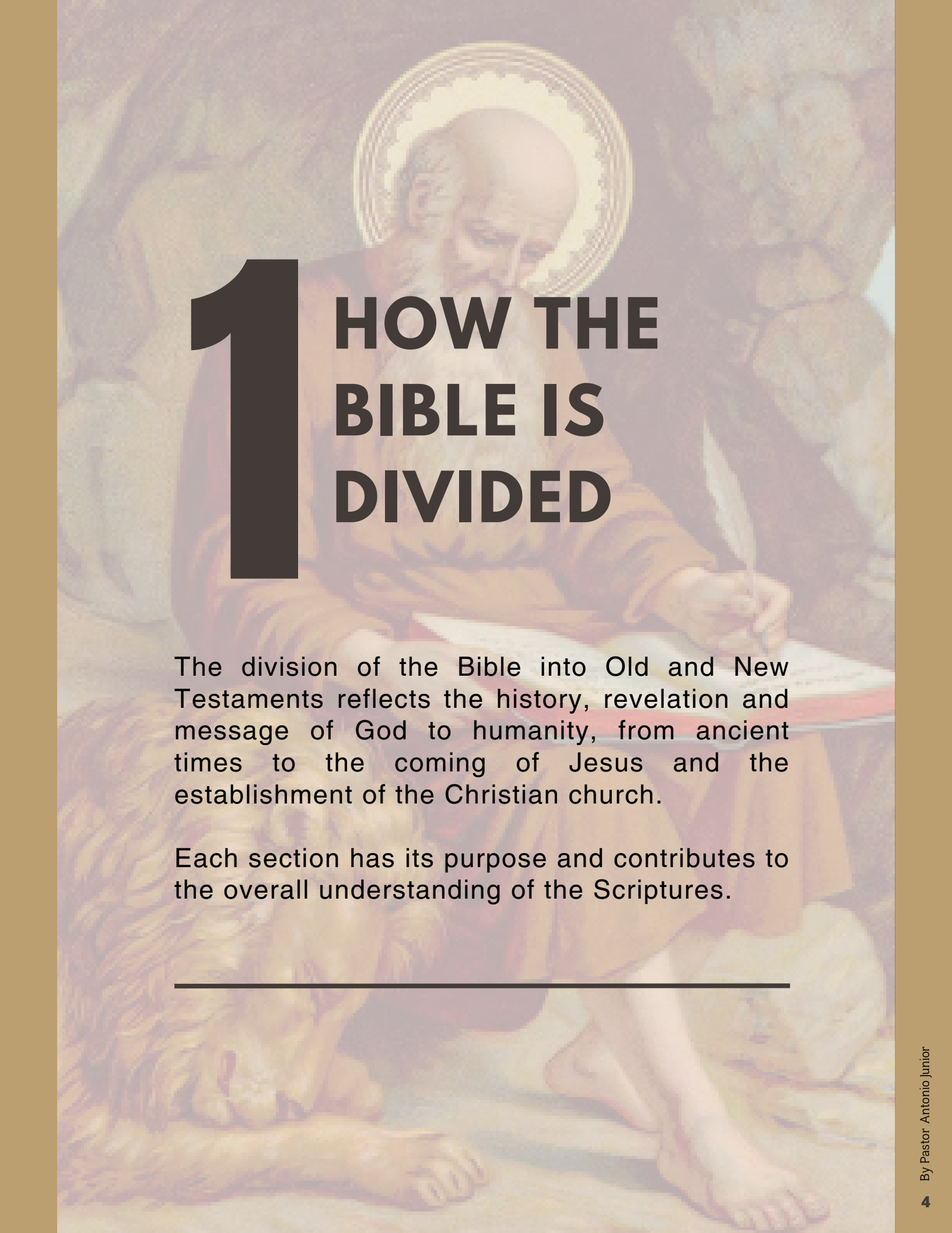
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# 1 HOW THE BIBLE IS DIVIDED

The division of the Bible into Old and New Testaments reflects the history, revelation and message of God to humanity, from ancient times to the coming of Jesus and the establishment of the Christian church.

Each section has its purpose and contributes to the overall understanding of the Scriptures.

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## HOW THE BIBLE IS DIVIDED

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The Bible is made up of 66 books in total. These books are divided into two main sections: the Old Testament, with 39 books, and the New Testament, with 27 books. Each book has a distinct content and purpose, spanning a variety of literary genres, such as historical narratives, laws, poetry, wisdom, prophecies, gospels, epistles, and apocalypses.

These books were written over several centuries by different authors, all of them inspired by the Holy Spirit, in accordance with Christian belief.

The Bible is considered the Word of God and has been a central source of teachings and guidance for Christianity

The division of the Bible into chapters and verses was not part of the original text when the books were written.

Scholars and translators later added this division to make the Scriptures easier to read, reference, and study.

Chapter division was introduced in the 13th century by a scholar named Stephen Langton, and verse division was introduced in the 16th century by the French printer Robert Estienne.

While this division has proven useful for locating and referencing specific passages, it is important to remember that the Bible must be read and understood as a whole, taking into account the context and overall message of each book and passage.

## **THE NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE**

The Bible contains a total of 1,189 chapters and approximately 31,150 verses, although this number may vary slightly depending on the specific Bible translation used.

These chapters are distributed throughout the 66 books that make up the Bible, with the different books having a variable number of chapters.

The shortest book in the Bible is the Second Letter of John, in the New Testament. The greatest book of the Bible is the book of Psalms, in the Old Testament.

While the Second Letter of John has only one chapter divided into thirteen verses, the book of Psalms has one hundred and fifty chapters.

The Bible is a rich and diverse collection of sacred writings, and each chapter contributes to the overall narrative and message it presents to readers.





Books

Chapters

Verses

B. in the Old Testament

B. in the New Testament

66

1189

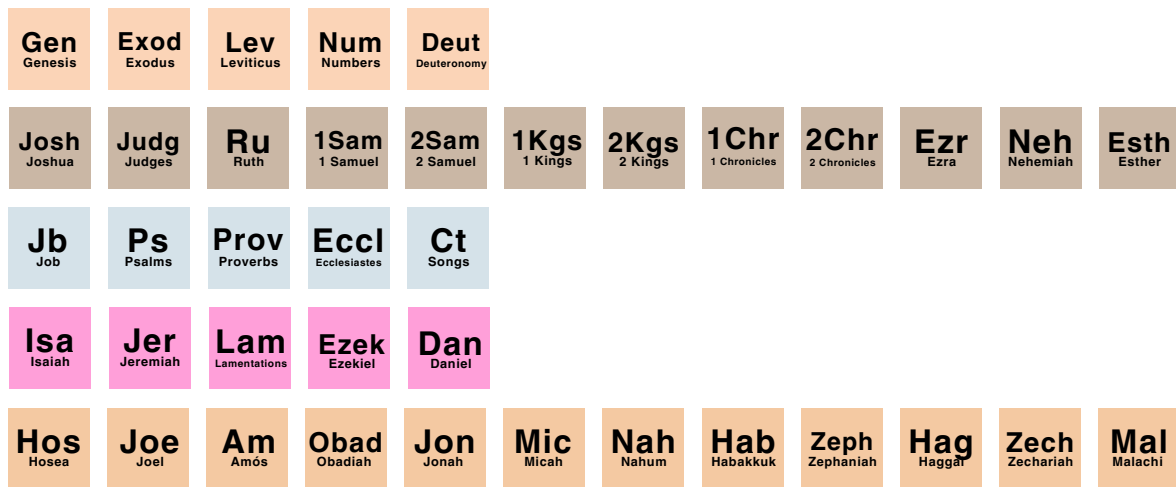
Approx. 31.150

39

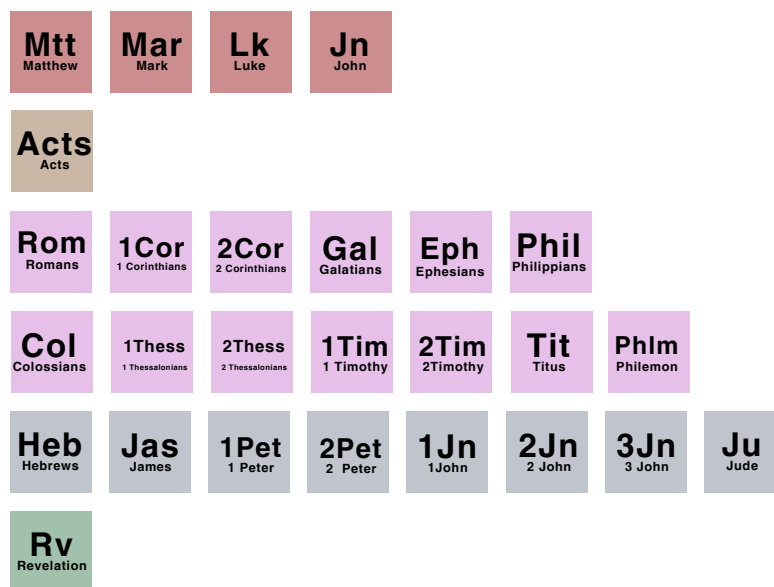
27

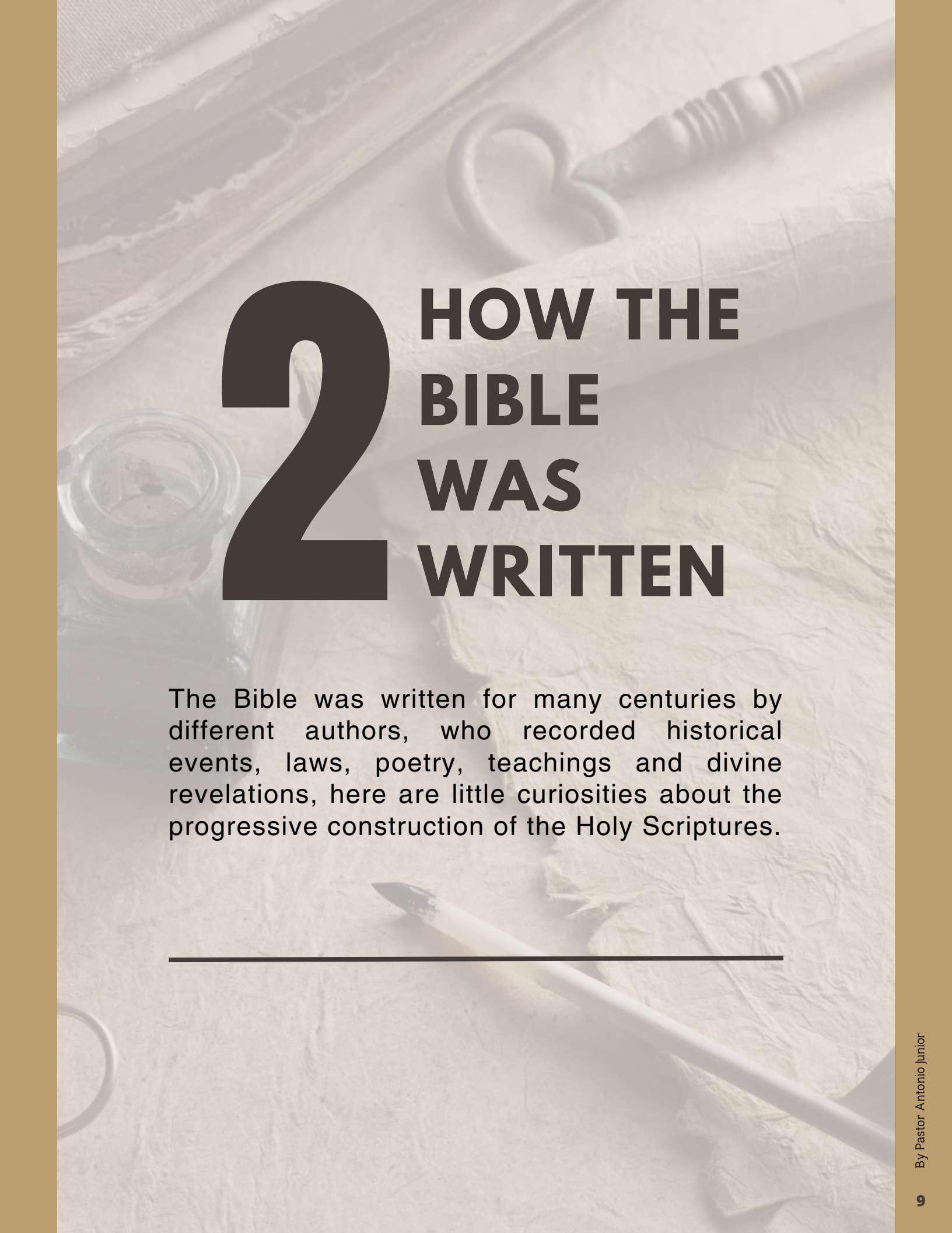
- Pentateuch
- Minor Prophets
- Revelations
- Historic
- Gospels
- Poetic Books
- Paul's letters
- Major Prophets
- General Letters

## Old Testament



## New Testament





# 2 HOW THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

The Bible was written for many centuries by different authors, who recorded historical events, laws, poetry, teachings and divine revelations, here are little curiosities about the progressive construction of the Holy Scriptures.

---

## HOW THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

The Bible was written over many centuries by different authors, who recorded historical events, laws, poetry, teachings and divine revelations.

The books of the Old Testament are believed to have been written primarily in Hebrew, with some parts in Aramaic, while those of the New Testament were written in Koine Greek, the common language of the time.

Authors include prophets, religious leaders, kings, apostles, and disciples of Jesus.

The Bible reflects a variety of literary styles, from historical narrative to lyric poetry, letters, proverbs, and prophecies.

The authors were inspired by the Holy Spirit, according to Christian belief, and their writings were preserved, copied and transmitted throughout the centuries.

The preservation and formation of the Bible as we know it today involved a complex process of compilation, selection, and canonization.

The books were recognized as sacred and authorized through the discernment and consensus of the religious community.

Councils and religious authorities played an important role in determining which books would be included in the Bible, such as the Council of Hippo in 393 AD and the Council of Carthage in 397 AD

After this process, the Bible was transmitted through manuscript copies by dedicated scribes and was then printed during the printing age.

Today there are several translations available in different languages, allowing people from all over the world to access the Holy Scriptures.

---

**FOR OVER 1600 YEARS**

**BETWEEN 1500 AND 450 BC  
AND BETWEEN 45 AND 90 AD**



**OVER 40 WRITERS**



Aramaic



Greek



Hebrew

**IN 3 LANGUAGES**



Africa

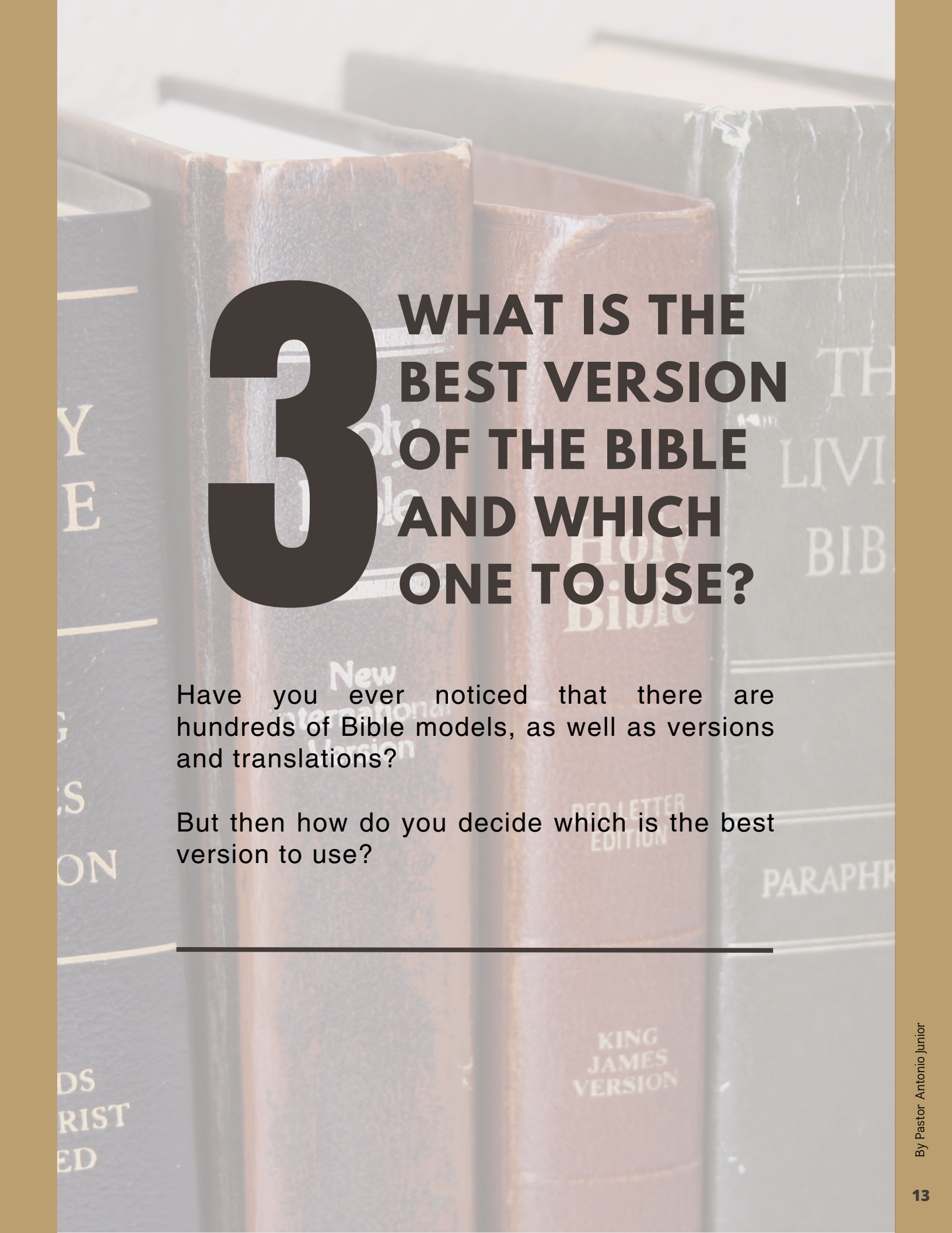


Asia



Europe

**ON 3 CONTINENTS**



# 3 WHAT IS THE BEST VERSION OF THE BIBLE AND WHICH ONE TO USE?

Have you ever noticed that there are hundreds of Bible models, as well as versions and translations?

But then how do you decide which is the best version to use?

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## **WHAT IS THE BEST VERSION OF THE BIBLE AND WHICH ONE TO USE?**

Have you ever noticed that there are hundreds of Bible models, as well as versions and translations? But then how do you decide which is the best version to use, since there are several translations of the Bible available today?

Each translation is the result of the work of scholars, linguists and theologians who seek to convey the biblical text in different languages in an understandable and relevant way.

Translations may vary in their approach, language style, and purpose. Some translations focus on strict fidelity to the original text, while others seek to balance fidelity with clarity and fluency in the target language.

Furthermore, different translations may have different translation principles and philosophies.

Some take a more literal approach, while others take a more interpretive approach.

Choosing a Bible translation is a personal matter, as each person may have different language preferences, study needs, and understanding.

It is recommended that you examine several translations, compare their styles and approaches, and choose the one that best suits your purpose of reading and understanding the Holy Scriptures.

**First you need to understand this:  
Formal Equivalence and Dynamic Equivalence.**

The difference between formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence refers to the approaches taken in Bible translation in relation to fidelity to the original text and fluency in the target language.

Formal equivalence: Translation style that seeks to follow the original text word for word.

Dynamic equivalence: Translation style that is not strictly linked to the text, but rather seeks to translate the idea.

Formal equivalence, also known as literal translation or literality, aims to maintain maximum fidelity to the original text.

In this translation method, the translator seeks to accurately reproduce every word, grammatical structure, and style of the original text, even if this may result in more archaic or less fluent language in the target language.

Formal equivalence is valued for its emphasis on accuracy and preserving the nuances of the original biblical text.



On the other hand, dynamic equivalence, also known as functional translation or thinking about meaning, seeks to convey the meaning and message of the original text in a language that is more fluent and understandable in the target language.

In this approach, the translator prioritizes conveying the meaning of the text rather than a word-for-word correspondence.

This may involve rearranging sentences, using idiomatic expressions, and adapting linguistic style to make the text more accessible to contemporary readers.

Both approaches have their advantages and challenges.

**Formal equivalence** preserves fidelity to the original text, but may require greater familiarity with older terms and linguistic structures.

**Dynamic equivalence** seeks to facilitate the understanding of the text, but may imply greater interpretation by the translator and, consequently, a less literal correspondence.

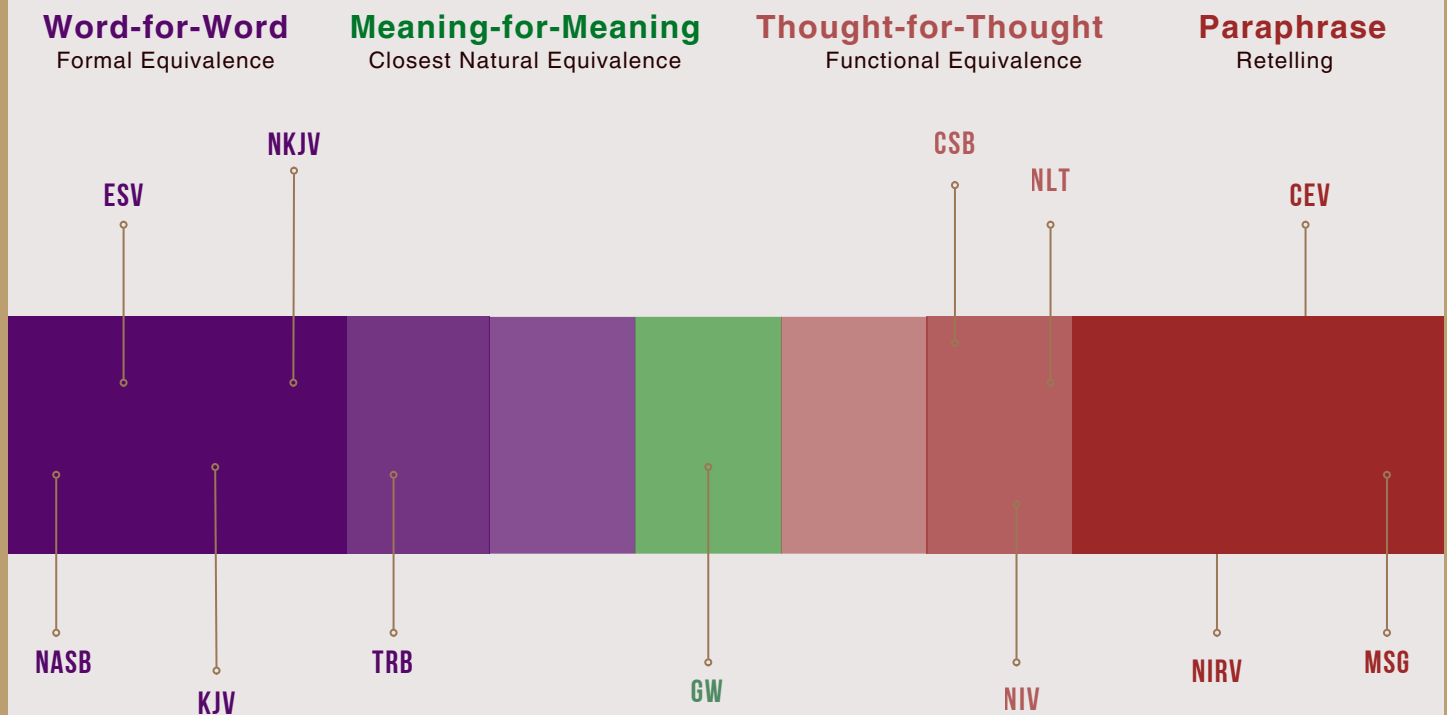
The choice between these approaches depends on the goals of the reader and the context in which the Bible will be read.

Some people prefer a more literal translation for in-depth textual study and analysis, while others seek a more accessible translation for devotional reading or a general understanding of the Scriptures.

It is important to evaluate the features of each approach and select a version that meets individual needs and preferences.

**Formal equivalence: literal word-for-word translation.**

**Dynamic or Functional equivalence - Text interpretation translation.**



**CSB** Christian Standard Bible

**KJV** King James Version

**NIV** New International Version

**CEV** Contemporary English Version

**MSG** The Message

**NKJV** New King James Version

**ESV** English Standard Version

**NASB** New American Standard Bible

**NLT** New Living Translation

**GW** GOD'S WORD Translation

**NIRV** New International Reader's Version

**TRB** The Readable Bible

After all, which one to use?

The ideal is to have several translations, or at least two or three following this rule.

A more formal translation, one more dynamic (but in balance) and the other a little more free, and if you want one that is a paraphrase, you can always consult them and compare them, this will give you a clearer and more objective vision of the subject.

For a simpler and more fluid reading on a daily basis, we recommend one that respects a little balance.

You can use the table above to understand the level of equivalence of some of the most used translations in USA.

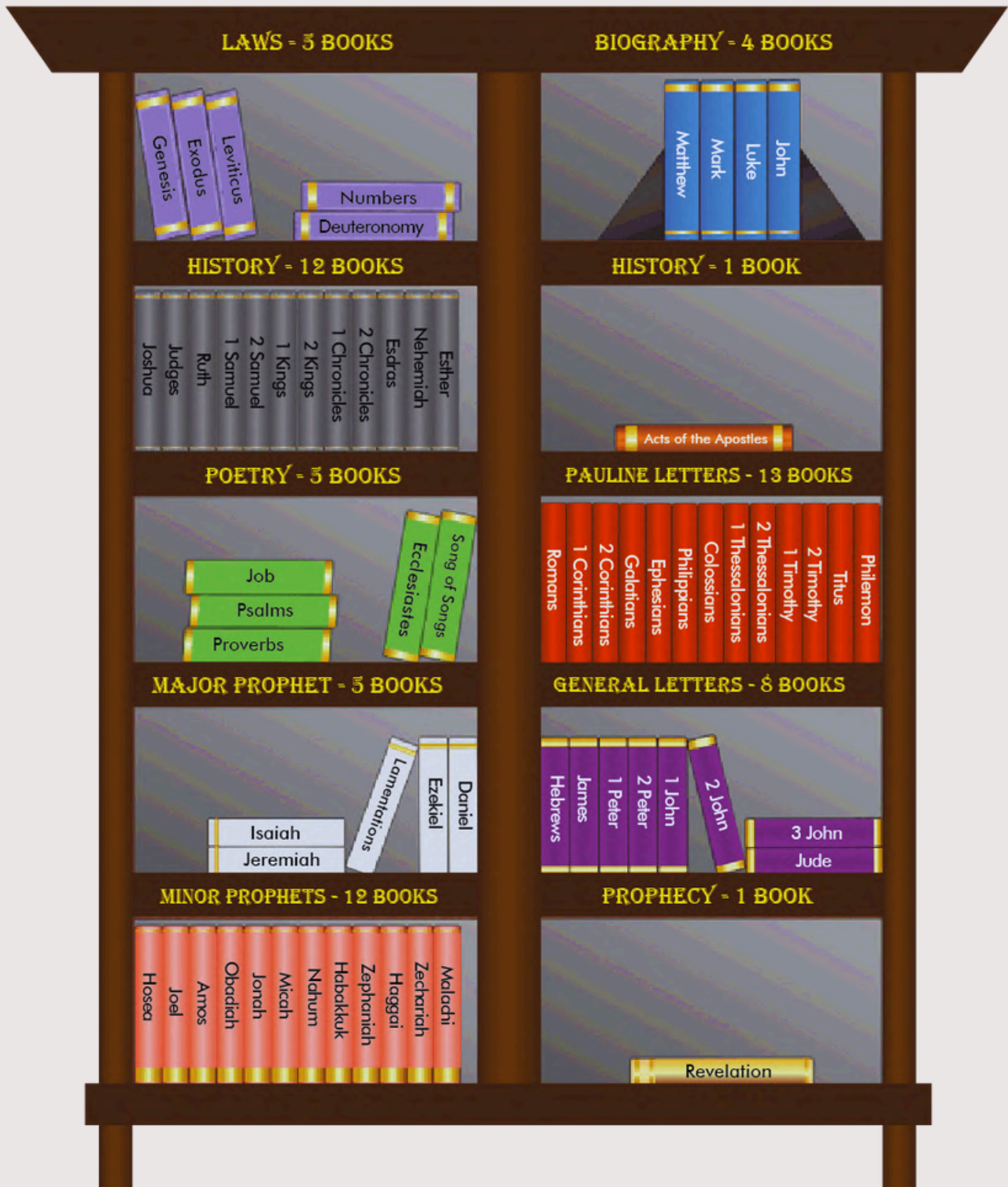


# 4

## LITERARY DIVISION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

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# LITERARY DIVISION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.



The construction of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, took place over several centuries. The Old Testament was compiled over a period of approximately one thousand years, beginning with oral traditions passed down by ancient Jewish communities. These traditions were gradually recorded in writing, preserving stories, laws, prophecies, psalms, and wisdom. The books of the Old Testament were written at different times and places, reflecting the history and faith of the people of Israel.

In the case of the New Testament, the writings were produced throughout the first century, recording the experiences and teachings of the first followers of Jesus Christ. The gospels, epistles, and other writings were shared among Christian communities, circulating in the form of manuscripts and copies. During this time, there were debates and discussions about which writings should be considered sacred and authoritative.



The organization and formation of the canon, that is, the official list of books considered inspired and authorized, was a gradual and complex process. Different criteria were used to evaluate the authenticity and authority of the writings, including their connection to the apostles, their doctrinal conformity, and their use in Christian communities. Over the centuries, councils and debates were held to discuss and define which books should be included in the biblical canon.

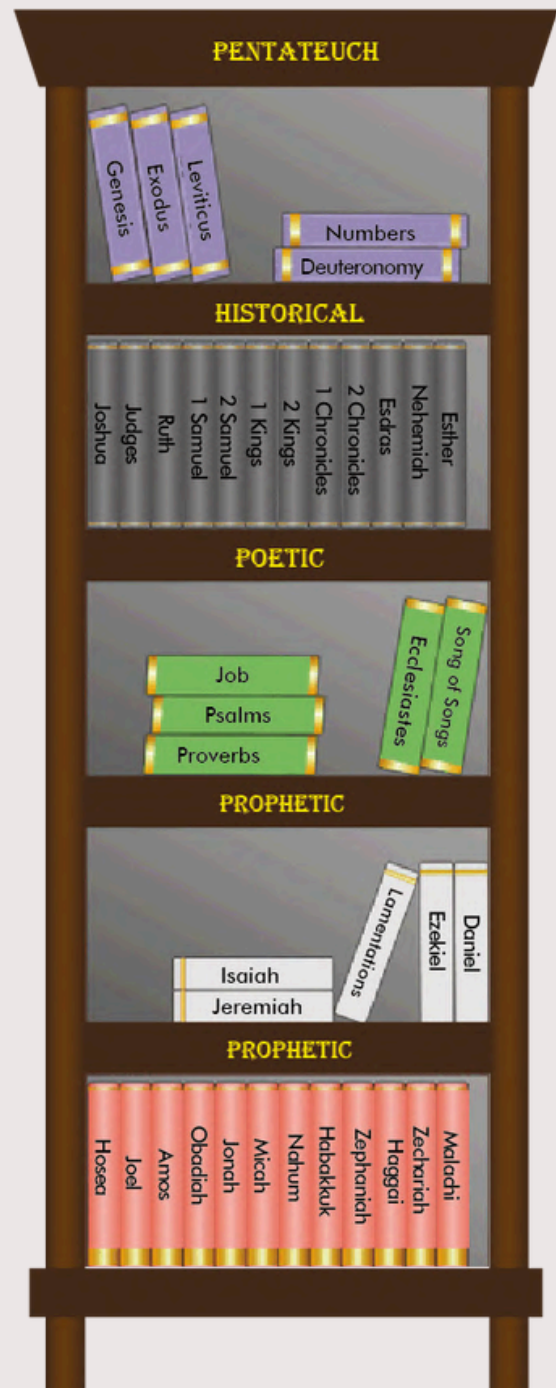
Although the process of constructing the Bible was challenging and involved several steps over time, the result was the formation of a body of writings considered sacred and fundamental to the faith and practice of Judeo-Christian communities. The Bible remains a central text for Protestant Christianity and plays a fundamental role in the worship, teaching, and devotional lives of believers.

The Old Testament was slowly formed over a period of more than 1,000 years, and many writers, editors, scribes, and other inspired people participated in its formation.

The Old Testament is a collection of sacred writings covering a significant period in the history and faith of the people of Israel.

Divided into several sections, including the Torah (Law), the Historical Books, the Books of Wisdom and the Prophets, the Old Testament presents a comprehensive view of the beliefs, practices, narratives and teachings that shaped identity and religion of ancient Israel.

From the stories of creation and the patriarchs to the deliverance of the people from Egypt, the formation of the nation of Israel, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the Psalms of praise and lament, the wise proverbs and prophecies of hope and warning, the Old Testament offers a wealth of spiritual, ethical, and historical content to readers.



In summary, the Old Testament is a literary collection that covers a wide range of genres and content, providing a deep insight into the history, culture and faith of the people of Israel.

Throughout his books we find stories of creation, laws and commandments, stories of leadership and failure, lyric poetry, practical wisdom, and prophetic messages that point to the people's relationship with God, their struggles and hopes, and the search for justice and divine guidance.

The Old Testament is an essential foundation for understanding the roots of Judaism and the cultural context in which Christianity developed.

The books of the Old Testament are not organized in chronological order, but rather by literary style. First the narrative books appear (from Genesis to Esther), then the books of wisdom/Poetry (from Job to the Song of Songs) and, finally, the books of the prophets (from Isaiah to Malachi).

## DIVISION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

### PENTATEUCH



Greek word that means five books (or rather, five volumes of a book). The first five books of the Bible belong to this group: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

They tell us about the Creation of the world, the patriarchs, the departure of Israel from the land of Egypt, the Sinai alliance, the Laws, etc...

For Jews it is the most important part of the sacred books, calling it Torah or Law.



## STORIES



These offer us the history of the people of Israel and their leaders, from their entry into the promised land (book of Joshua), the development of the people until they became a monarchy, the difficulties of remaining faithful to God, until their captivity and their return to Jerusalem.

A story where God intervenes to (reveal himself) and know men.

## POETIC



They transmit to us the wisdom and feelings of the people of Israel. Wisdom that is born from life experience, wisdom matured and accumulated over generations and then synthesized in short phrases (for example, Proverbs) or in broader and deeper reflections (for example, Job, Ecclesiastes).

Even a collection of prayers, supplications, praises, lamentations, poetry like the book of Psalms.

## PROPHETIC



They are witnesses of the preaching and activity of the prophets, men and women whose mission was to announce the Word and will of God to the people and nourish the hope of the people.

Always showing the people where they were going wrong and what path God expected of them.

# DIVISION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The New Testament is a collection of writings describing the life, teachings, and legacy of Jesus Christ, as well as the formation of the early Christian church.

Divided into four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), the New Testament chronicles the earthly life of Jesus, including his birth, ministry, teachings, miracles, death on the cross, and resurrection.

In addition to the Gospels, there is also the book of the Acts of the Apostles, which records the growth of the church and the missionary journeys of Paul and other disciples, and various Epistles (letters) written by Paul, Peter, James, John, and Judas, who provided instruction, exhortation, and encouragement to the early Christians.



Finally, the New Testament concludes with the book of Revelation, an apocalyptic vision of John that deals with the end times and God's final victory over evil.

In short, the New Testament is a literary collection that recounts the life of Jesus, the establishment of the early church, and the teachings of the apostles. It offers spiritual, ethical, and theological guidance to followers of Jesus and continues to be a central source of inspiration and authority for Christians around the world.

## GOSPEL



The first section of the New Testament is made up of the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, each of them narrates the life, teachings, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

These books are essential to understanding the central message of Christianity.

## HISTORY



The book of Acts tells the history of the early church after the ascension of Jesus. It describes the actions of the apostles, especially Peter and Paul, and key events such as the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and Paul's missionary journeys.

The book of Acts serves as a connection between the Gospels and the Epistles, providing a historical account of the development of the early church.

## PAULINE EPISTLES



The apostle Paul wrote several letters (epistles) to different Christian communities. These letters include Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

These epistles address theological, ethical, and practical issues, offering instruction and encouragement to early Christians.

## GENERAL EPISTLES



In addition to Paul's epistles, there are a set of general letters written by other authors. These include Hebrews, an anonymous letter that explores the relationship between the Old Testament and the person of Jesus Christ, and the epistles of James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude.

These letters deal with topics such as faith, morality, perseverance, and the fight against heresies.

## PROPHECY - APOCALYPSE



The last book of the New Testament is the Apocalypse, written by John, it is a prophetic and apocalyptic book that reveals symbolic visions of the end times, the conflict between good and evil and the final victory of God.

The Apocalypse offers hope and encouragement to Christians in the face of hardship and persecution.

---

“

I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Revelation 3:11

# 5

## CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS FROM GENESIS TO THE RETURN OF JESUS

Understanding the Bible chronologically is essential to have a clearer and more attractive view of the biblical narrative.

By studying the sequence of events, we can connect stories, characters, and teachings in a coherent way. This allows us to see how God has acted throughout human history, keeping promises, bringing redemption, and demonstrating his love and grace.

By learning the Bible chronologically, we also delve into the historical and cultural circumstances in which events occurred, providing a rich context for interpreting and applying biblical teachings in our lives today. This helps us avoid isolated and distorted interpretations, promoting a broader and more consistent understanding of the biblical message.



## **Creation**

God created the universe by his word.



## **Adam and Eve**

God created humanity in his image and likeness to take care of his creation.



## **The Fall**

Man sins, rejects God and is expelled from the Garden of Eden.



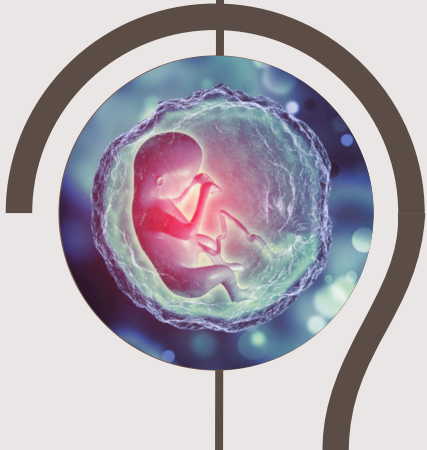
## **Noah | Flood**

God floods the earth, but saves it and makes a covenant with Noah and his family.



## **Babel**

God confuses the language of the world and scatters humanity.



## **Abraham**

God promises to bless Abraham and all people through him.



## **Joseph | Egypt**

Joseph and his brothers move to Egypt.



## **Moses | Exodus**

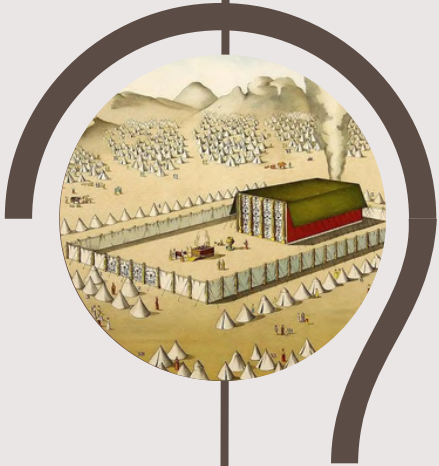
Through Moses, God frees Israel from slavery in Egypt.





## **Law**

God makes a covenant with Israel to be their God.



## **Tabernacle**

God dwells with Israel in the tent of consecration.



## **Pilgrimage**

Israel wanders in the desert for forty years.



## **Promised Land**

Joshua leads Israel into the land of Canaan.







## **Judges**

God raises up Judges to save Israel from its enemies.



## **Saul**

Saul became Israel's first king, but disobeyed God and lost his throne.



## **David**

God makes a covenant with David to establish his throne forever.



## **Solomon | Temple**

Solomon builds a temple for God in Jerusalem.





### **The Schism / Divided Kingdom**

The kingdom is divided between the northern and southern tribes.



### **Fall of Samaria**

Assyria defeats Israel (the northern kingdom).



### **Assyrian exile**

Assyria takes Israel (north) captive.



### **Fall of Jerusalem**

Babylon defeats Judah (the southern kingdom).





## **Babylonian Exile**

Babylon takes Judah (south) captive.



## **Return from Exile**

Persia defeats Babylon and the exiles return.



## **Reconstruction**

The temple and the walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt.



## **Birth and life of Jesus**

Jesus came into the world as a man to save humanity.





## **Jesus' death**

Jesus is crucified to pay the price for humanity's rejection of God.



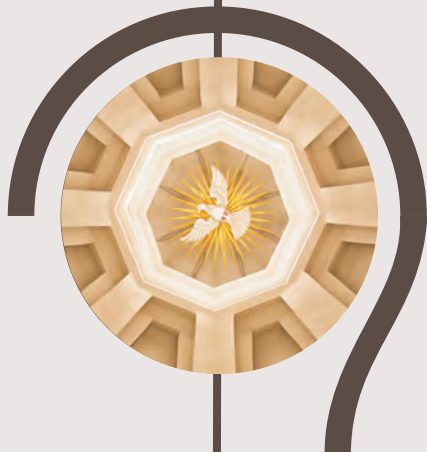
## **Resurrection of Jesus**

Jesus conquers death to bring life to humanity.



## **Jesus' Ascension**

Jesus returns to heaven.



## **Pentecost**

The Holy Spirit empowers the apostles to bear witness to Jesus.





## **The Great Commission**

The gospel began to be preached from Jerusalem to "the ends of the earth".



## **Apostle Paul**

Paul is commissioned to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.



## **Current Days**

You are here.



## **Jesus' return**

Jesus is coming back to put an end to evil and to seek out his church.





## **Final judgment**

All of humanity is judged by God.



## **New Creation**

God creates a new heaven and a new earth.

### **Revelation 21:1-4**

*Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.*

*I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.*

*He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*

# **6** QUICK INTRODUCTION FROM GENESIS TO APOCALYPSE

A brief introduction to each book of the Bible to set you in the context of the stories in each book.

---

Note: The dates refer to the periods in history when the events took place, not when the book was written.

# Book-by-Book Quick Start

## 1st Book

### GENESIS - Bereshit In Hebrew

Reading time: 4 hours and 10 minutes

|          |        |        |                   |            |
|----------|--------|--------|-------------------|------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date              | Style      |
| 50       | 1533   | Moses  | + 4000-1500<br>AC | Pentateuch |

Genesis: Written by Moses, Genesis recounts the creation of the world, the history of the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and the beginning of the people of Israel. The book explores the origin of humanity, sin, the flood, and the formation of the covenant between God and the patriarchs.





## 2nd Book

### EXODUS - Shemôth In Hebrew

Reading time: 3 hours and 25 minutes

|          |        |        |                   |            |
|----------|--------|--------|-------------------|------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date              | Style      |
| 40       | 1213   | Moses  | 1400 - 1200<br>AC | Pentateuch |

Exodus: Also attributed to Moses, the Exodus narrates the departure of the people of Israel from Egypt, led by Moses. The book addresses slavery in Egypt, plagues sent by God, the institution of the Passover, and the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.



### 3rd Book

### LEVITIC - Vayikra In Hebrew

Reading time: 2 hours and 40 minutes

|          |        |        |                    |            |
|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date               | Style      |
| 27       | 859    | Moses  | 1450 - 1410<br>A.C | Pentateuch |

Leviticus: The book of Leviticus, attributed to Moses, presents a series of laws, rituals and norms that govern the cult, the priesthood and the moral and ceremonial purity of the people of Israel. It also addresses issues of holiness and sacrifice.



## 4th Book

### NUMBERS - Bamidbar In Hebrew

Reading time: 3 hours and 35 minutes

|          |        |        |                    |            |
|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date               | Style      |
| 36       | 1288   | Moses  | 1450 - 1410<br>A.C | Pentateuch |

Numbers: Written by Moses, Numbers describes the period of the people of Israel's pilgrimage in the wilderness, including the organization of the camp, censuses, murmurings, rebellions, and preparation to enter the Promised Land.



## 5th Book

### DEUTERONONE - Devarim In Hebrew

Reading time: 3 hours and 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |            |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style      |
| 34       | 959    | Moisés | 1440-1400<br>A.C | Pentateuco |

Deuteronomy: Also attributed to Moses, Deuteronomy contains Moses' final speeches to the people of Israel, before they entered the Promised Land. The book reaffirms God's laws and commandments, urges obedience, and establishes a renewal of the covenant.



## 6th Book

### JOSUÉ

Reading time: 2 hours and 10 minutes

|          |        |        |                    |         |
|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date               | Style   |
| 24       | 658    | Joshua | 1390 - 1100<br>A.C | History |

Joshua: Joshua, Moses' successor, is the likely author of the book that bears his name. Joshua recounts Israel's conquest of the Promised Land and the division of the land among the tribes of Israel.



## 7th Book

### JUDGES

Reading time: 3 hours and 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |         |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style   |
| 21       | 619    | Samuel | 1200-1000<br>A.C | History |

Judges: The book of Judges chronicles the period after the conquest of Canaan, when leaders called judges emerged to rule and free Israel from oppression. The book highlights the current cycle of infidelity, oppression, regret and liberation.



## 8th Book

### RUTE

Reading time: 20 minutes

|          |        |        |                    |         |
|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date               | Style   |
| 04       | 85     | Samuel | 1100 - 1000<br>A.C | History |

Ruth: The book of Ruth tells the story of a Moabite woman named Ruth, who showed faithfulness and devotion to her Israelite mother-in-law, Naomi. The story highlights the importance of loyalty, love and God's providence.



## 9th Book

### 1 SAMUEL

Reading time: 2 hours and 30 minutes

|          |        |                         |                    |         |
|----------|--------|-------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author                  | Date               | Style   |
| 31       | 811    | Samuel/or<br>Undeclared | 1100 - 1000<br>A.C | History |

1 Samuel: The book of 1 Samuel chronicles the transition from the period of judges to monarchy in Israel. Samuel stands out as an important prophet and the book presents the stories of Saul, the first king of Israel, and David, who would become the next king.





## 10th Book

### 2 SAMUEL

Reading time: 2 hours and 15 minutes

|          |        |                         |                   |         |
|----------|--------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author                  | Date              | Style   |
| 24       | 695    | Samuel/or<br>Undeclared | 1100 - 950<br>A.C | History |

2 Samuel: Continuing the story of 1 Samuel, the book of 2 Samuel recounts David's reign as the second king of Israel. The book includes military victories, the tragic story of David and Bathsheba, and the promise of an eternal covenant with David's descendants.



## 11th Book

### 1 KINGS

Reading time: 2h and 35 minutes

|          |        |            |                   |         |
|----------|--------|------------|-------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date              | Style   |
| 22       | 817    | Undeclared | 1000 - 790<br>A.C | History |

1 Kings: The book of 1 Kings details the history of the kings of Israel after the death of David. It covers the reign of Solomon, the building of the Temple in Jerusalem, the division of the kingdom into northern Israel and southern Judah, and the successions of kings in both nations.



## 12th Book

### 2 KINGS

Reading time: 2 hours and 35 minutes

|          |        |            |                  |         |
|----------|--------|------------|------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date             | Style   |
| 22       | 817    | Undeclared | 930 - 561<br>A.C | History |

2 Kings: Continuing the narrative of 1 Kings, the book of 2 Kings tells the story of the kings of Israel and Judah, highlighting their successes, failures, prophets sent by God, and the exile of the people of Israel to Assyria and, later, the exile of Judah to Babylon.



## 13th Book

### 1 CHRONICLES

Reading time: 2 hours and 30 minutes

|          |        |                    |                   |         |
|----------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author             | Date              | Style   |
| 29       | 942    | Ezra/or<br>unknown | 1050 - 586<br>A.C | History |

1 Chronicles: The book of 1 Chronicles reviews the history of Israel from Adam to the reign of David, emphasizing genealogies, the genealogies of the tribes of Israel, the records of the kings, and the importance of the temple and the liturgical service.



## 14th Book

### 2 CHRONICLES

Reading time: 2 hours and 45 minutes

|          |        |                    |                  |         |
|----------|--------|--------------------|------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author             | Date             | Style   |
| 36       | 822    | Ezra/or<br>unknown | 970 - 510<br>A.C | History |

2 Chronicles: Continuing the narrative of 1 Chronicles, the book of 2 Chronicles highlights the reigns of the kings of Judah, with an emphasis on religious reforms and the worship of God in the temple. The book ends with the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people of Judah to Babylon.



## 15th Book

### ESDRAS

Reading time: 45 minutes

|          |        |                    |                  |         |
|----------|--------|--------------------|------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author             | Date             | Style   |
| 10       | 280    | Ezra/or<br>unknown | 586 - 445<br>A.C | History |

Ezra: The book of Ezra recounts the return of a portion of the people of Judah from exile in Babylon and the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Ezra also emphasizes the restoration of the worship of God and the need for obedience to the law.



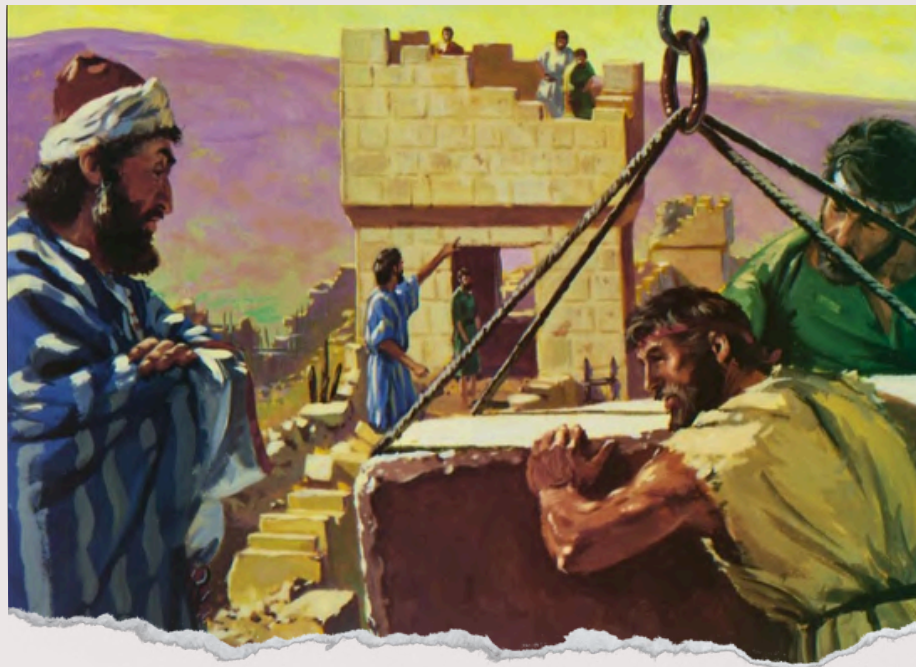
## 16th Book

### NEEMIAS

Reading time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |         |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style   |
| 13       | 406    | Ezra   | 586 - 445<br>A.C | History |

**Nehemiah:** Nehemiah tells the story of Nehemiah, a Jewish leader who obtained permission from the Persian king to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city walls. The book highlights the restoration of the city and the renewal of the people's commitment to God.



## 17th Book

### ESTHER

Reading time: 35 minutes

|          |        |            |                  |         |
|----------|--------|------------|------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date             | Style   |
| 10       | 167    | Undeclared | 486 - 445<br>A.C | History |

Esther: The book of Esther tells the story of a young Jewish woman named Esther, who becomes queen of Persia and intercedes for her Jewish people threatened with extermination. The book emphasizes God's sovereignty and divine protection over her people.





## 18th Book

### JOB

Reading time: 1 hour and 50 minutes

|          |        |            |                  |        |
|----------|--------|------------|------------------|--------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date             | Style  |
| 42       | 1070   | Undeclared | +ou- 2000<br>A.C | Poetic |

Job: Job is a poetic book that explores the question of human suffering and the search for answers. Job faces great adversity, but maintains his faith in God. The book raises questions about divine justice and God's wisdom in the midst of suffering.



## 19th Book

### PSALMS

Reading time: 3 hours and 50 minutes

|          |        |                 |                   |        |
|----------|--------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author          | Date              | Style  |
| 150      | 2461   | Various Authors | 1400 a<br>586 A.C | Poetic |

Psalms: The Psalms are a book of poetry and worship, attributed mainly to King David. They express a variety of emotions, from praise and gratitude to sorrow and supplication. The Psalms are considered a source of consolation, guidance and inspiration for God's people.



## 20th Book

### PROVERBS

Reading time: 1 hour and 50 minutes

|          |        |         |                  |        |
|----------|--------|---------|------------------|--------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author  | Date             | Style  |
| 31       | 915    | Solomon | 970 - 930<br>A.C | Poetic |

Proverbs: The book of Proverbs contains a collection of practical wisdom for everyday life. Written mainly by Solomon, the book offers advice on various topics, such as wisdom, justice, relationships, finances and virtue, with the aim of leading people to live a life in line with God's principles.



## 21st Book

### ECCLESIASTES

Reading time: 30 minutes

|          |        |         |                  |        |
|----------|--------|---------|------------------|--------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author  | Date             | Style  |
| 12       | 222    | Solomon | 970 - 930<br>A.C | Poetic |

Ecclesiastes: Written by Solomon, the book of Ecclesiastes explores the nature of life and the search for meaning. Solomon reflects on the transience of earthly things and concludes that true satisfaction comes from fearing God and obeying his commandments.



## 22nd Book

### SONG OF SOLOMON

Reading time: 20 minutes

|          |        |         |                  |        |
|----------|--------|---------|------------------|--------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author  | Date             | Style  |
| 8        | 117    | Solomon | 970 - 930<br>A.C | Poetic |

Song of Solomon: Also known as Song of Songs, it is a collection of lyric poems that celebrate the love between couples. The book highlights the beauty and purity of human love and is often interpreted symbolically as an expression of Christ's love for his church.



## 23rd Book

### ISAIAH

Reading time: 4 hours and 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 66       | 1292   | Isaiah | 840 - 586<br>A.C | Prophets<br>Major |

Isaiah: The book of Isaiah is a collection of prophecies attributed to the prophet Isaiah. It contains messages of judgment, comfort, redemption and hope for the people of Israel. Isaiah also presents several messianic prophecies that point to the future Messiah, Jesus Christ.



## 24th Book

### JEREMIAH

Reading time: 4 hours and 50 minutes

Chapters

52

Verses

1364

Author

Jeremias

Date

626 - 586  
A.C

Style

Prophets  
Major

Jeremiah: Written by the prophet Jeremiah, the book of Jeremiah contains the prophet's prophecies and lamentations about the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the exile of the people of Judah. Jeremiah also exhorts the people to repent and promotes hope for a new alliance with God.



## 25th Book

### LAMENTATIONS

Reading time: 25 minutes

|          |        |          |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|----------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author   | Date             | Style             |
| 05       | 154    | Jeremiah | 586 - 538<br>A.C | Prophets<br>Major |

Lamentations: Lamentations is a collection of poems attributed to Jeremiah. He expresses sadness and lament for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and for the pain and suffering of the people of Judah during their exile in Babylon.





## 26th Book

### EZEKIEL

Reading time: 4 hours and 15 minutes

|          |        |          |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|----------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author   | Date             | Style             |
| 48       | 1273   | Ezequiel | 593 - 573<br>A.C | Prophets<br>Major |

Ezekiel: The book of Ezekiel contains the visions and prophecies of the prophet Ezekiel during the Babylonian exile. Ezekiel confronts idolatry, announces God's judgment on Israel and the nations, and proclaims the restoration and hope of a new temple and a new covenant.



## 27th Book

### DANIEL

Reading time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 12       | 357    | Daniel | 600 - 530<br>A.C | Prophets<br>Major |

Daniel: The book of Daniel tells the story of Daniel and his companions during their exile in Babylon. The book presents the prophetic visions of Daniel, revealing God's plan for the nations, the future reign of the Messiah, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.



## 28th Book

### HOSEA

Reading time: 45 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 14       | 197    | Hosea  | 755 - 715<br>A.C | Prophets<br>Major |

Hosea: The book of Hosea is a prophecy by the prophet Hosea about Israel's unfaithfulness and God's unwavering love for his people. Hosea uses his own tumultuous marriage to illustrate the relationship between God and Israel, calling them to repentance and restoration.



## 29th Book

### JOEL

Reading time: 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                   |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date              | Style             |
| 03       | 73     | Joel   | 835 - 400?<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Joel: The book of Joel is a prophecy about a scourge of locusts and a call to repentance. Joel also announces the coming of the Spirit of God and the promise of salvation for all who call on the name of the Lord.



## 30th Book

### AMÓS

Reading time: 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 9        | 146    | Amos   | 760 - 750<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Amos: The book of Amos contains the prophecies of the prophet Amos against the neighboring nations and especially against the northern kingdom, Israel. Amos denounces social injustice, the oppression of the poor and empty religion, calling the people to repentance and justice.



## 31st Book

### OBADIAH

Reading time: 5 minutes

| Chapters | Verses | Author  | Date             | Style             |
|----------|--------|---------|------------------|-------------------|
| 01       | 21     | Obadiah | 586 - 553<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Obadiah: The book of Obadiah is a prophecy against Edom, a country neighboring Israel. Obadiah denounces the pride and violence of Edom and prophesies its destruction, reaffirming God's justice and judgment on the nations.



## 32nd Book

### JONAH

Reading time: 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 04       | 48     | Jonah  | 785 - 750<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Jonah: The book of Jonah tells the story of the prophet Jonah, who initially flees from God's mission, being swallowed by a large fish. After being rescued, Jonah fulfills his mission and preaches repentance in the city of Nineveh, where the people convert. The book emphasizes God's mercy and forgiveness.



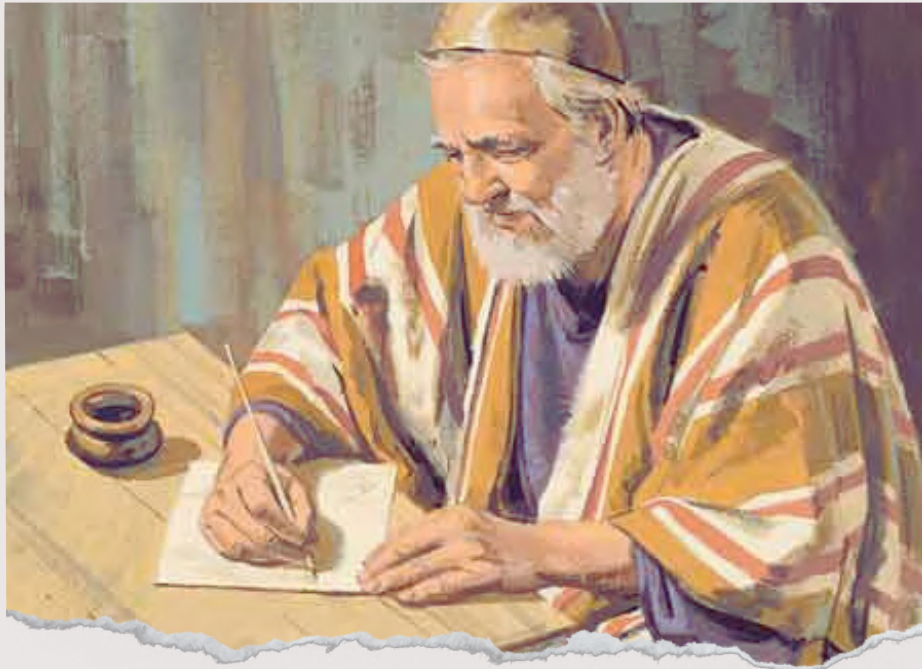
## 33rd Book

### MICAH

Reading time: 25 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 07       | 105    | Jonah  | 742 - 687<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Micah: The book of Micah is a prophecy that denounces social oppression and corruption in Israel and Judah. Micah proclaims the justice of God, the need for repentance, and the hope of a future messianic king who will bring peace and justice to the people.





## 34th Book

### NAHUM

Reading time: 10 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 03       | 47     | NaHum  | 663 - 612<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Nahum: The book of Nahum is a prophecy against the city of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire. Nahum announces the destruction of Nineveh as an act of divine justice, bringing comfort to the people of Judah who were under Assyrian oppression.



## 35th Book

# HABAKKUK

Reading time: 15 minutes

Chapters

03

Verses

56

Author

habakkuk

Date

612 - 588  
A.C

Style

Minor  
Prophets

Habakkuk: The book of Habakkuk is a conversation between the prophet and God, in which Habakkuk questions divine justice in the face of oppression and evil in Judah. God responds that he will bring judgment on the oppressors and encourages Habakkuk to trust in his sovereignty.



## 36th Book

### ZEPHANIAH

Reading time: 10 minutes

|          |        |           |                 |                   |
|----------|--------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author    | Date            | Style             |
| 03       | 53     | ZEPHANIAH | 640- 608<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Zephaniah: The book of Zephaniah is a prophecy that denounces idolatry and injustice in Judah. Zephaniah announces God's judgment on the nation, but also speaks of the restoration and deliverance that God will bring to the faithful remnant.



## 37th Book

### HAGGAI

Reading time: 8 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style             |
| 02       | 38     | Haggai | 520 - 480<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Haggai: The book of Haggai is a prophecy encouraging the people of Judah to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem after the exile. Haggai draws attention to the priority of seeking God's glory and promises God's presence and blessing when the people obey.



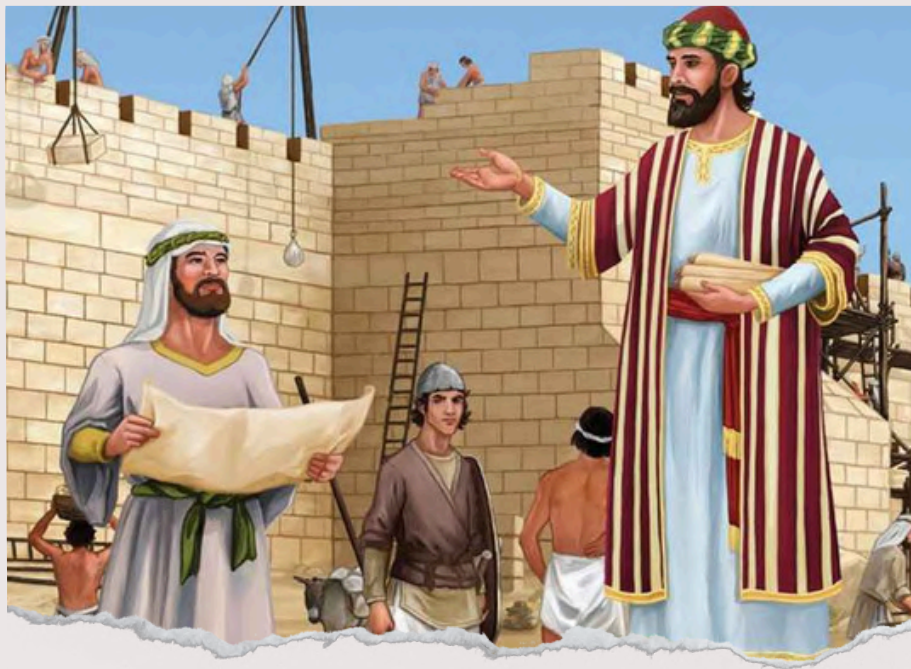
## 38th Book

### Zechariah

Reading time: 45 minutes

|          |        |           |                  |                   |
|----------|--------|-----------|------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author    | Date             | Style             |
| 14       | 211    | Zechariah | 520 - 518<br>A.C | Minor<br>Prophets |

Zechariah: The book of Zechariah contains a series of visions and prophetic messages. Zechariah encourages the people to rebuild the temple and talks about the future reign of the Messiah, his work of salvation, and the restoration of Jerusalem.



## 39th Book

### MALACHI

Reading time: 15 minutes

Chapters

04

Verses

55

Author

Malachi

Date

440 - 430  
A.C

Style

Minor  
Prophets

Malachi: The book of Malachi is a collection of messages from the prophet Malachi about the unfaithfulness of the people of Israel to God. He rebukes the abandonment of religious service, social injustice and lack of fear of God. Malachi promotes the need for genuine repentance and announces the coming of the prophet Elijah and the Day of the Lord.



## 40th Book

### **MATTHEW**

Reading time: 2 hours and 45 minutes

Chapters

28

Verses

1071

Author

Matthew

Date

3 - 33 D.C

Style

Gospels

**Matthew:** The book of Matthew is the first gospel of the New Testament. Written by Matthew, one of Jesus' disciples, it presents the life, teachings, miracles and death of Jesus. Matthew emphasizes that Jesus is the promised Messiah in the Old Testament and discusses topics such as the Kingdom of God and the importance of faith.



## 41st Book

### MARK

Reading time: 1 hour 35 minutes

|          |        |        |           |         |
|----------|--------|--------|-----------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date      | Style   |
| 16       | 678    | Mark   | 3 - 3 D.C | Gospels |

Mark: The Gospel of Mark, written by John Mark, a disciple of Peter, presents a concise account of the life and ministry of Jesus. The book highlights the authority of Jesus, his miracles, and his sacrifice on the cross. Mark emphasizes the need to follow Jesus with faith and altruism.





## 42nd Book

### LUKE

Reading time: 2 hours and 45 minutes

|          |        |        |            |         |
|----------|--------|--------|------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date       | Style   |
| 24       | 1151   | LuKE   | 3 - 33 D.C | Gospels |

Luke: Written by Luke, a physician and companion of Paul, the gospel of Luke offers a detailed account of the life of Jesus, from his birth to his death and resurrection. Luke emphasizes Jesus' compassion for the marginalized, God's forgiveness, and offer of salvation to all people.



## 43rd Book

### JOHN

Reading time: 2 hours and 10 minutes

|          |        |        |            |         |
|----------|--------|--------|------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date       | Style   |
| 21       | 879    | John   | 3 - 33 D.C | Gospels |

John: The gospel of John was written by John, one of Jesus' closest disciples. It presents a theological perspective on Jesus as the Incarnate Word, the Son of God. John emphasizes the importance of faith in Jesus for eternal life and shares the teachings and miracles of Jesus.



## 44th Book

### ACTS

Reading time: 2 hours and 10 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |         |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|---------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style   |
| 28       | 1007   | Luke   | First Century AD | History |

Acts of the Apostles: Written by Luke, the book of Acts recounts the history of the early Christian church from the ascension of Jesus to Paul's arrest in Rome. It describes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the preaching of the gospel, the formation of Christian communities, and the missionary journeys of the apostles.



## 45th Book

### ROMANS

Reading time: 1 hour and 25 minutes

|          |        |        |                     |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date                | Style             |
| 16       | 433    | Paul   | First Century<br>AD | Paul's<br>letters |

Romans: The letter to the Romans was written by Paul to the church in Rome. Explores deep theological themes, including justification by faith, the universality of sin, and the grace of God. Paul highlights the importance of a life transformed by the Holy Spirit and the centrality of Jesus Christ in salvation.



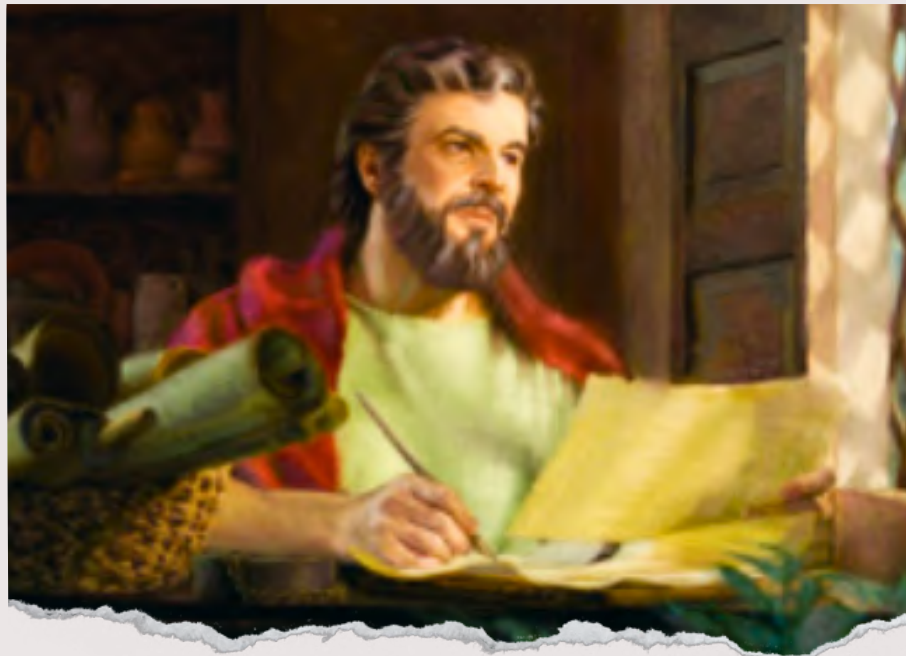
## 46th Book

### 1 CORINTHIANS

Reading time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                     |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date                | Style             |
| 16       | 437    | Paul   | First Century<br>AD | Paul's<br>letters |

1 Corinthians: Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth, addressing the problems and issues that arose among the believers. He discusses topics such as church divisions, immorality, the use of spiritual gifts, and the resurrection of the dead, encouraging them to live in love and holiness.



## 47th Book

### 2 CORINTHIANS

Reading time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style          |
| 13       | 256    | Paul   | First Century AD | Paul's letters |

2 Corinthians: The second letter to the Corinthians is a continuation of the first, in which Paul expresses his joy at reconciliation with the Corinthian church. He defends his apostolic ministry, encourages generosity and unity, and urges them to remain faithful to Christ.



## 48th Book **GALATIANS**

Reading time: 30 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style          |
| 06       | 149    | Paul   | First Century AD | Paul's letters |

Galatians: The letter to the Galatians was written by Paul to the churches in the region of Galatia. It defends justification by faith and confronts legalism, emphasizing freedom in Christ and life in the Holy Spirit.



## 49th Book

### EPHESIANS

Reading time: 25 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style          |
| 06       | 155    | Paul   | First Century AD | Paul's letters |

Ephesians: Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians to encourage the believers in Ephesus to live in unity and spiritual maturity. He explores the richness of God's grace, the identity of believers in Christ, and the call to a holy and loving life.





## 50th Book

### PHILIPPIANS

Reading time: 20 minutes

Chapters

04

Verses

104

Author

Paul

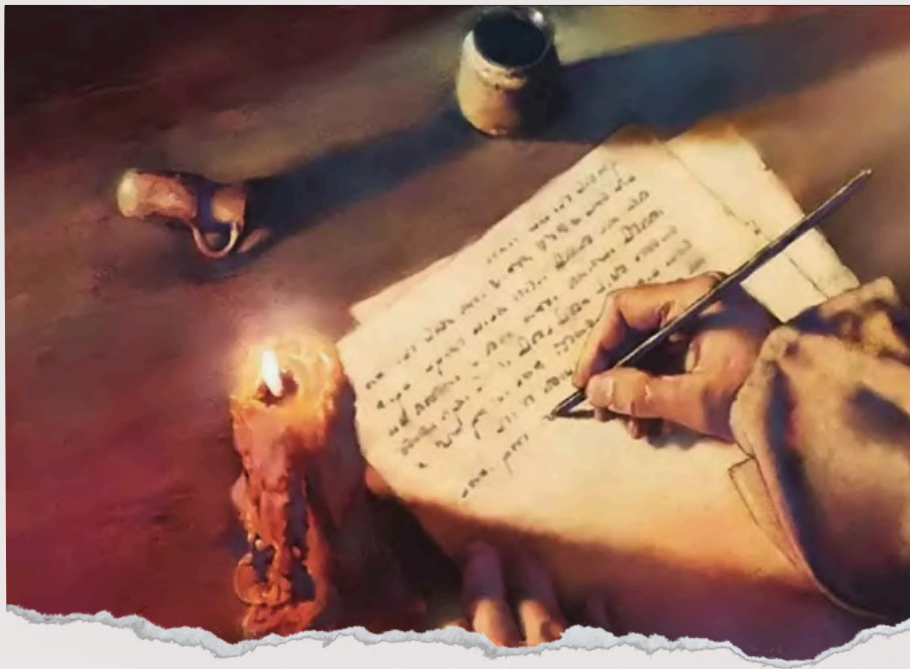
Date

First Century  
AD

Style

Paul's  
letters

Philippians: The letter to the Philippians is an expression of Paul's joy and gratitude toward the church in Philippi, despite having written it while imprisoned. He exhorts them to have the mind of Christ, to rejoice in all circumstances, and to seek unity and mutual service.



## 51st Book

### COLOSSIANS

Reading time: 20 minutes

|          |        |        |                     |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date                | Style             |
| 04       | 95     | Paul   | First Century<br>AD | Paul's<br>letters |

Colossians: The letter to the Colossians was written by Paul to combat the false doctrines that were emerging in the church of Colossae. It highlights the supremacy of Christ, the need to live according to the truth, and the importance of faith and spiritual growth.



## 52nd Book

### 1 THESSALONIANS

Reading time: 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                     |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date                | Style             |
| 05       | 89     | Paul   | First Century<br>AD | Paul's<br>letters |

1 Thessalonians: The first letter to the Thessalonians was written by Paul to encourage the church in Thessalonica. It speaks of the hope of the second coming of Christ, the importance of sanctification and brotherly love.



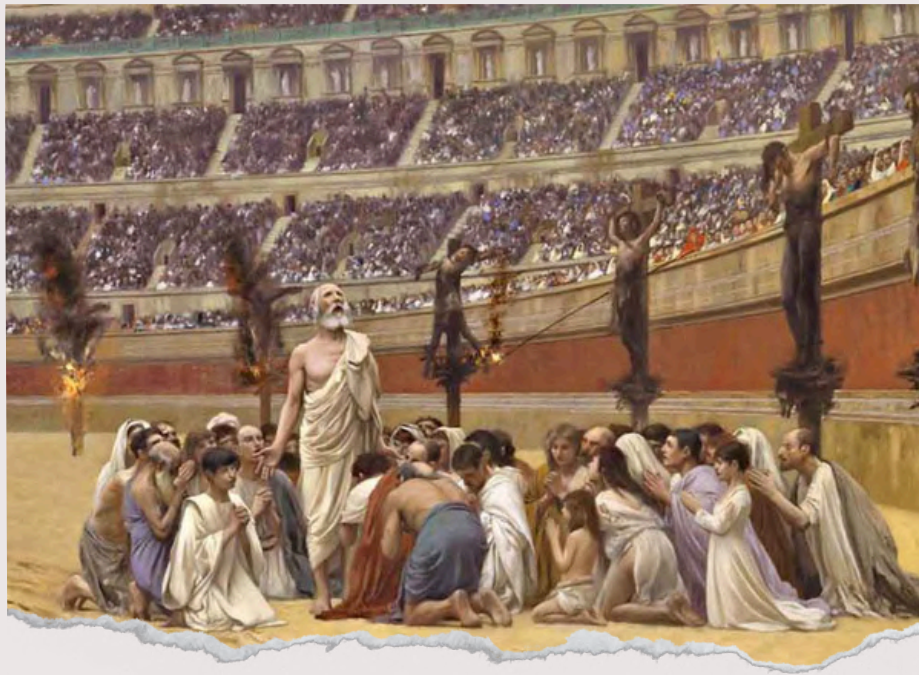
## 53rd Book

### 2 THESSALONIANS

Reading time: 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style          |
| 03       | 47     | Paul   | First Century AD | Paul's letters |

2 Thessalonians: The second letter to the Thessalonians is a continuation of the first, in which Paul addresses misunderstandings about the second coming of Christ and encourages believers to remain steadfast in the faith, even in the face of persecution.



## 54th Book

### 1 TIMOTHY

Reading time: 15 minutes

|          |        |        |                     |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date                | Style             |
| 06       | 113    | Paul   | First Century<br>AD | Paul's<br>letters |

1 Timothy: The first letter to Timothy was written by Paul to instruct him in matters related to teaching, leadership, and church organization. Addresses the importance of correct doctrine, the responsibility of leaders, and the conduct of believers.



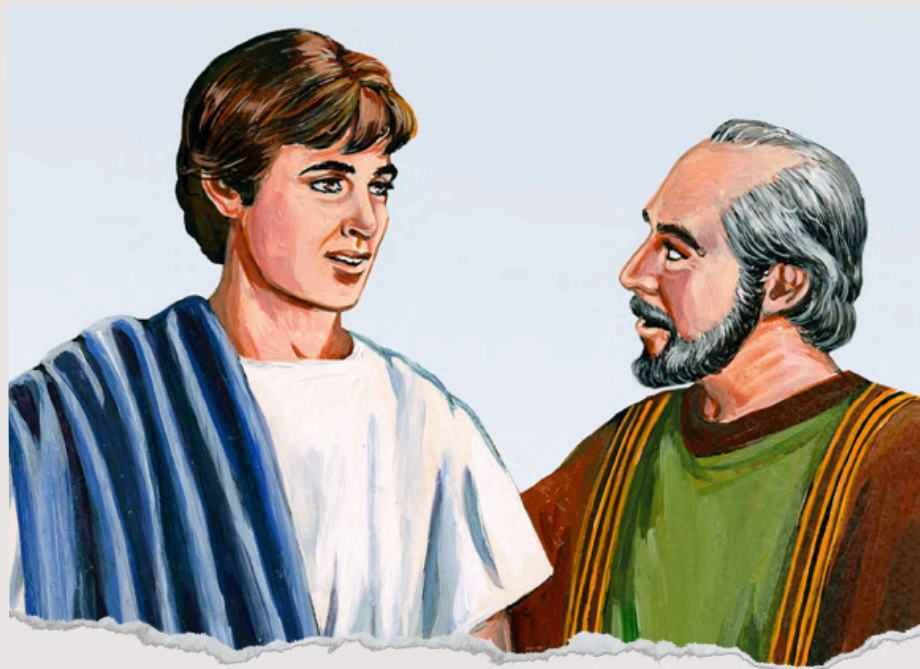
## 55th Book

### 2 TIMOTHY

Reading time: 12 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style          |
| 04       | 83     | Paul   | First Century AD | Paul's letters |

2 Timothy: The second letter to Timothy is the last letter written by Paul before his death. He encourages Timothy to persevere in faith, to faithfully preach the Word of God, and to stand firm in the midst of adversity.



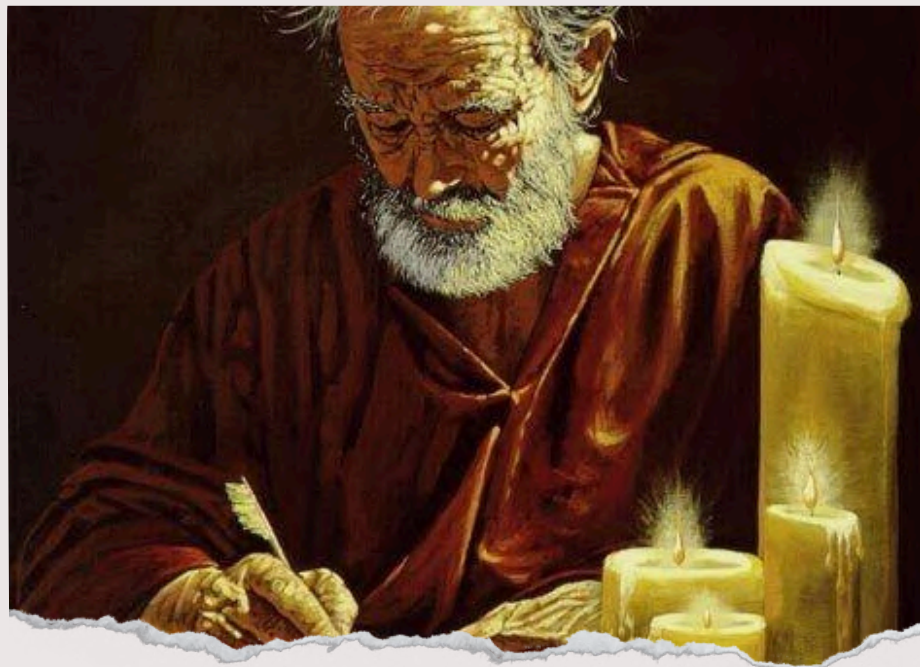
## 56th Book

### TITUS

Reading time: 7 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style          |
| 03       | 46     | Paul   | First Century AD | Paul's letters |

**Titus:** The letter to Titus was written by Paul to instruct him in the leadership of the church in Crete. It speaks of the importance of character and correct teaching, and emphasizes the need to live godly and do good works.



## 57th Book

### PHILEMON

Reading Time: 5 minutes

|          |        |        |                     |                   |
|----------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date                | Style             |
| 01       | 25     | Paul   | First Century<br>AD | Paul's<br>letters |

Philemon: The letter to Philemon is Paul's plea on behalf of Onesimus, a slave who fled from Philemon. Paul asks Philemon to welcome Onesimus as a brother in Christ and as a free person.





## 58th Book

### HEBREWS

Reading time: 45 minutes

|          |        |            |                  |                |
|----------|--------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date             | Style          |
| 13       | 303    | Undeclared | First Century AD | Paul's letters |

Hebrews: Although the author of the letter to the Hebrews is unknown, it is a theological treatise that exalts the superiority of Jesus Christ. The author explores the relationship between the Old Testament and the redemptive work of Jesus, emphasizing the importance of faith and perseverance.



## 59° Livro

### JAMES

Tempo de leitura: 15 minutos

|          |        |        |                     |                    |
|----------|--------|--------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date                | Style              |
| 05       | 108    | James  | First Century<br>AD | General<br>Letters |

James: The letter of James is written by James, probably the brother of Jesus. He speaks of the practice of faith, the importance of works as evidence of true faith, and the need for a life of righteousness and wisdom.



## 60th Book

### 1 PETER

Reading time: 20 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                 |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style           |
| 05       | 108    | Peter  | First Century AD | General Letters |

1 Peter: The first letter of Peter was written by Peter to encourage believers scattered in Asia Minor. It speaks of suffering and persecution, the hope of salvation in Christ, and the need to live as God's people in a hostile world.



## 61st Book

### 2 PETER

Reading time: 12 minutes

|          |        |                      |                     |                    |
|----------|--------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | <sup>97</sup> Author | Date                | Style              |
| 03       | 61     | PeTER                | First Century<br>AD | General<br>Letters |

2 Peter: The second letter of Peter is an exhortation by the apostle before his death. It warns against false teachers, emphasizes the importance of truth and holiness, and reminds believers of the promise of Christ's second coming.



## 62nd Book

### 1 JOHN

Reading time: 15 minutes

|          |        |            |                  |                 |
|----------|--------|------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date             | Style           |
| 05       | 105    | Undeclared | First Century AD | General Letters |

1 John: The first letter of John was written by John to encourage believers to live in communion with God and with others. It speaks of the love of God, the importance of obedience and the certainty of eternal life in Christ.



## 63rd Book

### 2 JOHN

Reading time: 5 minutes

|          |        |            |                  |                 |
|----------|--------|------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date             | Style           |
| 01       | 13     | Undeclared | First Century AD | General Letters |

2 John: The second letter of John is a brief message of exhortation to believers about the need to remain in the truth and distance themselves from those who deny the divinity of Jesus.



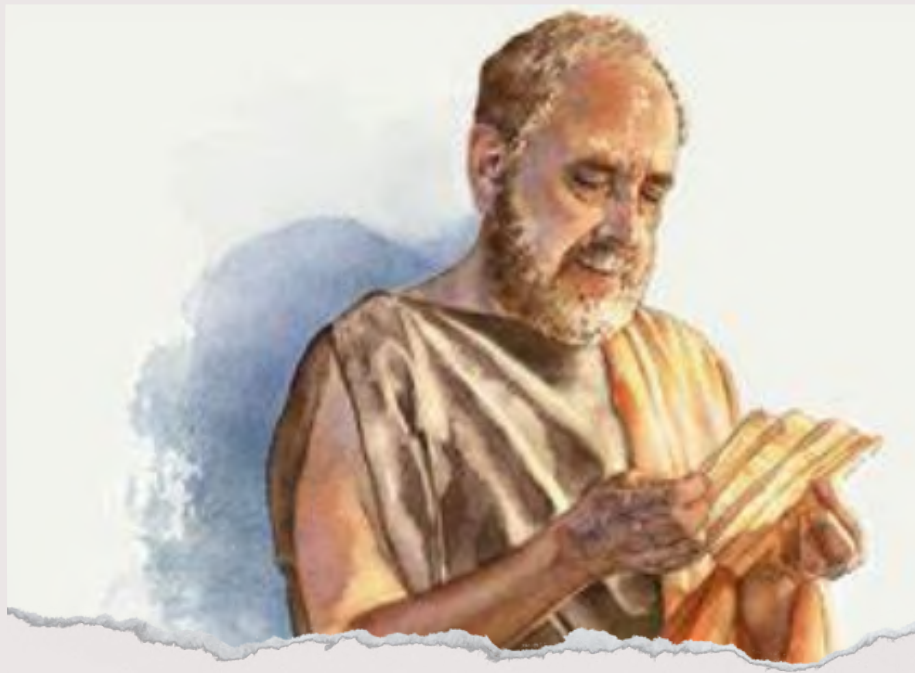
## 64th Book

### 3 JOHN

Reading time: 5 minutes

|          |        |            |                     |                    |
|----------|--------|------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author     | Date                | Style              |
| 01       | 15     | Undeclared | First Century<br>AD | General<br>Letters |

3 John: The third letter of John is a personal letter written by John to thank and encourage Gaius, a church leader. He praises Cayo's hospitality and urges him to continue supporting the workers of truth.



## 65th Book

### JUDE

Reading time: 5 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |                 |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-----------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style           |
| 01       | 25     | Jude   | First Century AD | General Letters |

Jude: The letter of Jude was written by Judas, probably the brother of James. It warns against false teachers and urges believers to remain firm in their faith, fight evil, and protect themselves from moral corruption.





## 66th Book

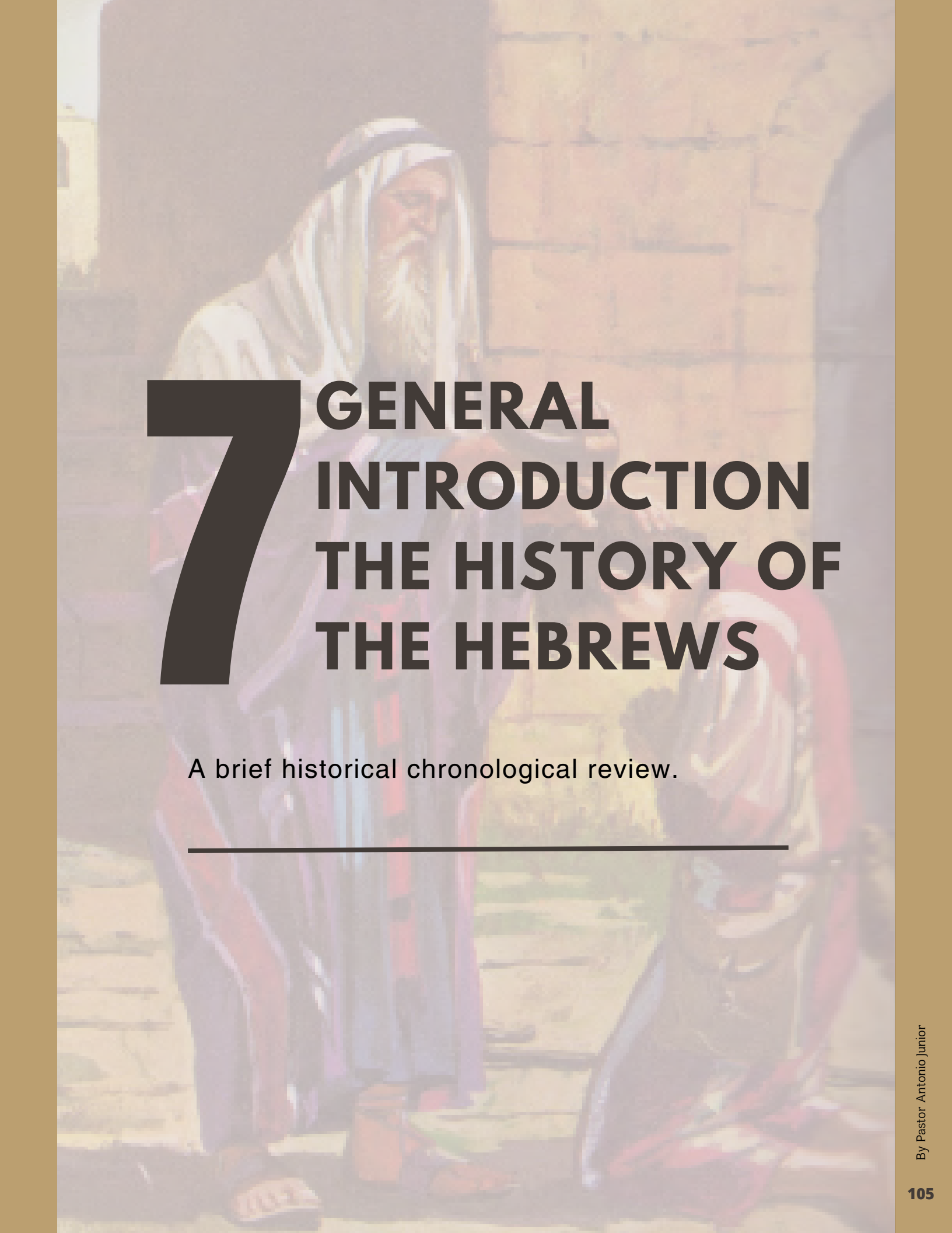
### REVELATION

Reading time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

|          |        |        |                  |             |
|----------|--------|--------|------------------|-------------|
| Chapters | Verses | Author | Date             | Style       |
| 22       | 404    | John   | First Century AD | Revelations |

Revelation: The book of Revelation is a revelation given to John on the island of Patmos. It describes symbolic visions of the end times, Christ's final victory over evil, and the consummation of God's plan for the redemption of humanity.





# **7 GENERAL INTRODUCTION THE HISTORY OF THE HEBREWS**

A brief historical chronological review.

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# General introduction - The history of the Hebrews

## A brief historical chronological review

A little less than four thousand years ago, great people lived on the coasts of the Mediterranean in Asia and Africa.

They formed the two great powers: Chaldea and Egypt. Between these two great kingdoms were small countries: Syria and Canaan (also called Palestine).

Several tribes lived off the culture and products of their flocks, among which were the Hebrews who came from the patriarch Abraham. This man and his family came from Ur in Chaldea, from where they had emigrated to Palestine in the 19th century BC.

With the life of Abraham and his descendants begins the Holy History that the Bible has preserved for us. The following notes serve only to place these events in the course of the general history of the ancient world.

ABRAHAM emigrated to Palestine at the time when the great King Hammurabi reigned in Chaldea.

Before Abraham it is impossible for us to fix a date for the events mentioned in the Scriptures.

The nomadic and agricultural life of the tribes originating from this emigration lasted around four hundred years.

Then the Hebrews, called the people of Israel, according to the surname given by God to the patriarch Jacob, retired to EGYPT, fleeing the famine that devastated the land at the request of the patriarch Joseph, undoubtedly occupying the region of the Nile Delta. He was the richest and most productive in that entire country.

They became objects of exploitation by the Egyptians who took control of them.

In the year 1250 BC, God raised up a liberator for them, in the person of **MOSES**.

Under his leadership, the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea to head to the land of Canaan.



1250



1200

After spending forty years in the desert, the Israelites undertook the conquest of **PALESTINE**, taking Jericho (around the year 1200). The occupied land was distributed into twelve territories according to the twelve tribes, which progressively settled in the mountains and valleys of Canaan.

The small town of the Hebrews developed little by little, until they managed to organize themselves as a kingdom among their neighbors. The last judge, Samuel, who was also a prophet, ended up, after many doubts, granting the people the constitution of a **KINGDOM**. Saul was named king in the year 1,000.



1000



1000

Saul was never more than a small local king, his kingdom being only a prelude. It was up to **DAVI**, his successor, to establish royal power first over the tribe of Judah and then over all the Israelite tribes.

David is succeeded, in 970, by **SOLOMON**, who organizes the kingdom of Israel, allies himself with Egypt and Tiro and builds the Temple of Jerusalem.



970



930

Shortly after his death, under the reign of Rehoboam, in the year 930, a dissension broke out between the tribes that ended with the **SCHISM**: the ten northern tribes separated from those of Judah and Benjamin to form an independent kingdom.

This northern kingdom will last around two centuries, its capital being the city of Samaria, conquered in the year 722 by **SARGON II, KING OF ASSYRIA**. The kingdom of Judah escaped this catastrophe and continued to exist as a buffer state between the two rival powers: Egypt and Assyria (quickly subjugated by Babylon).



722



622

**KING JOSIAH**, in 622, undertook a vast religious and social reform, the effects of which were short-lived.

The kingdom of Judah gradually declined until **NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S** expedition took Jerusalem in 598. The conqueror transformed Judea into a vassal state, deported part of the population to Babylon and established a viceroy: Zedekiah.

598



589

But, while rebelling, Nebuchadnezzar took the city of Jerusalem for the second time and set it on fire in the year 589. Almost the entire population was then deported to **MESOPOTAMIA**, leaving the conquered country under the administration of a Chaldean government.

The exile of the Israelites lasted until Cyrus, king of Media, authorized the **RETURN OF THE DEPORTED PEOPLE** under the direction of Zerubbabel in the year 538 (the year he took control of Babylon).

538



The Israelites, deprived of their kings, sought to organize themselves into a religious community.



331

In the year 331, all of Palestine was conquered by **ALEXANDER THE GREAT**.

From the year 323, Judea successively came under the rule of the dynasty of Alexander's generals, who divided the great Greek empire among themselves.

323



175

Shortly thereafter, between 175 and 163 BC, the Jews underwent a period of great tribulation and persecution by the king of Assyria, **ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANUS**. It was the time of the revolt and the holy war of liberation, waged by Judas Maccabeus.

In the year 63, Pompey the Great, at the head of the Roman armies, invaded Palestine, reducing it to a **ROMAN PROVINCE**. A little later, Caesar divided it into four parts, each ruled by a tetrarch.

63



A Jewish prince named Herod was placed in the tetra of Galilee.

70



In the year 7 AD, the government of Judea is entrusted to a Roman procurator. But a new independence movement began to emerge, eventually leading to Roman reprisals, a civil war, and the final siege of Jerusalem, where the Roman emperor **TITO** entered, in the year 70 of our era.

With the **DESTRUCTION OF THE HOLY CITY** the history of the ancient Israelites ended.

It was undoubtedly before the year **3/5 AD** when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Tiberius being Roman emperor.

Jesus died on the cross probably in the year **30 - 33**.



The apostle Paul was approximately **36** years old.

Peter suffered martyrdom in Rome along with Paul between **60 and 70 AD**.

Saint John the Apostle died in Asia around the year **100**.

It was among the Hebrew people where the Bible was born.

The Bible is the collection of books (considered by the Church to be written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) that is the Word of God.

**THE BIBLE IS A MESSAGE THAT GOD DIRECTED AND CONTINUES TO DIRECT TO MEN.**



# 8 UNDERSTANDING THE OLD TESTAMENT IN 9 PERIODS

A chronological and illustrated summary of the events of the Old Testament allows us to understand the narrative and the teachings contained therein in a clearer and more organized way.

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# Understanding the Old Testament in 9 periods

## Period 1 – Creation

**The creation of the world and humanity, and the first events. (Fall of man, flood and tower of Babel).**

At the beginning, the Old Testament tells the creation narrative, which covers the first chapters of the book of Genesis. During this period, God presents himself as the supreme Creator, giving existence to the universe, the earth, animals and human beings.

God creates everything with perfection and establishes man and woman in his image, granting them dominion over the earth. This story emphasizes divine sovereignty, the origin of the human being and the responsibility given to care for God's creation.

Creation is the starting point of the Old Testament and sets the stage for the narratives that follow. This period highlights the special relationship between God and humanity, as well as the importance of worship and obedience to God as Creator and Lord. Although initial perfection is interrupted by the entry of sin, the story of creation establishes the need for redemption and reveals the greatness and power of God as the foundation of all things.



## Period 2 – Patriarchs

**With the birth of the Hebrew people through a family of patriarchs, God began a relationship with Abram, who would become Abraham, the father of nations, spanning a period of 200 years.**

The second period of the Old Testament is marked by the history of the patriarchs, beginning with Abraham and extending to Isaac, Jacob, and their families.

Abraham is called by God to leave his homeland and go towards a land that God promises him. Abraham is considered the father of faith and it is through him that God establishes a special alliance, promising him numerous descendants and a land to possess.

The patriarchs play crucial roles in Old Testament history, as they are the precursors of the twelve tribes of Israel. They face challenges and trials, but God remains faithful to his promises, fulfilling them generation after generation.

This story reveals God's faithfulness, the value of obedience, and the importance of faith, even in the midst of adversity. The patriarchs serve as examples of trust in God and as instruments of blessing to the people of Israel, preparing the way for future events in the Old Testament.



## Period 3 – Exodus

**The exodus of the Hebrew people, who are freed from 400 years of slavery in Egypt, led by Moses through the desert towards the promised land, a land that God promised to the patriarchs.**

The third period of the Old Testament is dominated by the story of the Exodus, which tells of the liberation of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. After centuries of oppression, God raises Moses as a leader and prophet to confront Pharaoh and demand the liberation of the people. Through a series of plagues and miracles, God demonstrates his power and sovereignty over the gods of Egypt.

The Exodus is a fundamental event in Israel's history, as it establishes the people's identity as a nation chosen by God. God leads the Israelites through the Red Sea, provides food and water in the desert and makes a covenant with them in the giving of the Ten Commandments. This story highlights God's faithfulness in keeping His promises, His provision and His constant direction for His people.

Exodus also serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of obedience to God and the consequences of disobedience.



## Period 4 – Conquest

**After his Exodus from Egypt and his 40 years in the desert, walking and knowing more about God and experiencing miracles, through Joshua, the servant of Moses finally conquers the Promised Land.**

The fourth period of the Old Testament describes the conquest of the Promised Land by the Israelites, after their journey through the desert. Led by Joshua, Moses' successor, the people of Israel cross the Jordan River and face military challenges as they take possession of the lands inhabited by the Canaanites.

During this time, God demonstrates his power by granting victories to the people of Israel, such as in the fall of the walls of Jericho. The land is divided among the twelve tribes of Israel, fulfilling the promises made to Abraham. However, the Israelites also face periods of disobedience and internal conflict, which have adverse consequences.

The conquest of the Promised Land highlights God's faithfulness in leading his people to the inheritance he promised. It also highlights the importance of obedience and trust in God to achieve victory over obstacles. This period serves as a reminder that the blessing and possession of the Promised Land are directly linked to the relationship and alliance with God.



## Period 5 – Judges

**A 400-year period during which Israel was ruled (already within the promised land) by rulers known as judges, men and women who, with God's charisma and anointing, were chosen for a specific purpose.**

The fifth period of the Old Testament is known as the Time of the Judges. After Joshua's death, Israel enters a repeating cycle of disobedience, oppression, repentance, and deliverance. During this time, God raises up leaders called judges to guide the people of Israel in times of crisis and oppression.

Judges play a crucial role in Israel's history, acting as military leaders, administrators, and legal judges. They are God's instruments to free the people from foreign oppression and bring justice and temporary peace to the nation. However, the period of the judges is characterized by a continuous cycle of apostasy, idolatry, and instability.

This period highlights the human tendency to distance ourselves from God and seek our own paths, which brings negative consequences. At the same time, it demonstrates God's patience, mercy, and faithfulness as he continues to raise up judges to rescue and govern the people. The Time of Judges serves as a reminder of the need for a true leader and the importance of faithfully following God's ways to experience lasting peace and prosperity.



## Period 6 – Monarchy

**The Kingdom of Israel, with its capital Samaria, lasted more than 200 years with 19 kings, while the Kingdom of Judah was ruled from Jerusalem for 400 years by the same number of kings, from the line of David.**

The sixth period of the Old Testament is marked by the Time of Kings, which begins with Israel's transition to monarchical government. After the judges, the people of Israel cry out for a king to rule them like the other nations around them. God grants this request and establishes a line of kings to lead and govern Israel.

During the Time of Kings, there are times of prosperity, such as in the reign of David and Solomon, when the kingdom reaches its peak in terms of territory, power and glory. However, there are also periods of division, rebellion, and apostasy that lead to the fall of the unified kingdom and the formation of the Northern (Israel) and Southern (Judah) kingdoms.

This period highlights the importance of righteous leadership and devotion to God on the part of kings and people. Some kings are faithful and lead the people to true worship, while others are corrupt and lead the people to idolatry. The actions of kings and the consequences of their decisions have a direct impact on the history and destiny of Israel. The Time of Kings reveals the complexities of human nature, the dangers of power, and the need to seek God as the true King and ruler of Israel and our lives.



## Period 7 – Exile

**The kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians (722 BC) and its people were thrown into exile and oblivion. More than a hundred years later, Babylon conquered the Kingdom of Judah, exiling most of its inhabitants and destroying Jerusalem and the Temple (586 BC).**

The seventh period of the Old Testament is marked by the exile, a dark period in Israel's history. After centuries of disobedience and idolatry, God allows foreign nations to conquer and exile the people of Israel, taking them captive to Babylon. This is the consequence of the people's repeated transgressions in relation to the covenant established with God.

During exile, Israel faces challenges, suffering, and separation from their land and the temple in Jerusalem. However, even in this time of desolation, God remains faithful to his promises. He raises up prophets, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to bring comfort, hope, and warning to the people. These prophets encourage repentance, trust in God, and the expectation of a redemptive future.

The exile serves as a time of discipline and purification for Israel, but also as a reminder of God's faithfulness and love, even in the midst of punishment. It reveals the need for repentance, restoration and renewal of the relationship with God. The exile sets the stage for the later period when God will bring salvation and restoration to his people.





## Period 8 – Return

**The return of the exiled Jewish people to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple, led by Ezra and Nehemiah.**

The eighth period of the Old Testament is marked by the return from the Babylonian exile. After a period of approximately seventy years of captivity, God moves the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia, to allow the exiled Jews to return to his homeland, Jerusalem, and rebuild the temple.

Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, the Jews return to the land of Judah with hope and enthusiasm. They face challenges as they rebuild the temple and restore worship of God. Ezra, a scribe versed in the Law of Moses, brings spiritual revival by teaching and applying God's Word to the people. Nehemiah leads the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, restoring security and unity to the people.

The return from exile is a period of restoration and renewal for the people of Israel. God demonstrates his care, provision, and faithfulness by bringing them back to his land and allowing them to rebuild the temple and city. This season highlights the importance of obedience to God's Law, the restoration of true worship, and the rebuilding of community. The return from exile is a moment of hope and rebirth for the people of Israel, marking the beginning of a new phase in Old Testament history.



## Period 9 – Silence, Interbiblical Period

**A period between the Old and New Testaments, called the intertestamental, some call it prophetic silence, however, was a time of many important events in the history of Israel, perhaps the greatest being the revolt of the Maccabees.**

The ninth period of the Old Testament is known as “The Silence” or Interbiblical period. This period spans approximately 400 years between the book of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, and the beginning of the New Testament with the birth of Jesus Christ.

During this time, there are no inspired records of prophets or canonical writings in the Bible. However, world history is not completely devoid of important events. During this interval, the world experienced considerable political, social and cultural changes, with the influence of empires such as the Greek and Roman.

Although the Bible does not provide specific details about this period, it established an important setting for the New Testament context. During these years, expectation for the Messiah grew among the Jewish people, preparing the way for the coming of Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. The silence of the interbiblical period reminds us of the importance of continued trust and faith in God, even when his voice seems to be silent.





# 9

## UNDERSTANDING THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 5 PERIODS

A chronological and illustrated summary of the events of the New Testament allows us to understand the narrative and the teachings contained therein in a clearer and more organized way.

---

# Understanding the New Testament in 5 periods

## Period 1 – Life and Ministry of Jesus

The period of Jesus' life and ministry, narrated in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, presents a series of facts and teachings fundamental to understanding Christianity. Among the main acts of Jesus are his miracles, in which he demonstrated his power over nature, illness and even death.

He performed cures, such as restoring sight to the blind and curing people with incurable diseases. Jesus also multiplied loaves and fish to feed multitudes, demonstrating his power to meet people's physical needs. Furthermore, he raised the dead, as in the case of Lazarus, showing his authority over death.

In addition to miracles, Jesus taught powerfully, using parables and sermons to convey spiritual truths. He proclaimed the Kingdom of God and the need for repentance, calling people to a life of love, forgiveness and service to others. Jesus also confronted the religious leaders of his time, criticizing hypocrisy and teaching the importance of justice and truth. He left an example of humility and sacrifice by washing the feet of his disciples and, finally, offering himself as a sacrifice on the cross for the redemption and salvation of humanity. Jesus' acts reveal his divine nature, his unconditional love, and his mission to bring hope, reconciliation, and salvation to the world.



## Period 2 – Acts of the Apostles and/or Acts of the Holy Spirit

The book of the Acts of the Apostles recounts the main events shortly after the ascension of Jesus and the beginning of the spread of the gospel. One of the main events narrated is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when the disciples were empowered and empowered to testify and proclaim the gospel.

This event marked the beginning of the expansion of the early church.

Throughout the book, it is possible to follow Paul's missionary journeys, which played an important role in spreading the gospel among the Gentiles. Paul faced persecution, resistance, and challenges, but he persevered in his ministry, founding several Christian communities, and writing many of the epistles that make up the New Testament.

Additionally, the book of Acts describes the spread of the gospel beyond Jewish boundaries, reaching other cultures and nations.

The events recorded in the Acts of the Apostles illustrate the transformative power of the gospel, the expansion of the Christian community, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the first believers.



## Period 3 – Theology and Establishment of the Church

In the period of the Pauline Epistles we find a wealth of themes and teachings transmitted by Paul to the Christian communities that were being born. One of the central themes is justification by faith, in which Paul emphasizes that salvation is not achieved by works, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

Explores God's grace as the foundation of salvation and highlights the importance of living a life transformed by the Holy Spirit.

Another topic addressed by Paul is the unity of the church. He emphasizes the importance of Christians living in harmony, overcoming divisions, and demonstrating love and service to one another. Additionally, Paul addresses ethical and practical issues, guiding communities on how to live a godly life, confront moral challenges, and practice holiness. He exhorts believers to love their brothers, live in obedience to God's commandments, and use their spiritual gifts for the common good.

In the context of the Pauline Epistles, Paul explores a wide range of topics, from salvation theology to ethics and Christian behavior. His teachings have been fundamental to Protestant theology, highlighting the importance of faith, grace and unity in the Christian life.



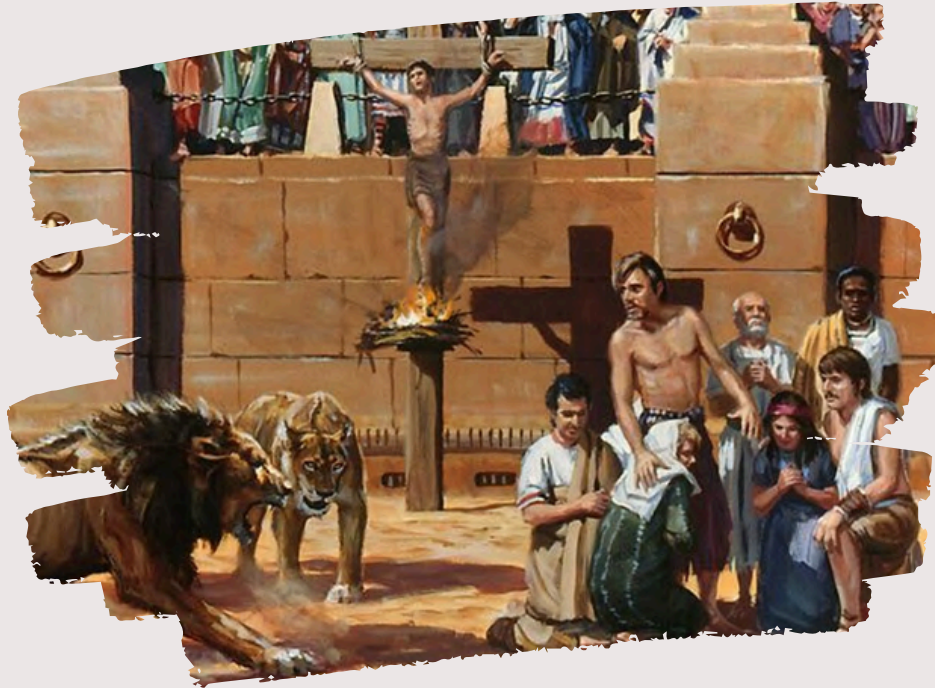
## Period 4 – Growth and Persecution

A significant period in the history of the early church was marked by its growth and the persecution it faced from the Roman Empire. After Pentecost and the beginning of the spread of the gospel, the church experienced notable growth as many people converted to Christianity and joined Christian communities.

During this period, the early Christians gathered in homes, shared their possessions, and lived a life of fellowship and mutual devotion.

They faced internal challenges, such as theological and ethical issues, but they also had to deal with external hostility, especially from the Roman authorities.

The Roman Empire was a political and religious system that sought to maintain order and worship its gods. The Christians, in turn, refused to worship the Roman gods and recognized Jesus Christ as the only Lord.



This brought them into conflict with the dominant culture and religious practices.

As a result, Christians faced persecution and discrimination. They were accused of disloyalty to the Empire, subjected to slander, and subjected to various forms of punishment, including imprisonment, torture, and even execution. However, despite persecution, the Christian faith continued to spread and gain followers.

This period of growth and persecution in the early church was a testament to the courage and devotion of the early Christians. His perseverance and fidelity to the gospel in the face of adversity are a powerful testimony to the strength and vitality of the Christian faith. Persecution also played a role in shaping Christian identity, uniting believers in solidarity and reinforcing their trust in God, even in the midst of hardship.

### **Period 5 – Expansion of the Early Church and its Strengthening.**

An important period of the early Church was characterized by the flourishing of the Church Fathers and the strengthening of the Christian faith. During the 2nd and 3rd centuries, after the initial persecution, prominent leaders and theologians emerged who played a key role in the defense and expansion of the Christian faith.

During this period, figures such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyon, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Tertullian, among others, stand out. These Church Fathers sought to consolidate and explain Christian doctrines and beliefs, defending them against heresy and offering a solid foundation for the faith.

They wrote theological treatises, apologists, and works of biblical exegesis, providing guidance and instruction to Christian communities.

The Church Fathers also played an important role in the formation of the New Testament canon, helping to establish the official list of books considered inspired and authoritative.



They dealt with complex theological questions such as the nature of Christ, the Trinity, grace and salvation, and laid the foundations of Christian theology.

Furthermore, during this period there was a strengthening of the ecclesiastical structure. Bishops and presbyters emerged as leaders of Christian communities and churches began to organize in a more formal way. Councils and synods were held to debate and resolve theological and disciplinary issues.

This period of the Church Fathers and the strengthening of the church was crucial for the consolidation of the Christian faith and the establishment of its theological identity and organizational structure.

The work of these leaders and theologians contributed to the preservation and dissemination of the Christian message, leaving a lasting legacy for future generations.



A soft, painterly illustration of a shepherd with a staff and a flock of sheep in a valley with mountains and a river. The scene is peaceful and pastoral, with a shepherd in a blue robe and purple shawl holding a wooden staff, standing on the right. A large flock of white sheep is grazing in the foreground. In the background, there are rolling green hills, a winding river, and distant mountains under a sky with several birds flying. The overall tone is gentle and serene.

# 10

## HISTORICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

A tour of the stories of the Bible in chronological order so that you understand the enigma of the biblical stories.

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## Historical and chronological overview of the Old and New Testaments

In the book of Genesis we find stories that range from the creation of the world to the calling of Abram. In the beginning, God creates the universe and everything in it in six days, culminating in the creation of man and woman in his image. He places them in the garden of Eden and gives them a single prohibition: not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

However, they do not disobey God, being seduced by the serpent and succumbing to temptation. The fall brings profound consequences, as sin enters the world and separates humanity from its Creator. We see this exemplified in the story of Cain and Abel, where Cain, overcome by envy, kills his own brother.

As corruption spreads across the land, God decides to send a flood to purify and reboot humanity. Noah and his family are chosen to be preserved, along with animals of all species, in the ark built in obedience to divine instructions.



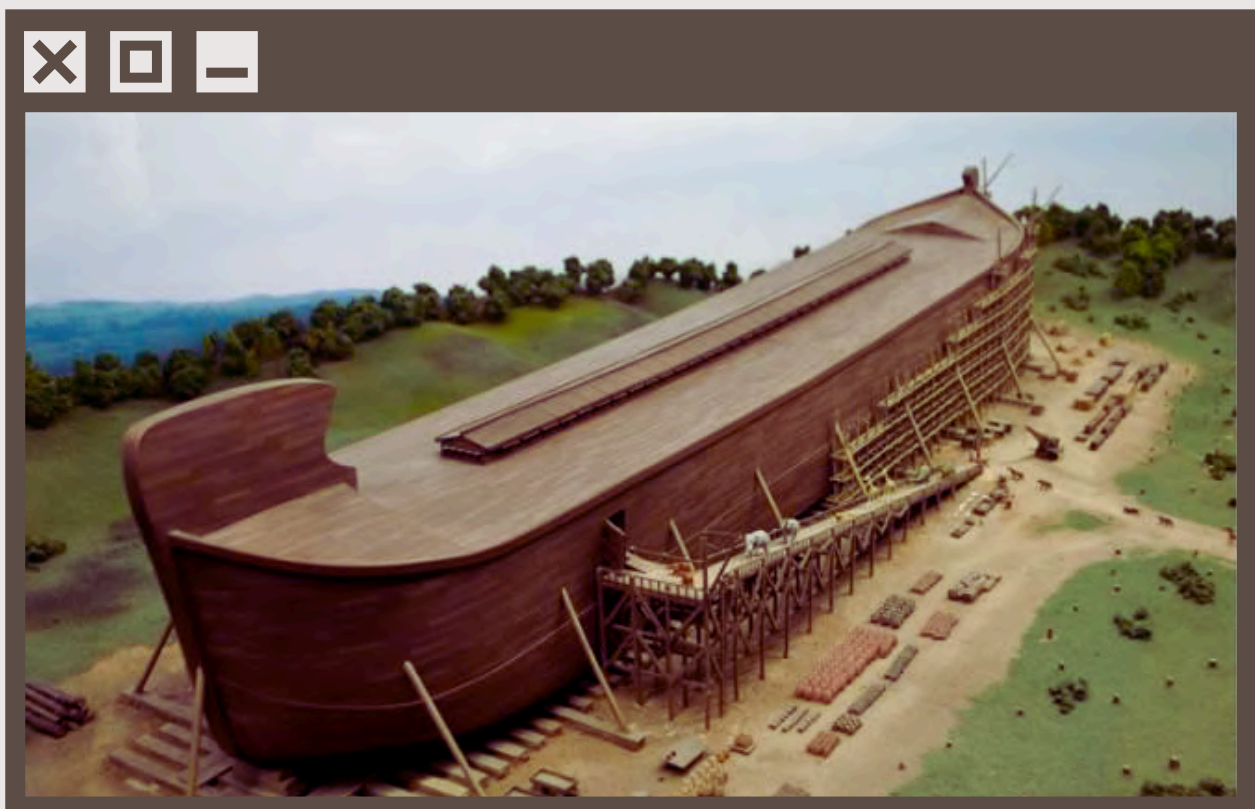
Noah played an important role in the story described in the book of Genesis. God chose Noah as righteous and righteous in the midst of corrupt humanity and decided to destroy the world through a flood.

Noah received precise instructions from God to build an ark and gather inside it a couple of each species of living being, in addition to his own family. During the flood, the ark was preserved and Noah and his family were protected from divine judgment.

After the flood, Noah and his family were the only survivors and, from them, humanity multiplied again.

God made a covenant with Noah, establishing a covenant not to destroy all creation with a flood. This pact was symbolized by the rainbow, which represents the divine promise to preserve life on earth.

## The Ark



### ***Dimensions of the Ark:***

|                          | <b>Length</b> | <b>Width</b> | <b>Height</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Cubits                   | 300           | 50           | 30            |
| Meters ( 44.5 cm cubit ) | 133,5         | 22,30        | 13,40         |

## **How long did the flood last?**

- **The 40 days refer to the duration of the rain (Genesis 7:12)**
- **The 150 days speak of the time when the waters of the Flood prevailed (Genesis 8:3; 7:24)**
- **It was only after the fifth month after the start of the rains that the waters began to recede (Genesis 8:13).**
- **Exactly one year and ten days after the start of the flood, Noah and his family landed on dry land (Genesis 8:14).**

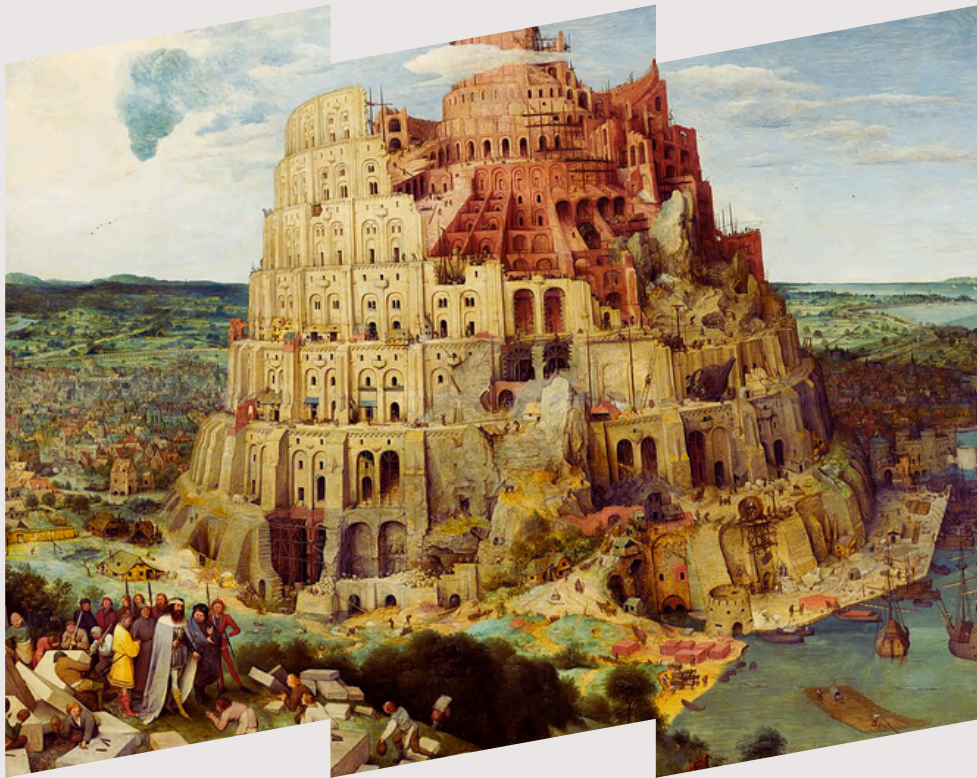
After the flood, humanity multiplies again, but begins to challenge the authority of God.

In the story of the Tower of Babel, we see men's attempt to build a tower that reaches to the heavens, wanting to be equal to God.

In response, God confuses their language and scatters them across the face of the earth.

## **Babel's Tower**

Noah named Shem as the chosen seed through whom God will bless the world. Noah's descendants, led by Nimrod, raised a rebellion against God, they erected a tower (Tower of Babel Gen 11), their purpose “league of nations” against God.



These early Genesis accounts provide a fundamental understanding of human nature and show our tendency to sin and rebel against God.

They establish the need for redemption and anticipate the promise of future rescue through Abram's lineage, which will be addressed in later narratives.

## **The story of Yesterday and Today: A call of faith and life.**

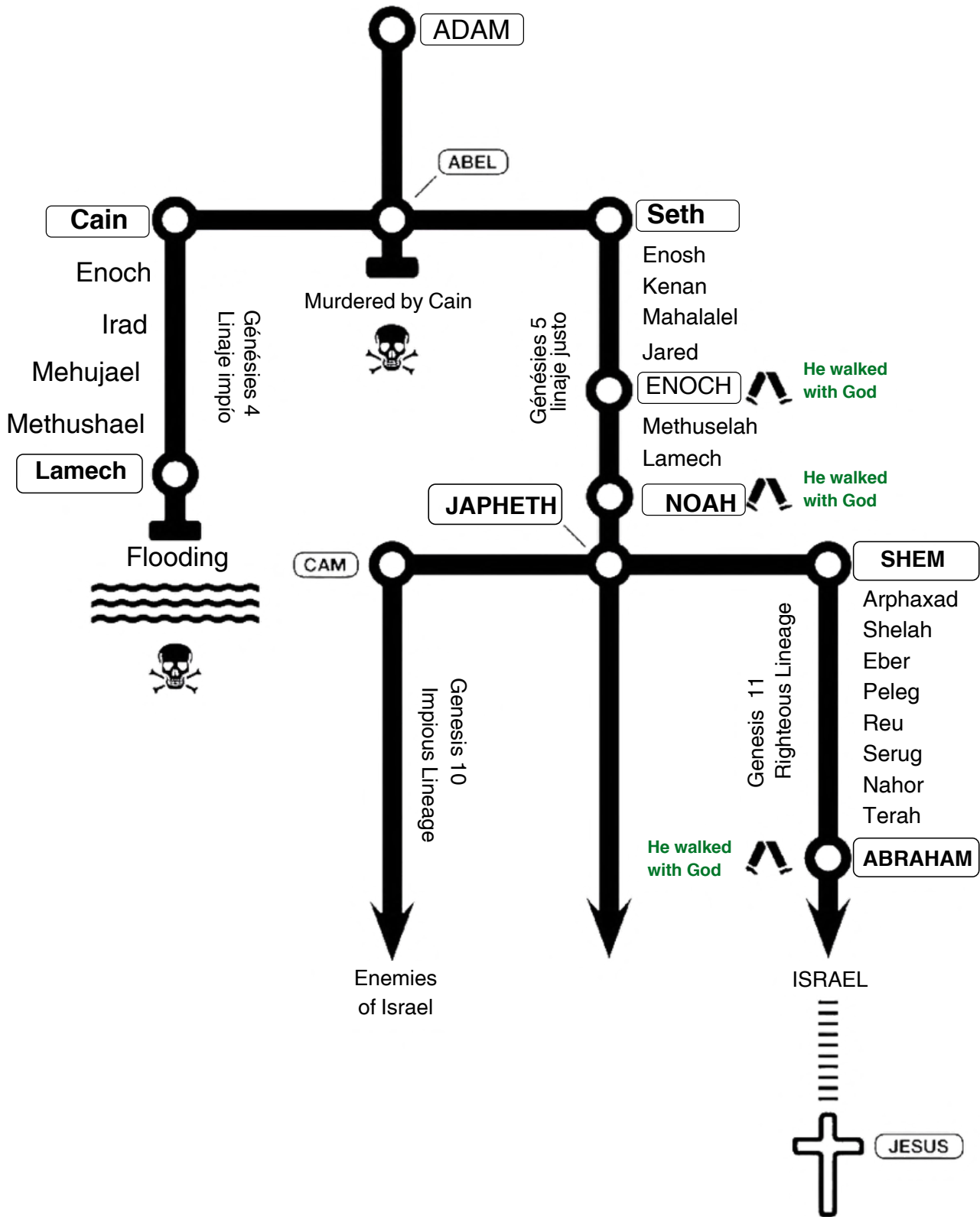


Abraham's call marks the beginning of the history of the people of Israel, who would become the channel through which God would reveal his plan of redemption for all humanity.

The story of Abraham and his descendants, Isaac and Jacob, is fundamental to understanding the path of God's people from the beginning to the formation of a nation that would be a special instrument in the hands of God.

# Lineage from Adam to Abraham

## Lineage from Adam to Abraham



## ...Dialoguing...

The Bible is a gripping story of love between God and man.

A living tradition, an eternal witness to an active faith that reaches us as a sign of the eternal covenant between heaven and earth.

The Bible is born on our soil and is the fruit of a joint effort of faith, resistance and struggle in favor of life.

His word is a living communication of God's presence among us.

“What we have heard and learned, what our parents have told us, we will not hide from our children, we will tell future generations the praises of the Lord, his power and the wonders he has performed so that they will trust in God, not forget his deeds, and keep his commandments.”  
(Sl,78 1-7)



## Where and when does this story begin?

**2000 BC - The entire East is dominated by great powers, especially Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, whose heart is Israel (Canaan).**

In this scenario of dominance by the great eastern powers, Israel (Canaan) occupied a strategic position as a territory of passage and dispute between empires.

Around 2000 BC., Canaanite city-states flourished in this region, with diverse polyist cultures and religious practices. However, it is in this context where the figure of Abraham stands out, the man chosen by God to be the father of a new nation.

God makes a pact with Abraham, promising him numerous descendants, a land to possess and be a blessing to all nations. Abraham is called to leave his homeland and follow divine guidance, establishing a path of faith and obedience.





## The formation of the people of Go 1250 1200 BC Abraham

- 1850 BC, Mesopotamia undergoes profound transformations and the poorest groups are forced to abandon their lands and go in search of a new life.
- Abraham is one of those immigrants who sets out, pursuing new ideals in search of new living spaces.
- Nahor, father of Terah, lived in Mesopotamia (Genesis 11:24);
- Terah became the father of Abraham and one day decided to take the road to Canaan, but upon arriving in Haran, he settled there (Gn 11:31);
- Abraham, at seventy-five years of age, receives a command from God (Gen 12:19);
- Abraham reaches his destination and then there was a great famine. He travels to Egypt (Genesis 12:10);



## The World of the Patriarchs



## Abraham's Journey

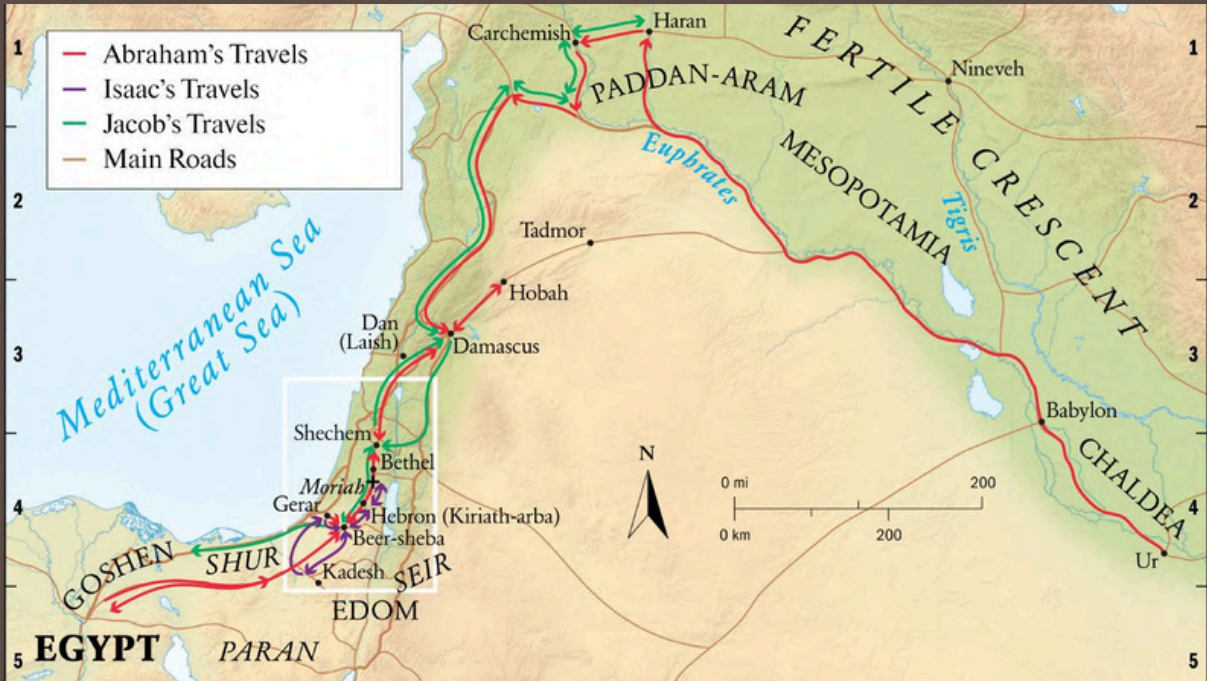
Abraham's journey is a significant event in biblical history and marks the beginning of this patriarch's journey in response to God's call.

Abraham is called to leave his homeland, Ur of the Chaldeans, and go to a land that God would show him.

Guided by faith and trust in God, Abraham sets out with his wife Sarah and nephew Lot towards the land of Canaan.

During this journey, they face challenges and obstacles, including resource scarcity, conflicts with other tribes, and the need to adapt to different cultures and environments.

# Abraham's Pilgrimages



Pastures of Abraham

pastures of Lot



## Abraham's Pilgrimages



Throughout this journey, God makes several promises to Abraham, reaffirming the previously established covenant.

God promises Abraham that he will be the father of a great nation, that his descendants will be numerous, and that all the land he will occupy will be given to him and his descendants.

Abraham's journey represents not only a physical journey, but also a journey of faith and obedience.

Abraham trusts God and moves forward, even when the challenges are great and the promises seem unlikely to be fulfilled.

This trip is an example of faith and trust in God, in addition to establishing the foundations for the history of the Jewish people and the fulfillment of divine promises throughout the generations.

## **“Leave your land and go where I will show you show you.” (Gn 12,1)**

Whoever undertakes the path carries within them a motivating force, a mystery that resides in us and drives us outside of ourselves.

- Abraham leaves his footprints along the way and we are called to follow those footprints.
- Abraham accepts the challenge of faith and welcomes God's calls.
- It is necessary to cultivate faith; Don't let hope die.
- Abraham is no longer one, he is a restless people, upset by a promise because he understands that it is not a gift that is imposed, but that it happens in proportion to our yes.

### **From Slavery to Freedom**

**1650 BC - Time of drought and famine in the country of Canaan.**

Abraham's descendants emigrate to Egypt in search of better living conditions.

Through Joseph, son of Jacob, the people settle in Egypt, grow, prosper and become very numerous, to the point of becoming a threat to the Pharaoh.

He then promotes days of pain and suffering for people who brought with them the promise of blessing, but lived the harsh reality of slavery and misery.

# The Patriarchs

## ABRAHAM

Abraham, whose original name was Abram, is a central figure in the Old Testament of the Bible and one of the most important patriarchs.

He was born in Ur of the Chaldees, an ancient city located in what is now southern Iraq. God called him to leave his homeland and go to the land of Canaan, where he would become the father of a great nation.

Abraham faced many challenges throughout his life, including the need to migrate several times due to resource scarcity and conflicts with other tribes.

He also had to deal with issues of faith, such as waiting for God's promised offspring, as he and his wife Sarah were initially barren.

According to the biblical narrative, Abraham demonstrated unwavering faith in God, and his trust and obedience attracted divine blessings.

He was considered the spiritual father of the Jewish people, as well as a model of faith for believers around the world.

Additionally, Abraham is remembered for his role as an example of hospitality and justice, as seen in the story of his intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah.

Abraham's life left a lasting legacy, as his promises and covenants with God extended to later generations.

He is revered as one of the most important figures in biblical history and an inspiring example of faith and obedience for followers of different religions.

# The Patriarchs

## ISAAC

Isaac, son of Abraham and Sarah, is a significant figure in the biblical narrative.

It was born as a miraculous response to God's promise to bless Abraham with numerous descendants.

Isaac was the son of promise, born when his parents were old.

One of the best-known stories about Isaac is the episode in which he was almost sacrificed by his father, Abraham, in obedience to God's command. At the last moment, God provided a lamb as his substitute and showed his faithfulness to the covenant made with Abraham.

Isaac grew up and became a man blessed by God. He married Rebekah and together they had twin sons, Esau and Jacob.

Isaac faced family challenges and conflicts, including rivalry between his children and disputes over blessings and inheritance.

Isaac is often remembered as an example of submission to God's will, like his father Abraham.

His life was marked by a special connection with God and the continuation of the divine promises made to Abraham.

The story of Isaac is fundamental in the formation of the people of Israel, as it is an important link in the lineage that eventually led to the birth of Jesus Christ.

His life teaches us about faith, obedience and trust in God's promises.



# The Patriarchs

## JACOB

Jacob, also known as Israel, is a central figure in the book of Genesis and in the history of the people of Israel. He was the son of Isaac and Rebekah, and grandson of Abraham. Jacob's life was marked by important challenges and transformations.

From the womb, Jacob fought with his twin brother Esau, tricking him into obtaining the birthright and paternal blessing. This resulted in family conflicts and the need to flee from Esau.

During his journey, Jacob had an encounter with God at Bethel, where he received a vision of a ladder connecting earth to heaven.

Jacob spent many years working as a shepherd for his uncle Laban, who deceived him several times. He married Laban's daughters, Leah and Rachel, and had many children.

Jacob faced challenges and trials throughout his life, but he also experienced divine blessings and revelations. One of the most significant moments in Jacob's life was his encounter with God at the River Jabbok, where he wrestled with a man until dawn.

At this meeting, Jacob received a blessing and was renamed Israel, which means "he who fights with God."

Jacob's story shows his spiritual growth and transformation over the years. He learned important lessons about humility, trust, God and reconciliation. His descendants became the twelve tribes of Israel, and Jacob left a lasting legacy as the patriarch of Israel. Jacob's life teaches us about God's faithfulness in fulfilling his promises, even in the face of our weaknesses and failures.

# The Patriarchs

## JOSEPH

Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel, is a prominent figure in the book of Genesis.

Its history is marked by adversity, perseverance and the providential action of God. Since he was little, José was loved by his father, which caused jealousy among his brothers. They sold him as a slave to Egypt, where he was purchased by Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh. Despite being wronged, Joseph proved to be faithful and wise, reaching the position of administrator of Potiphar's house.

However, Joseph faced a new test when he was falsely accused and imprisoned. Even in prison, he continued to trust in God and demonstrated his gifts by interpreting the dreams of other prisoners.

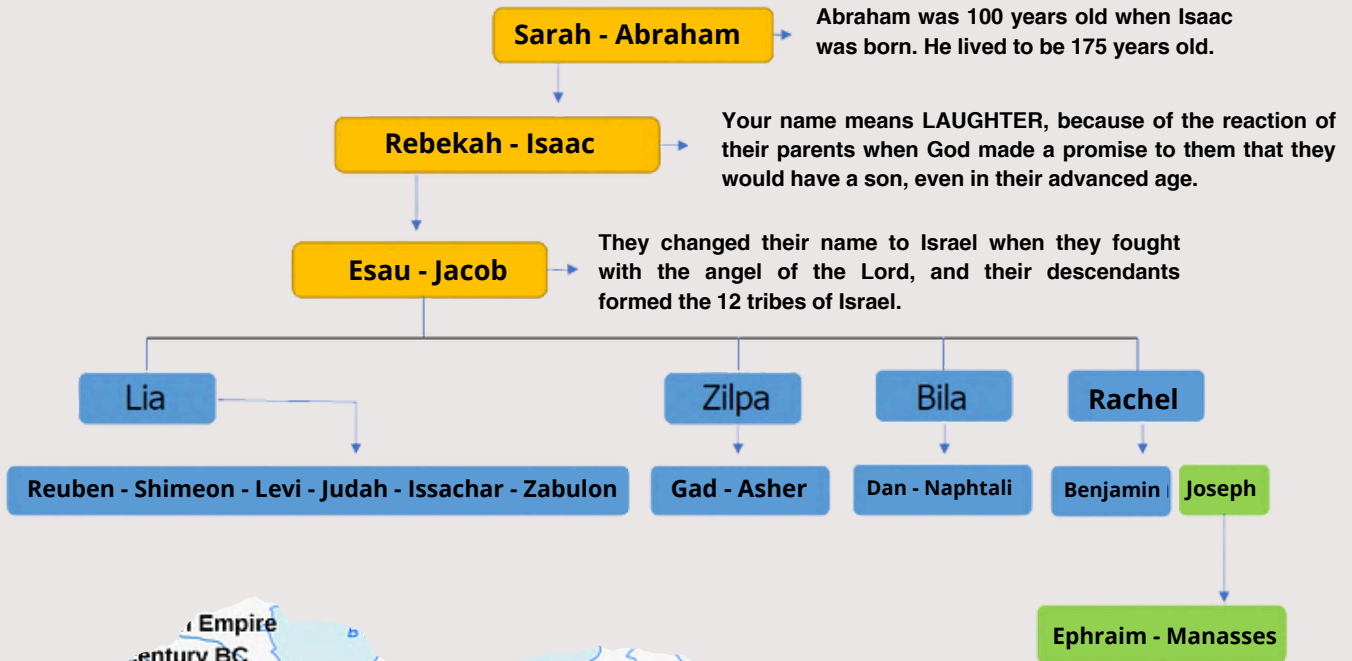
His skill caught Pharaoh's attention when he had a disturbing dream. Joseph was called to interpret Pharaoh's dream, revealing that there would be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine in Egypt.

Impressed by his wisdom, Pharaoh appointed Joseph governor of Egypt, charged with preparing the country for the coming crisis. During the years of famine, Joseph was reunited with his brothers, who had come to Egypt in search of food. He recognized them, but kept his identity a secret for a while. Joseph showed forgiveness and generosity by offering shelter and sustenance to his family and reuniting with his father.

Joseph's story highlights his skill as an administrator, his ability to interpret dreams, and God's providential action in his life.

His journey shows the importance of perseverance, faithfulness and forgiveness, as well as revealing how God can use even the most difficult circumstances to fulfill his purposes.

# The Patriarchs and the Birth of Israel



## About Egypt

Ancient Egypt at its greatest extent during the period known as the New Kingdom, around 1450 BC.

- After Palestine, Egypt is one of the most cited and important lands in the biblical narrative, from Abraham to the days of Jesus.
- Egypt, as a powerful empire, played an important role in biblical history, as a place of refuge for Joseph and his family and as a nation from which the people of Israel were delivered by God.
- The narratives related to Egypt in the time of Joseph and the Exodus provide an important historical and cultural foundation for understanding the trajectory of the people of Israel in the Old Testament

The history of Israel and Egypt has been closely intertwined since biblical times.

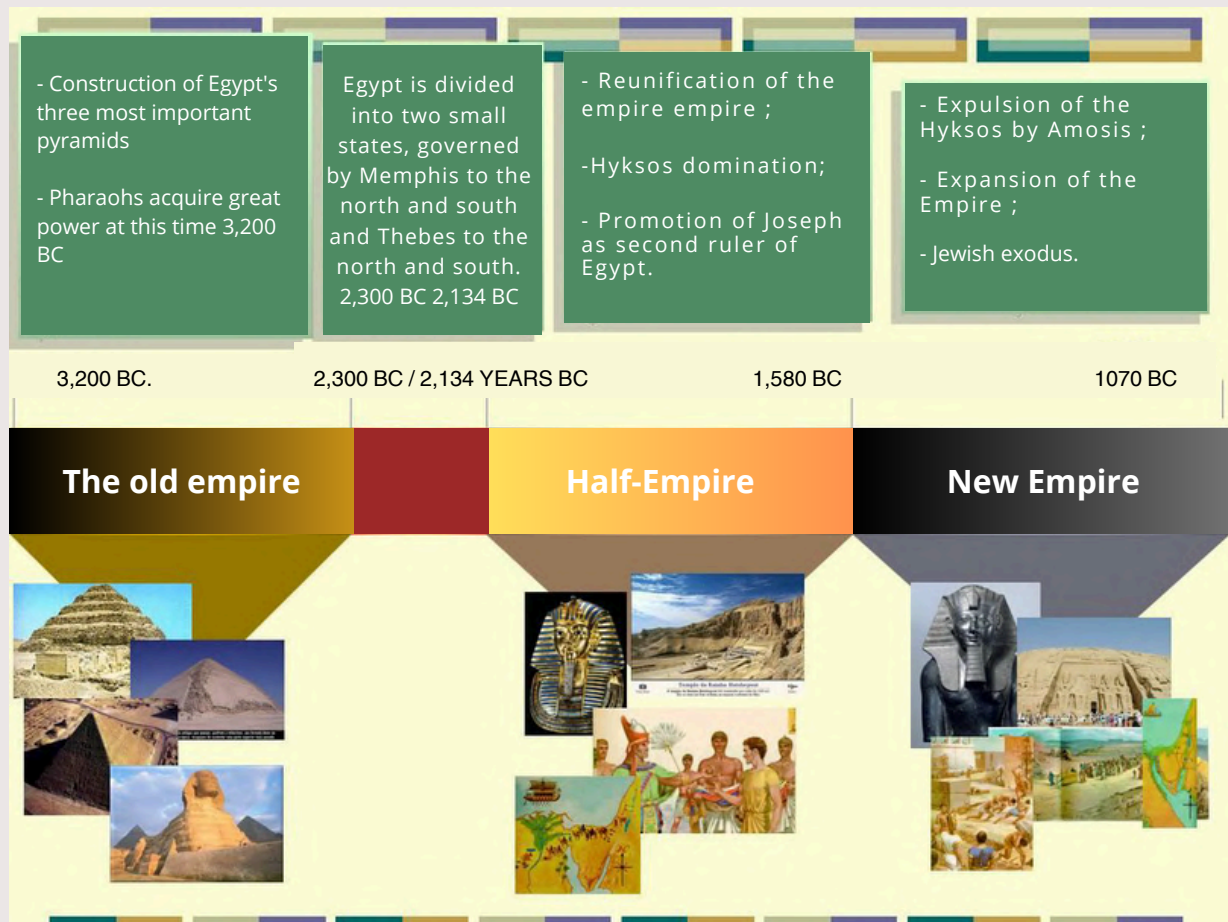
Starting with the patriarch Abraham, who left Mesopotamia and settled in Egypt during a great famine.

Their descendants, the Israelites, eventually became slaves in Egypt, where they suffered oppression for generations.

Moses was chosen by God to lead the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, crossing the Red Sea and heading towards the Promised Land.

The story of the ten plagues, the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, and the wandering in the wilderness are some of the important events that occurred during this period.

Despite the difficulties faced, the history of Israel and Egypt shows God's faithfulness in freeing his people and fulfilling his promises.



Egypt was an advanced nation since the birth of Israel.

With a rich culture and highly developed society, Egypt was a center of innovation and power in the ancient world.

Their civilization flourished with notable advances in the areas of architecture, engineering, agriculture, and writing.

The great pyramids, imposing temples and sophisticated irrigation systems are enduring testimonies to the knowledge and skills of the Egyptians.

However, Israel's history in Egypt was marked by slavery and oppression, in contrast to the greatness of Egyptian civilization.

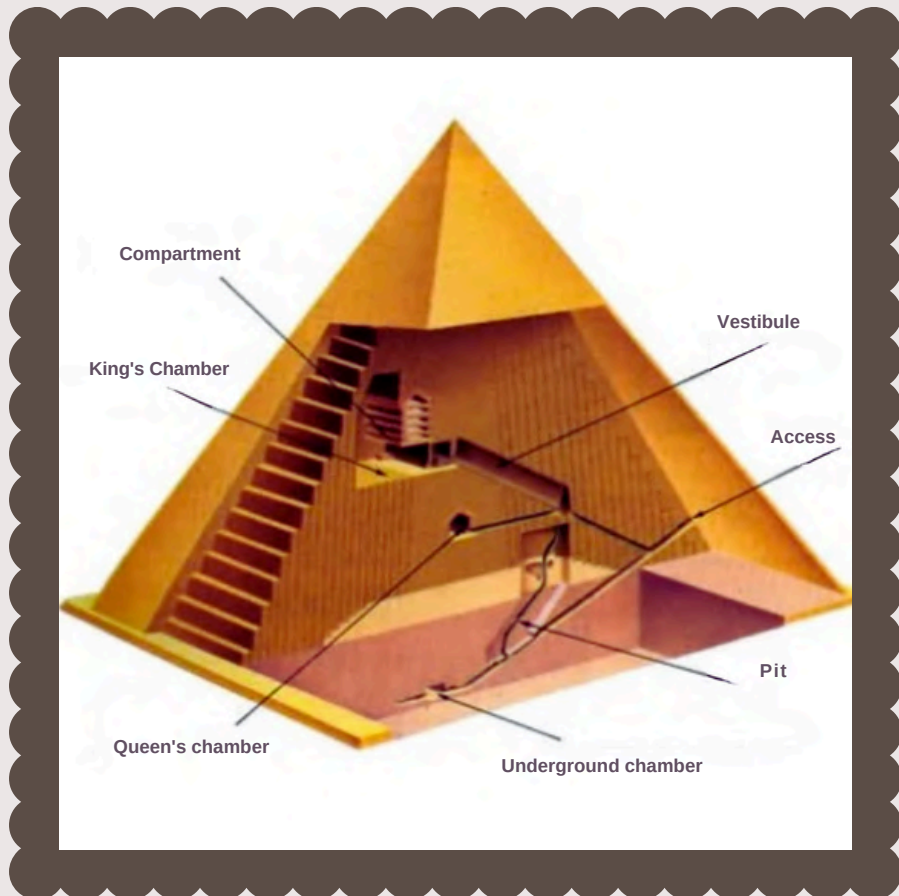
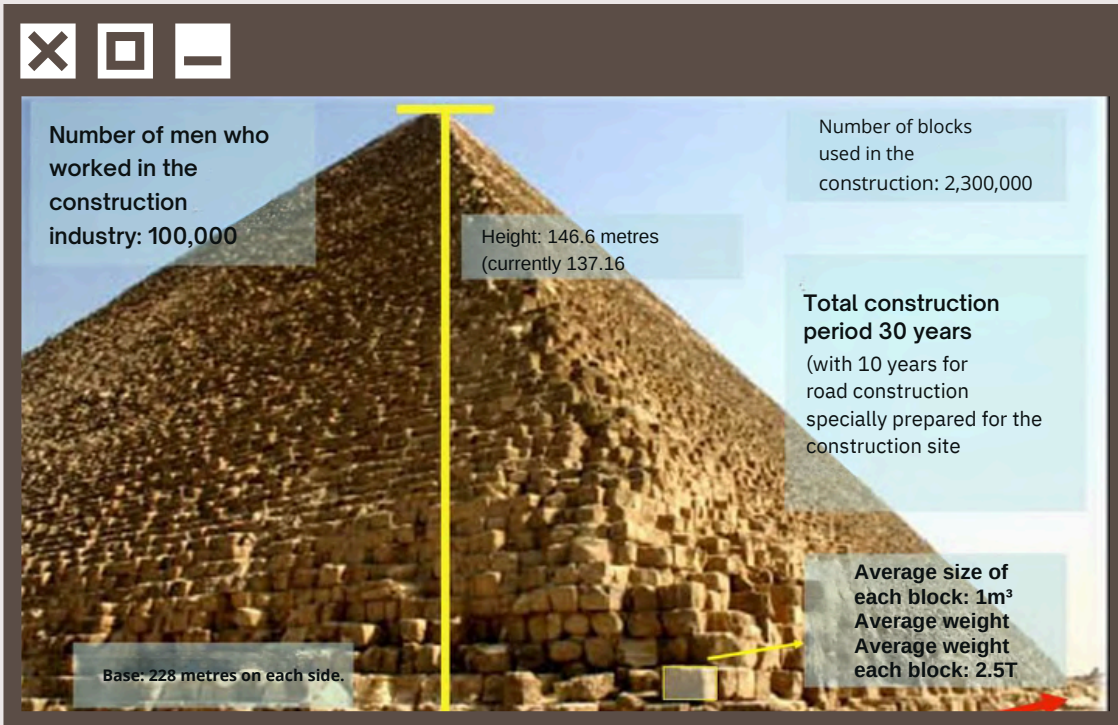
This complex relationship between the people of Israel and Egypt shaped the historical and spiritual trajectory of both nations.

Sphinx and the Great Pyramid of Khufu



# Pyramid of Cheops

Curiosities about the pyramids.



## Merneptah Stele



The first document known so far that mentions the name of Israel dates back to the time of Israel's settlement in the country of Canaan.

This is the Stele of Merneptah (1238-1209 BC), engraved during the fifth year of the reign of this pharaoh (1233 BC), successor of Ramses II.

In it we find a list of the peoples that the pharaoh had defeated in one of his campaigns to Asia.

The text in which reference is made to Israel states:

**"Israel is annihilated and has no seeds left."**

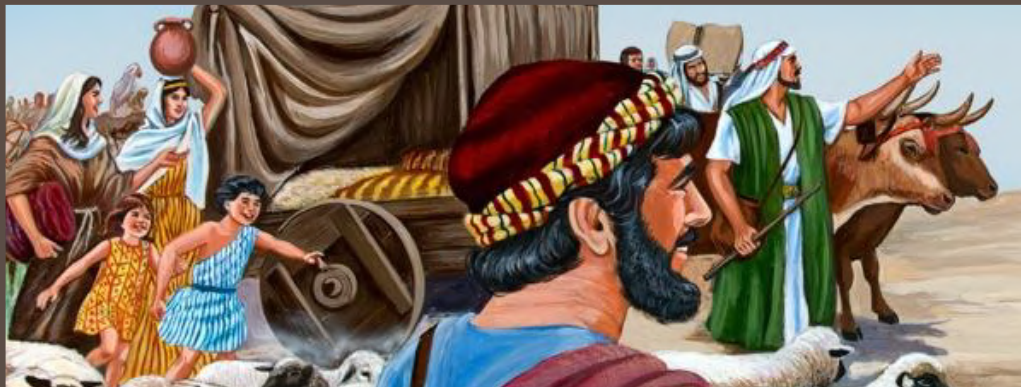
Next to the hieroglyph of Israel appears the sign that means "people."

There are doubts about the best reading of the text.





## José's family's trip to Goshen for hunger





## Moses

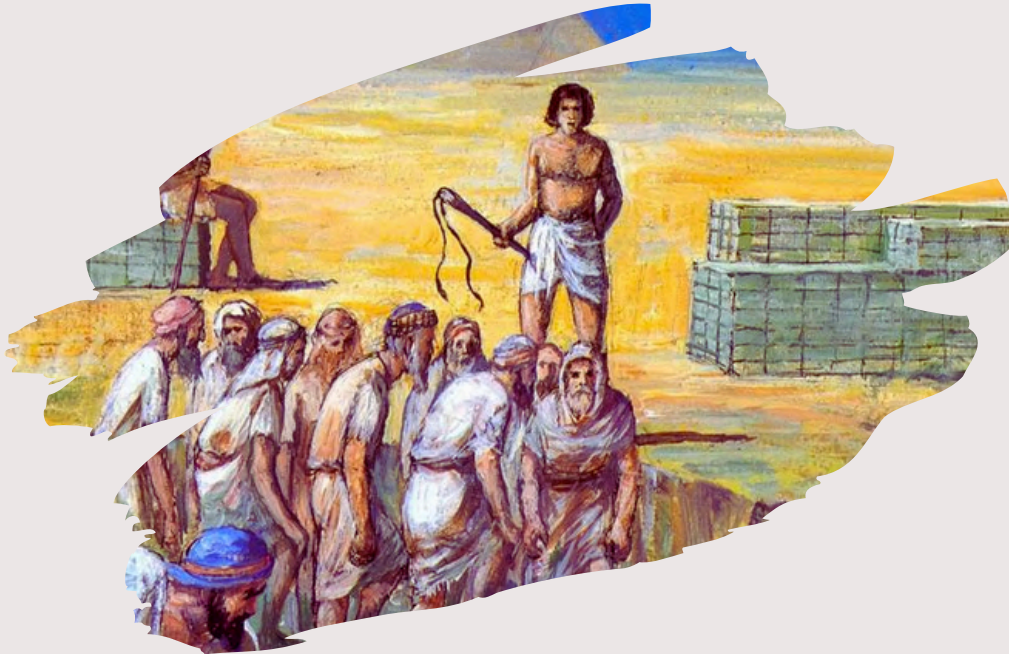
- Later, it is Abraham's descendants who return to Egypt with the Jacob's family and his sons (Gen 12 - 50);
- 1250 BC The Egyptian Empire of Ramses II (1290 1228 BC) begins to decline.
- Experiencing internal tensions, Ramses begins to demand an increase in workload, with a view to expanding the grain collection system in the warehouse cities.
- This increase in workload was the origin of a slave revolt led by Moses.
- Moses was a Hebrew by birth, but his name is Egyptian.

Moses was a biblical leader of great importance in the history of the people of Israel.

Born in Egypt during a period of Hebrew oppression, he was adopted by the pharaoh's daughter and grew up at the royal court. However, upon discovering his Hebrew roots, Moses identified with his people and became a defender of the oppressed.

Guided by a divine calling, Moses led the Israelites on an epic journey of liberation from Egypt.

They miraculously crossed the Red Sea and spent years wandering in the desert, where Moses received God's laws and commandments on Mount Sinai.



As a prophet and leader, Moses faced challenges and internal conflicts within the people of Israel, but he was also God's instrument in performing many miracles and guiding his people.

Although he did not enter the Promised Land, his influence and legacy were fundamental to the formation and identity of the people of Israel.

Moses left a lasting impact on religious and cultural history, being considered one of the great leaders and prophets of the Bible.

**“I have seen the misery of my people, I have heard their cries, I know their sufferings, so I have come down to deliver them.” (Ex 3,7 8)**

Moses is the one chosen by God to lead the people on the path to freedom.

## **Exodus**

- In Egypt a new stage of the Hebrew people begins with the exodus (Ex3,1ff).
- The struggle of the enslaved Hebrews was considered the factor that united the various groups that made up Israel.

The biblical exodus from Egypt with Moses is one of the most significant events in the history of the people of Israel.

According to the book of Exodus, the Israelites multiplied and became a great nation while in Egypt, but they were also enslaved and oppressed by the Egyptians.

In this context, God called Moses to lead the people to freedom and the promised land.

Moses, through signs and wonders performed by God, confronted the Egyptian Pharaoh, demanding that he free the Israelites.

After a series of plagues sent upon Egypt, Pharaoh finally allowed the people of Israel to leave. Thus, the Israelites left Egypt on a memorable night known as the Passover.

Led by Moses, they crossed the Red Sea, miraculously divided by God, while the Egyptian army that pursued them was swallowed by the waters.

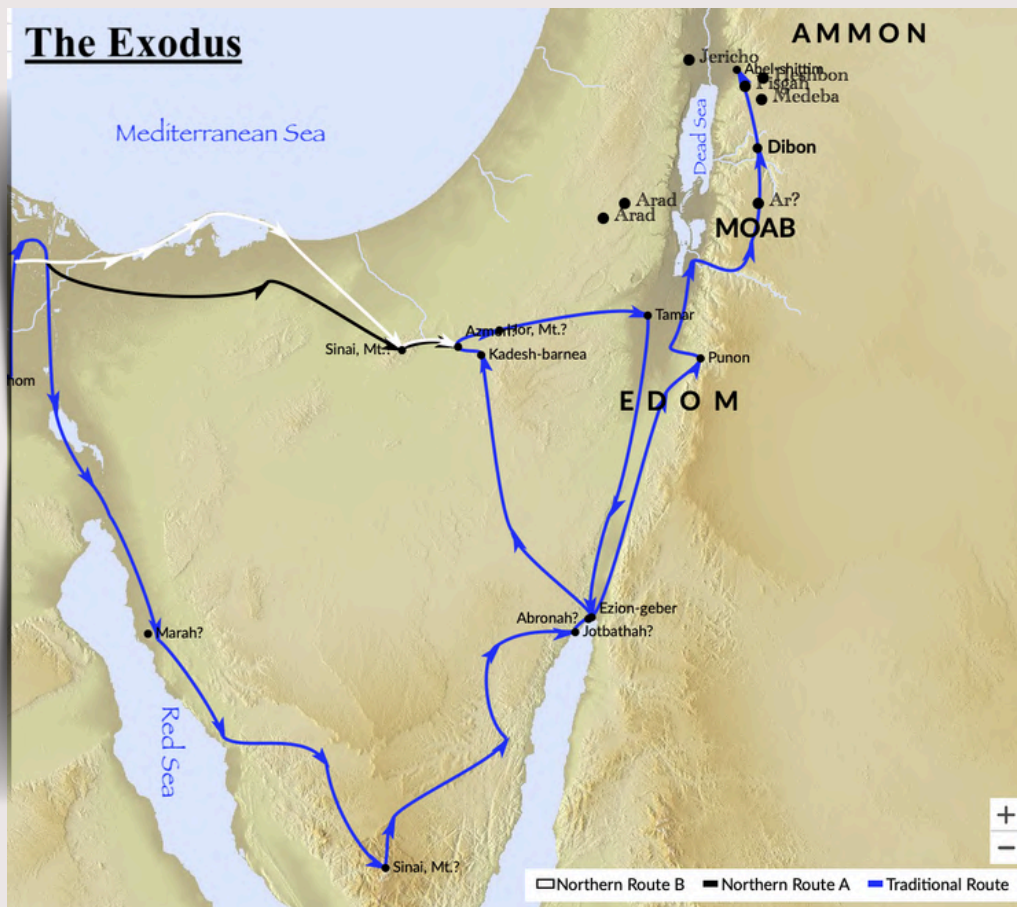


# ...Walking...

1300 BC the pilgrimage through the desert towards the promised land is called by the people of the Bible Exodus. It is the way out, the passage from slavery to freedom.

## 2. Israel's Exodus from Egypt and Entry into Canaan





## Mount Sinai

Mount Sinai plays a crucial role in the history of Israel and its relationship with God. It was on Mount Sinai where Moses received the tables of the Law, the Ten Commandments, directly from God.



This event is considered one of the most significant moments in the history of Israel, as it marked the establishment of the alliance between God and the chosen people.

On Mount Sinai, God revealed his will and instructions to the people of Israel, establishing a moral, ethical, and spiritual foundation for their community.

The Ten Commandments provided fundamental guidelines for Israel's religious and social life, addressing issues such as worship of God, interpersonal relationships, and justice. In addition, Mount Sinai also served as a sacred meeting place with God. It was to this mountain that Moses climbed to seek the presence of God, receive instructions and intercede on behalf of the people.



The cloud of divine presence covered the summit of Mount Sinai, symbolizing the special communion between God and Israel. Therefore, Mount Sinai plays a fundamental role in the history and spirituality of Israel.

It represents the place where God revealed himself and established his alliance with the people, and where Moses led the people in the search for a life in accordance with divine will.



## The Decalogue

- The Law was born as a guarantee of life in freedom. More than a rule and prescription, the Torah is grace and life for Israel.
- Upon leaving Egypt, towards the promised land, the Law is granted to the people.

## Receiving the Law

The decentralization of power favors the practice of liberation, which must be continually evaluated and nourished. What came to teach Moses that the liberating process requires commitment and fidelity.

The God of the Exodus remains eternally at the side of his people, but demands respect and fidelity to life. The ten commandments, the Decalogue, are the concrete expression of this alliance between God and his people.

The decalogue was not part of the ceremonial law, but of the moral one. Whoever violated his precepts was subject to the rituals of sacrifice for sin, or even capital punishment, in case of murder or adultery. Below are the commandments, paraphrased, from Exodus 20:

## The Delivery of the 10 Commandments in the Desert



1. **Not having other gods.**
2. **Do not make idols.**
3. **Do not take the Name in vain.**
4. **Keep the Sabbath holy.**
5. **Honor father and mother.**
6. **Do not kill.**
7. **Do not commit adultery.**
8. **Do not steal.**
9. **Do not lie**
10. **Do not covet.**

## ...Exchange...

- Faced with difficulties, Moses understands that he cannot be alone in front of a path that is not only his, but that of all the people.

**“Choose from among them capable, God-fearing men who are safe and who are enemies of bribery. Set them up as leaders of a thousand, a hundred, fifty and ten. They will regularly administer justice for the people. The serious matters they will bring to you, the simple matters they will resolve themselves. In this way, you will share out the work.”**  
**(Ex 18, 21).**

**“IAWE is among us or not?”**  
**(Ex 17,7)**

- Freedom has a price and the difficulties along the way cause some to lose faith and hope. Many become alienated and create idols and lose sight of the God of liberation.

## The Tabernacle

# And they shall make me a sanctuary, and I will dwell among them. Exodus 25:8

After Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai, where he received the tables of the Law, God expressed his desire to dwell among the people of Israel.

He commanded Moses to build the Tabernacle, a mobile sanctuary where the divine presence would dwell and where the people could approach God.

The Tabernacle was a sacred place, designed in precise detail, including an outer court, a Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place. In it was the altar of sacrifice, the lampstand, the table of shewbread and the veil that separated the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was located.

It was in this sacred place where God manifested himself in a special way. The construction and establishment of the Tabernacle were extremely important to the relationship between God and Israel.

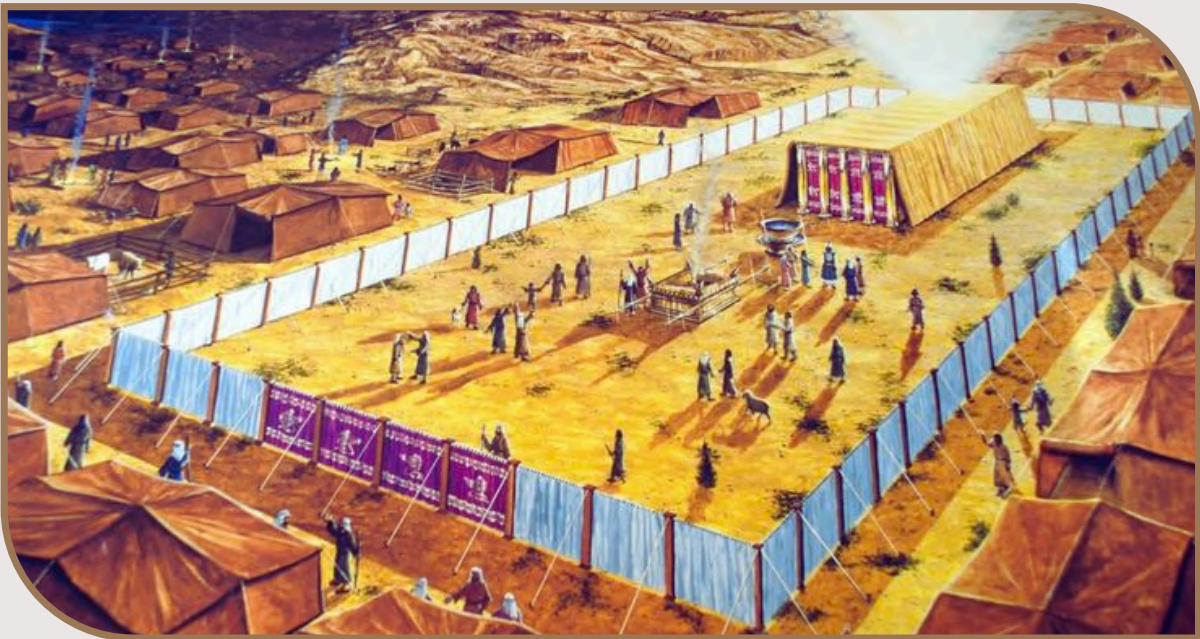
The Tabernacle symbolized the presence of God among the people, demonstrating his care, his closeness and his desire to have a relationship with them. It was a place where the Israelites could worship, offer sacrifices, and seek God.

The Tabernacle also served as a constant reminder of the holiness of God and the people's need for purity and obedience.

Through the rituals and ceremonies held in the Tabernacle, the people of Israel learned about the nature of God, the importance of holiness, and the need to approach him with reverence and fear.

Thus, the construction of the Tabernacle represented a significant milestone in the history of Israel, as it allowed God to dwell among his people in a tangible way, establishing a special connection between the divine and the human.

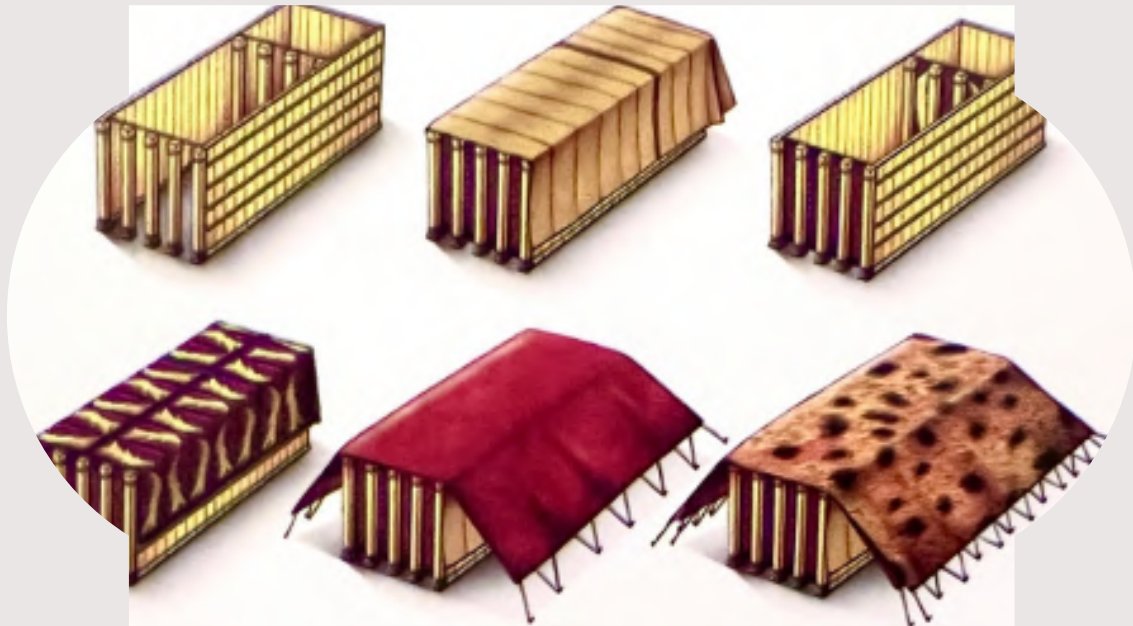
It was a visible sign of the unique relationship God desired to have with Israel and a preparation for the future construction of the Temple in Jerusalem.



**THE TABERNACLE DESCRIBED IN THE PENTATEUCH** was a folding tent, where the sacrifices prescribed by the Mosaic Law were to be performed. It was a structure perfectly adapted to the nomadic way of life of the Israelites, who were still on their way to Canaan. The tabernacle replaced the temporary tent that had been pitched outside the camp (Ex 33:7-11).

Next, the process of assembling the Tabernacle.

The Levites were in charge of disassembling, transporting and reassembling the structure, in addition to helping by providing wood, washing utensils and transporting water.



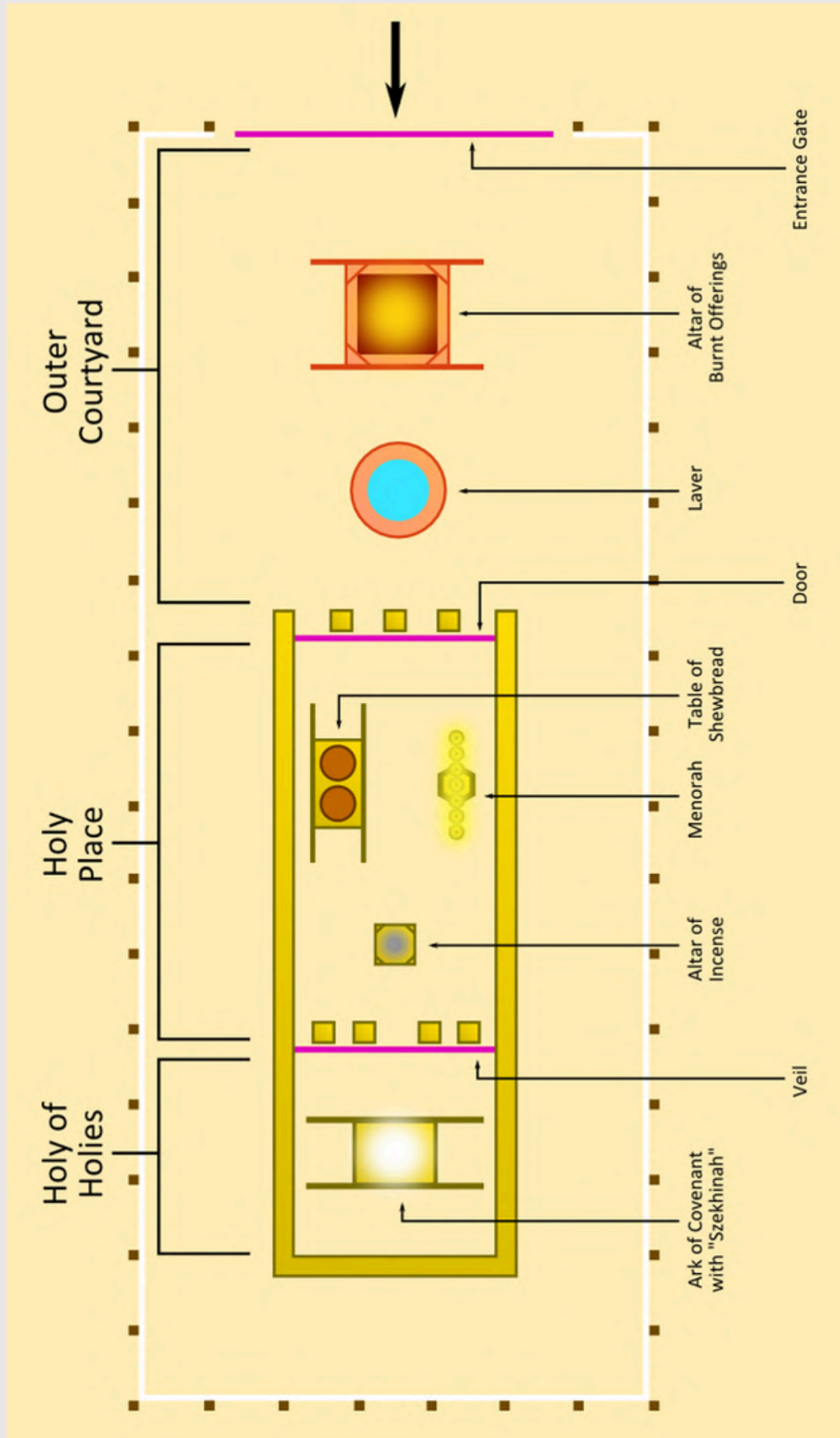
Although the animal was immolated by the offerer himself, only the priest could perform the rituals near the altar and sacred furniture.

The Tabernacle had several access restrictions when entering. The people stayed outside the courtyard and only the offerer with his sacrifice crossed the door, reaching only the Altar of the Holocaust.

There the animal was sacrificed and its blood was carried only by the priest inside the Tabernacle, in the Holy Place. In the most sacred part, the Holy of Holies, the high priest could only enter once a year, on the Day of Expiration.



# Plan of the Tabernacle



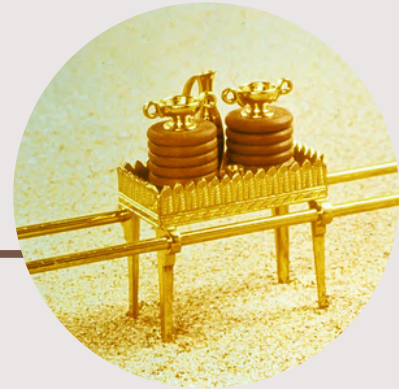
## Interior of the Tabernacle

The interior of the Tabernacle was divided into two parts: the **Holy Place** (or Sanctuary) and the Most Holy Place. This would be a basic description of your furniture:



The **Ark of the covenant**, the most important and sacred piece, which was located in the innermost room, the Holy of Holies.

The **Table of Breads** either Proposal table. 12 loaves of bread were placed on it, representing the 12 tribes. It meant God's provision for his people.



The **Chandelier** was a golden candlestick with 7 arms, where there were lamps that burned oil every day. It symbolized the presence of God, symbolically represented in the Old Testament with "seven spirits."



The **Incense Altar** was a small altar with a square base, used to burn aromatic (liquid) incense, which was constantly renewed.





## Tabernacle Courtyard

The courtyard around the Tabernacle was surrounded by curtains 2.5 m high, limiting an area of approximately 50 m x 25 m. This "fence" was supported by 20 columns on each side, 10 columns behind and another 10 in front. There were 2 elements:



The **bronze basin** also called Sea of Bronze, it was a very large basin where there was water for the priests to wash and the utensils they used.

The **Holocaust Altar** was a piece of wood covered in bronze, 2.5 m long x 2.5 m wide x 1.5 m high, with "horns" in the corners and a grill in the center, to support the offering that would be burned there. This piece had rings in the corners through which the rods passed for transportation.



## The end of the Tabernacle

When the temple was completed, Solomon called the Levites to take the tent to Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:4; 2Ch 5:5-7), probably to place it in the temple area, and the ark of the covenant was inserted into the Holy Place in the new temple.

## The Ark of the Covenant



The Ark of the Covenant was a sacred object described in the Old Testament of the Bible. It was a box made of acacia wood covered with gold, with a lid called the "mercy seat" or "lid of atonement."

It was considered the symbol of the presence of God among the people of Israel. Inside the Ark were the tables of the law, which contained the Ten Commandments, given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai.

The Ark of the Covenant was kept in the Holy of Holies, the most sacred place in the Tabernacle, and later in the Temple in Jerusalem.

It was a place where only the high priest could enter, once a year, on the Day of Atonement.

The presence of God was manifested on the lid of the Ark, between the carved cherubs, and there, God met with the high priest to offer the sacrifice for the people and make atonement for sins.

The theological meaning of the Ark of the Covenant is related to the alliance between God and the people of Israel. It symbolized the presence of God among his people and his authority and holiness.

The Ark also represented God's promise to be with Israel and guide their path. Furthermore, the tables of the law within the Ark represented Israel's commitment to obey God's commandments and live according to his will.

The Ark of the Covenant played an important role in the worship and religious practices of ancient Israel. It was considered a sacred and venerated object as a symbol of the presence and sovereignty of God.

However, it is important to highlight that the Ark was not an end in itself, but rather it pointed to the spiritual reality and the alliance between God and his people, highlighting the need for obedience and communion with Him.

## Challenges in the Desert and Divine Care



- After leaving Egypt, the people of Israel faced numerous challenges during their journey through the desert. They had to deal with food and water shortages, lack of adequate housing, and the natural hardships of an arid and hostile environment. However, in the midst of these difficulties, God demonstrated His care and power through amazing miracles.
- When the Israelites were hungry, God sent manna from heaven, a miraculous food that sustained the people every day during their forty years in the wilderness. Furthermore, he caused water to flow from a rock to quench the thirst of the people in times of desperate need. These events demonstrated God's constant provision and showed that God was attentive to the basic needs of his people.
- Another challenge the Israelites faced was the threat of attacks from enemy towns. In those moments, God acted on behalf of his people, granting them miraculous victories in battles against powerful nations, such as the Amalekites.
- Furthermore, during the journey, God guided the people of Israel in the form of a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night. These visible signs of divine presence assured the Israelites that God was guiding and protecting them at all times.
- The challenges he faced in the wilderness after leaving Egypt provided opportunities for God to demonstrate his faithfulness, love, and power. The miracles performed by Him not only met the physical needs of the people, but also strengthened their faith and trust in God as their protector and provider. This wilderness experience became a lasting testimony of God's goodness and power for generations to come.

## Levi – The Priestly Tribe

According to the biblical account, in the tenth plague (**death of the firstborn**) all the families that sprinkled the blood of the Passover lamb on their doorposts were saved.

That is why the Bible states that every firstborn is from the Lord (Exodus 13)



Therefore, they would be the firstborn to **minister in the presence of God**, symbolizing the adoration of their entire family. However, to facilitate the organization of the cult, a tribe was chosen and separated to replace them in office: that of Levi (Number 3).



According to the Bible, the choice was not accidental: the Levites positioned themselves alongside Moses in the episode of the golden calf, promoted by the priest Aaron (Ex 32).

Exodus 32:26 - Then he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, **“Whoever is for the Lord, let him join me.”**All the Levites joined him.

**Among the Levites** Aaron's descendants were chosen to serve as priests, who were the main officials and the only ones who had access to the interior of the Tabernacle and the altar. The rest of the tribe would be responsible for the activities of transportation, assembly and disassembly of the Tabernacle and for assisting the priests in the functions of the cult (cleaning, collecting firewood, transporting water, etc.).

## Leviticus: The Call to Holiness and Worship in Israel's Path

The book of Leviticus, the third book of the Pentateuch, is a divine manual for worship, adoration and holiness in the life of the people of Israel. Written by Moses, this book reveals how God instructed the Israelites to relate to Him in holiness, highlighting the central role of the priests and the tabernacle in community worship.



Leviticus begins by detailing the sacrifices that were to be offered to God, each with its own specific purpose: atonement, thanksgiving, consecration and communion. These sacrifices were fundamental for reconciliation between God and the people and were conducted by the priests, who also received specific instructions to carry out their roles as spiritual mediators.

The book continues with guidance on ritual purity and the laws of holiness, covering everything from dietary practices to issues of health and morality. God instructs the people to live separately from the surrounding nations, reflecting the holiness of God himself.

Leviticus also introduces the sacred festivals, such as Passover, the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) and the Feast of Firstfruits, establishing a sacred calendar that marked the rhythm of Israel's religious life. These celebrations pointed to God's faithfulness in history and were occasions for spiritual renewal and communion.



A central point of the book is the role of the priests, descendants of Aaron, who were responsible for teaching the Law, offering the sacrifices and maintaining order in the tabernacle. They led the people in worship and ensured that religious practices were carried out according to God's will.

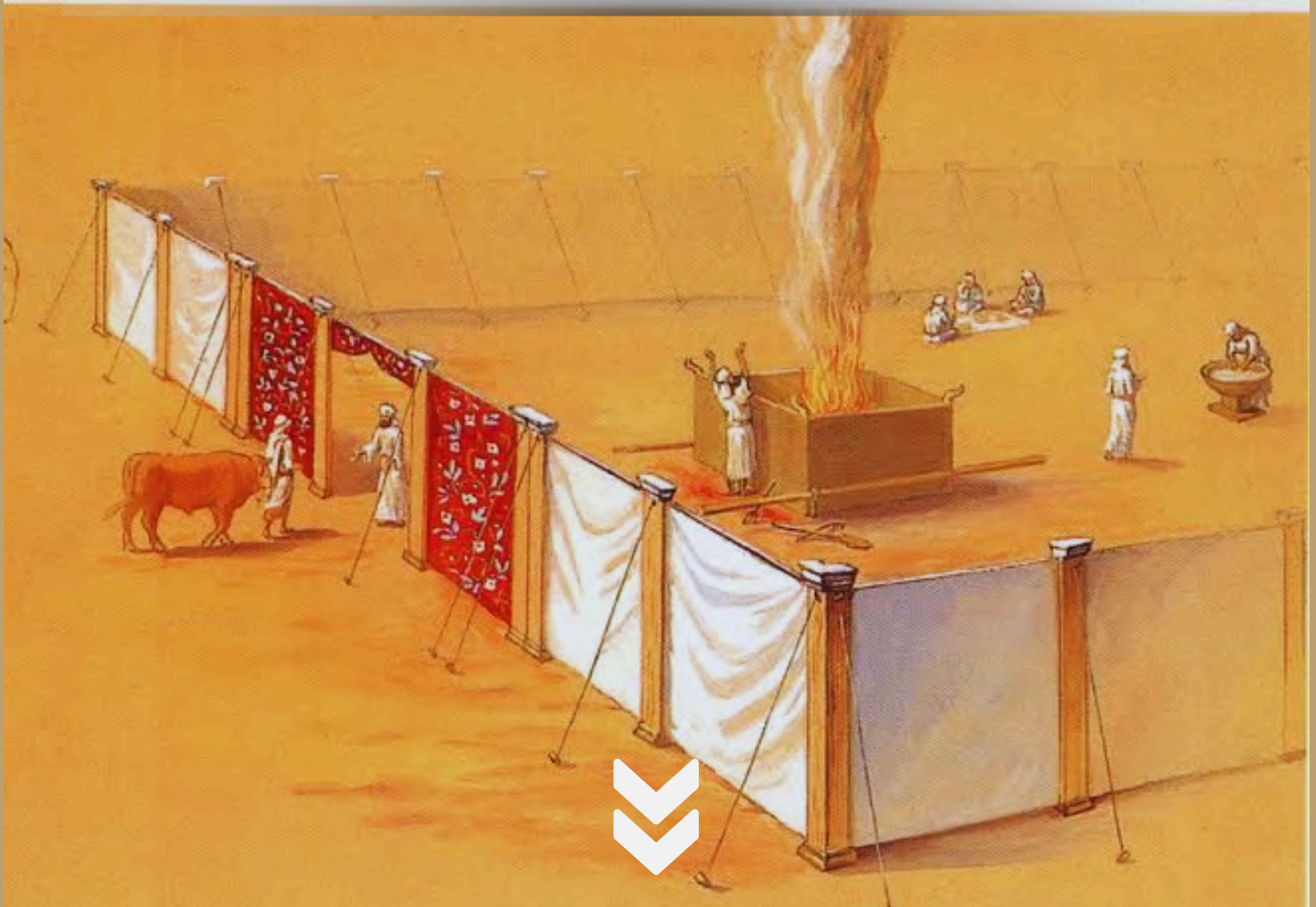
Finally, Leviticus emphasizes the call to holiness: “Be holy, for I am holy” (Leviticus 19:2). The whole structure of the book highlights the need for purity and obedience so that Israel could remain in God's presence and be a living testimony to the nations.

Leviticus is an invitation to reverence, obedience and gratitude, showing how God desires to dwell among His people and how holiness and worship are essential in the journey of faith.



## Old Testament sacrifices

In the book of Leviticus, we find various instructions about sacrifices and offerings, which were an essential part of the worship and relationship between the people of Israel and God. Here are the main sacrifices mentioned in the book:



# Holocaust (Burnt Offering):

## Description:

An animal (bull, ram, goat, dove or turtledove) was burnt completely on the altar as an offering to God. It represented complete consecration and atonement for sins.

## Personal item required:

- A male from a herd or flock with no visible defects.
- For those of lower economic status, a dove or pigeon.

## Reason:

- To provide atonement and a guarantee of forgiveness for general sins.
- To signal complete surrender and dedication of life to God.

## Reference:

**Leviticus 1:1-17; 6:8-13.**

*“When any of you offers an offering to the Lord, he shall offer his offering of livestock, that is, of cattle and sheep.”*



# Offering Manjares (Cereal Offering):

## Description:

It included ground grain, fine flour, olive oil, incense and unleavened bread. There was no bloodshed. It was an offering of gratitude and recognition of God's provision.

## Personal item required:

- Fine flour mixed with oil, salt and incense.
- Baked cakes made with fine flour, salt and oil, but without yeast or honey.
- Roasted heads of grain, filled with oil, incense and salt.

## Reason:

- To give thanks for the Lord's blessing on the harvest of grain and fruit.

## Reference:

**Leviticus 2:1-16; 6:14-23.**

*“Then you shall bring the meal offering, which shall be made from it, to the Lord, and present it to the priest, who shall bring it to the altar.”*



# Peaceful Sacrifice (Communion or Peace Offering):

## Description:

Unblemished animals were offered, part of which was burned on the altar, while the rest was shared in a meal. It represented communion with God and thanksgiving.

## Personal item required:

- A male or female from the herd with no visible defects.
- Thank you offerings are accompanied by baked cakes.

## Reason:

- To express gratitude for your relationship with the Lord and the peace he offers.
- To solemnize a vow.
- To express gratitude for particular blessings received.

## Reference:

**Leviticus 3:1-17; 7:11-34.**

*“The priest shall burn on the altar; food shall be of the offering made by fire, of a sweet smell. All the fat shall be the Lord's.”*



# Sacrifice for Sin:

## Description:

Made in atonement for sins committed through ignorance. The type of sacrifice varied according to the person's status (priest, leader, common people). It included the sprinkling of blood in sacred places.

## Personal item required:

- Male or female animals from the herd or flock, without visible defect, doves and pigeons, or fine flour without added oil or incense; type of offer for specific socio-economic situation

## Reason:

- To restore purity, ensure atonement and provide a guarantee of forgiveness for those who have committed unintentional sins

## Reference:

**Leviticus 4:1-35; 6:24-30.**

*“...they shall lay their hands on the head of the bullock before the Lord, and the bullock shall be slaughtered before the Lord.”*



# Sacrifice for Guilt (Sacrifice of Reparation):

## Description:

Offered in atonement for specific sins that required restitution (such as damage to property or violations of the sanctuary). The offerer had to offer a ram and repair the damage with a 20% increase.

## Personal item required:

- Lam with no visible defect

## Reason:

- Restoring purity, ensuring atonement and providing a guarantee of forgiveness for those who have committed involuntary sins in which restitution to the wronged individual is possible. Restitution is paid to the wronged person at 100% + 20% of the loss.

## Reference:

**Leviticus 5:14-19; 7:1-10.**

*“When any person commits a transgression, and sins through ignorance in the holy things of the Lord.”*



# Offering Purification after Impurities:

## Description:

Sacrifices offered for purification after events such as childbirth, leprosy or bodily fluxes. It usually included doves or turtledoves.

## Personal item required:

- One lamb or two turtledoves/pigeons, depending on the financial condition of the giver.

## Reason:

- To restore ceremonial purity and allow the person to fully reintegrate into the community of faith. This offering symbolized the need for holiness before God and the recognition of human frailty before divine purity.

## Reference:

**Leviticus 12:1-8; 14:1-32; 15:13-15.**

*“When a person becomes unclean through bodily contact or emission, he shall present the offering according to the law of the Lord*



# Offering for the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur):

## Description:

An annual event in which the high priest offered sacrifices to atone for the sins of all the people of Israel. It included two goats - one for sacrifice and the other as the “scapegoat” which symbolically carried the sins into the desert.

## Personal item required:

- Two goats without blemish and a steer.

## Reason:

- To provide annual atonement for the sins of the entire nation, purifying the Tabernacle and the people of Israel. This sacrifice symbolized divine forgiveness and the restoration of the relationship between God and His people.

## Reference:

### Leviticus 16:1-34.

*“One of the goats will be sacrificed to the Lord, and the other will be sent into the desert as a scapegoat, bearing the sins of the people.”*





# Voluntary Offer or Vow:

## Description:

Sacrifices made voluntarily or in fulfillment of a vow made to God. It could include burnt offerings or peaceful sacrifices.

## Personal item required:

- Male or female cattle, sheep or goats, with no visible defects.
- For vows or voluntary offerings, the animal should represent the dedication and gratitude of the offerer.

## Reason:

- Showing gratitude to the Lord for blessings received.
- Freely expressing devotion and love for God through a spontaneous act of self-giving.
- Signaling the fulfillment of vows, reaffirming commitment and fidelity to God.

## Reference:

### Leviticus 22:18-30.

*“Whoever offers a freewill offering to the Lord, whether in fulfillment of a vow or as a freewill offering, an animal without blemish shall be accepted.”*





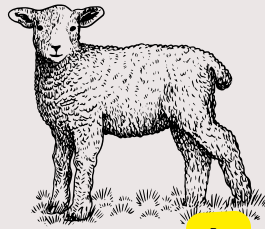
These sacrifices not only established the relationship between the people and God, but also pointed to the need for redemption and purification.

They were shadows of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as described in the New Testament (Hebrews 10:1-14).

## **Old Testament holidays and festivals.**

The festivals of the Old Testament biblical calendar were of great importance to the people of Israel, as they not only commemorated significant historical events, but also reflected spiritual principles and the relationship between God and his people. These festivals were moments of worship, celebration, repentance and renewal of commitment to the Lord. Let's look briefly at each of them:





Passover



Unleavened bread



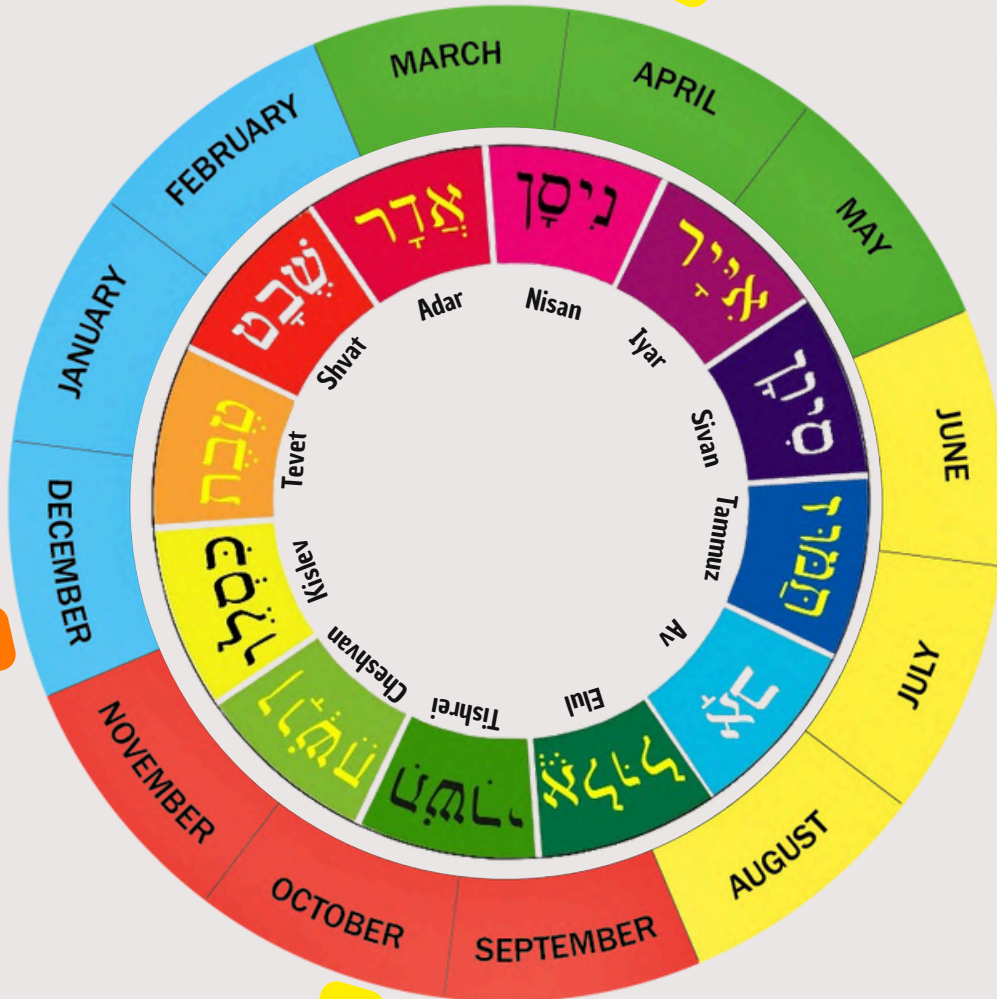
First fruits



\*Purim\*



Harvest



\*Hanukkah\*

Tabernacles

atonemen

Trumpets



# Passover (Pesach)

**Reference:** Exodus 12; Leviticus 23:5

**Date:** 14th day of the first month (Nisan)

## Origin:

The first Passover is linked to the last plague in Egypt, when every firstborn son died. The Lord spared (“passed over”) the houses where lamb's blood was placed on the doorposts for his guidance.

## Summary:

Passover commemorates the exodus from Egypt. When the family gathers in their home, an oral review of this event is accompanied by a meal whose elements (bitter herbs, asmo bread and lamb meat) help to recall the details of the exodus.



## Connection with the New Testament:

As a Jew, Jesus traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration many times during his life. Before his death on Good Friday, Jesus had a Passover dinner with his disciples and used its elements to start the meal known as the Lord's Supper. Christians link Jesus' death to the death of the Passover lamb.



# Unleavened bread (Hag Hamatzot)

**Reference:** Leviticus 23:6-8

**Date:** 15th to 21st day of the month of Nisan

## Origin:

This Festival also began with the exodus from Egypt, when the Lord directed his people to remove leaven from their homes. All baked goods were to be made without the use of yeast.

## Summary:

Together with Passover, the activities of the Festival of Unleavened Bread are meant to commemorate the exodus from Egypt. For a week, leaven is carefully removed from the house and all the bread eaten is asmo bread (without leaven, mazot in Hebrew). This is a week in which regular work is suspended and special worship services are enjoyed.



## Connection with the New Testament:

Jesus would have joined the Jewish families who rushed to Jerusalem for this week of celebration in the holy city. The negative connotations associated with leaven at this Festival led it to be used as a metaphor for something bad (Matthew 16.12, Luke 12.1, 1 Corinthians 5.7).



# Festival of First Fruits (Bikkurim)

**Reference:** Leviticus 23:9-14

**Date:** The day after the Sabbath of the Festival of Unleavened Bread

## Origem:

The Festival of Firstfruits was celebrated at the beginning of the harvest, marking the dedication to God of the first fruits of the land as an acknowledgement that all provision came from the Lord. The Israelites brought the firstfruits of the grain harvest, such as barley, to the temple and gave them to the priest as an offering, as instructed in Leviticus 23:9-

14.



## Connection with the New Testament:

Jesus is identified as the “firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20), and his resurrection is the symbolic fulfillment of this festival. Just as the first fruits pointed to the abundance of the harvest to come, Christ's resurrection points to the future resurrection of all believers.

## Summary:

This celebration was held the day after the Sabbath during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The priest moved a bundle of grain before the Lord, symbolizing the consecration of the harvest to the Lord. No part of the harvest could be consumed before this offering, highlighting God's priority in all things.



# Harvest Festival (Shavuot)

**\*\*Pentecost**

**Reference:** Leviticus 23:15-22

**Date:** 50 days after Firstfruits

## Origin:

The festival of Harvest/Pentecost, also known as the Festival of Weeks or Shavuot, has its origins in the instructions given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, as part of the calendar of celebrations for the people of Israel.

## Summary:

Fifty days after Passover, God commanded his people to give thanks for the wheat harvest during this agricultural festival. In order to remind them of the source of this blessing and to encourage them to give thanks for God's action in providing this essential element of the ancient diet, God's people were to bring an offering of grain products to the temple.



## Connection with the New Testament:



The Jews who heard Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost and responded to him had traveled to Jerusalem and were in the temple to take part in this festival (Acts 2).





# Festival of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)

**Reference:** Leviticus 23:23-25

**Date:** First day of the seventh month (Tishrei)

## Origin:

The Festival of Trumpets, also known as Rosh Hashanah, has its origins in the sacred calendar given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. It is mentioned in Leviticus 23 as a solemnity marked by the blowing of the shofar, symbolizing the summoning of the people to worship and repentance.

## Summary:

The sound of the ram's horn (shofar) marks the beginning of the Jewish year. On this day, regular work ceased and special worship indicated the right state of mind to begin the year. It came to mark the beginning of a ten-day period of sober reflection and repentance, leading up to the Day of Atonement.



## Connection with the New Testament:

No specific reference to the Feast of Trumpets is made in the New Testament.



# Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

**Reference:** Leviticus 16; 23:26-32

**Date:** 10th day of the seventh month (Tishrei)

## Summary:

## Origin:

The Day of Atonement, known as Yom Kippur, was instituted by God as part of the Law given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Its origin is deeply rooted in the context of the relationship between God and Israel, when the people were instructed to observe an annual day of fasting, repentance and purification.

This was the holiest day in the Hebrew calendar, when the people were “cleansed from their sins” (Leviticus 16.30). It was a day of fasting and prayer among the people. The high priest entered the Most Holy Place bringing the blood for atonement into the ark of the covenant, placing blood between the place where God made his presence known above the ark and keeping the law code inside the ark. The high priest also confessed the sins of the people using a scapegoat, which was taken into the wilderness.



## Connection with the New Testament:

The image of this day is used in Hebrews, illustrating the way in which the blood of Jesus and his sacrifice bring final atonement for the world, in a way that the offering of the Day of Atonement failed to fulfill (9.11-28).



# Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)

**Reference:** Leviticus 23:33-43

**Date:** 15th to 21st day of the seventh month (Tishrei)

## Origin:

The Festival of Tabernacles, also known as Sukkot, was instituted by God as an annual celebration to commemorate the 40 years during which the people of Israel dwelt in the desert after being freed from Egypt. During this time, the Israelites lived in temporary huts, symbolizing God's provision and protection as they wandered towards the Promised Land. This festival became part of the sacred calendar on Mount Sinai, being one of the three pilgrimage festivals when the people were supposed to gather in Jerusalem to worship God.

## Summary:

During the fall fruit harvest, God's people were supposed to suspend their regular work and spend more time in worship for seven days. It was a time to reflect on the years the Israelites had spent in the desert before their arrival in the promised land. The portable shelters, made of branches, are reminiscent of the "huts" in which their ancestors lived during this part of their history (Nehemiah 8:14-17). Prayers were offered for the early arrival of the winter rains, and a priest brought water from the pool of Siloam and poured it at the base of the great altar.



## Connection with the New Testament:

Jesus took part in this festival and used its symbolism to teach about his identity as the Messiah (John 7:1-39).



# Festival of Dedication (Hanukkah)

## (instituted later)

**Reference:** John 10:22 (quoted in the NT); historical texts of Maccabees

**Date:** 25th day of the month of Chisleu (lasts eight days)

### Origin:

During the intertestamental period, the temple in Jerusalem was freed from pagan hands and rededicated to the service of the Lord by the Maccabees in 164 BC. Tradition has it that during the eight-day celebration that followed, there wasn't enough oil to keep the menorah burning in the temple. However, the one-day supply of oil miraculously lasted eight days.

### Summary:

This is a time of celebration and reflection on the new dedication of the temple. Over time, various rituals have been added to the celebration, including the use of the Hanukkah candelabra.



### Connection with the New Testament:

Jesus faced a hostile crowd in the temple complex during this festival, a crowd ready not to celebrate but to stone him for claiming to be God himself (John 10.22).



# Festival of Purim (instituted later)

**Reference:** Esther 9:20-32

**Date:** 14th and 15th days of the month of Adar

## Origin:

When the wicked Haman planned the destruction of the Jews throughout the Persian Empire (choosing the day for it by casting purim, i.e. casting lots), the Lord used Esther's godly influence to prevent the atrocity. The day of the intended destruction and the accomplished liberation became the Jewish feast of Purim.

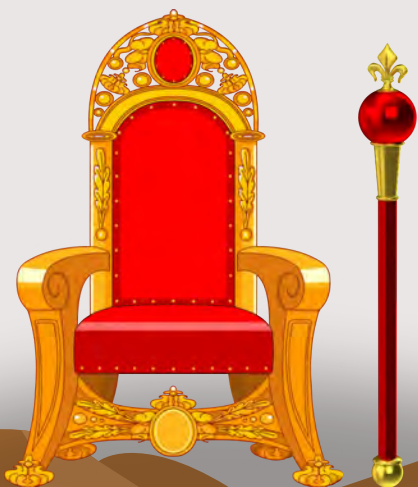
## Summary:

This day of celebration and gift-giving recalls the divine mercy that transformed a day associated with mourning into a day of joy, when the Lord saved the Jews from their enemies.



## Connection with the New Testament:

No specific reference to Purim is made in the New Testament.





## Final summary of the Biblical festivals

The calendar of biblical festivals reveals God's wisdom and perfection in ordering celebrations that mark the relationship between the Creator and his people. From Passover, which recalls the liberation from Egypt, to the Festival of Tabernacles, which celebrates God's faithfulness in sustaining Israel in the desert, each festival has a profound spiritual meaning. Agricultural festivals such as Firstfruits and Pentecost highlight divine provision, while celebrations such as the Day of Atonement emphasize the need for repentance and purification. The festivals of Purim and Dedication recall God's miraculous intervention on behalf of his people in times of danger.

These sacred dates not only united the community of Israel in worship, but also pointed to God's redemptive plan, culminating in Christ. In the New Testament, we see how Jesus symbolically fulfills many of these festivals, bringing new meaning and revelation.

## The Spiritual Teaching of Festivals

Biblical festivals teach us about gratitude, dependence on God and obedience to his word. They emphasize that all blessings come from the Lord, who is worthy of our praise and devotion. In addition, each festival points to the redemption and restoration offered by God, reminding us of his faithfulness and love throughout history.

For Christians, these celebrations are an opportunity to reflect on God's character and his eternal plan. They inspire us to live with grateful hearts, committed to God's purpose and firm in the hope of the eternal life promised in Christ, the ultimate fulfillment of all the festivals.



## The Priestly Tribe

The priests wore special clothes, made of white linen, with a belt embroidered in linen, gold, blue, purple and red, with a miter (linen turban) on their heads.

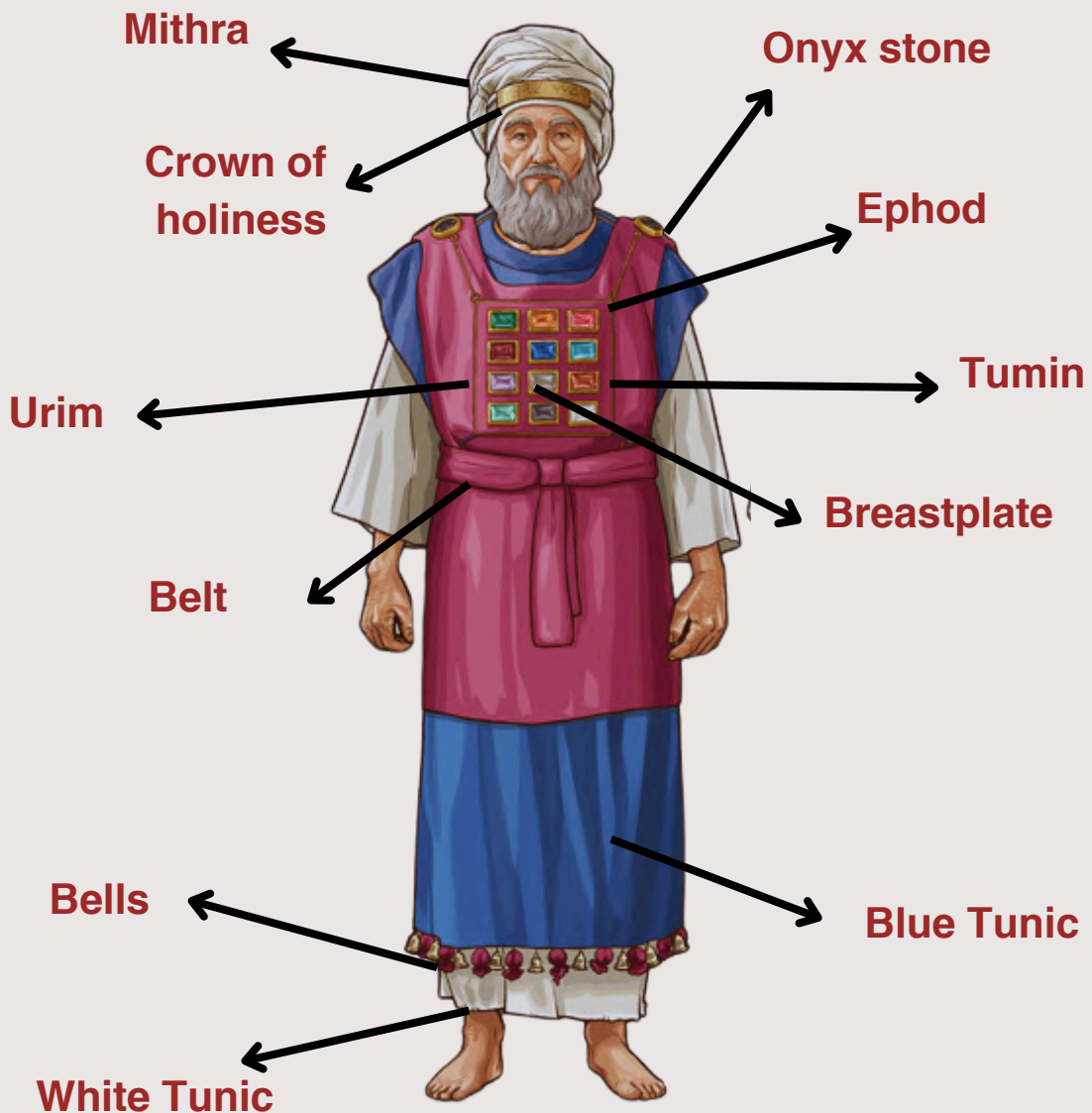
The high priest, the main one of them was elected annually, wore over the same tunic some layers that differentiated him: a blue surplice, an embroidered priestly mantle and a pectoral that contained twelve precious stones.



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# About the Tribe of Levi.

## Gersonites - Merarites - Kohathites

The tribe of Levi was made up of three main families: the Kohathites, the Gershonites and the Merarites. Each of these families was given a specific office in relation to the tabernacle, especially in the event of the temple having to be dismantled in order to set up camp.



“The Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and pronounce blessings in his name. That is why the Levites have no portion of land or inheritance among their brothers; the Lord is their inheritance, as the Lord their God promised them...”

**(Deuteronomy 10:8-9)**

## Gersonites:

# Sons of Levi

Numbers 4:2 21-28

The Gershonites were descendants of Gershon, the first-born of Levi's three sons (Exodus 6:16); he had two sons, Libni and Shimei (Exodus 6:17). So the Gershonites were made up of 2 families, and the head of this group of families was Eliasaph son of Lael. Numbers 3:24. Their function was more exalted than that of the Merarites, who carried the tablets, and less than that of the Kohathites, who carried the holiest utensils and symbols.

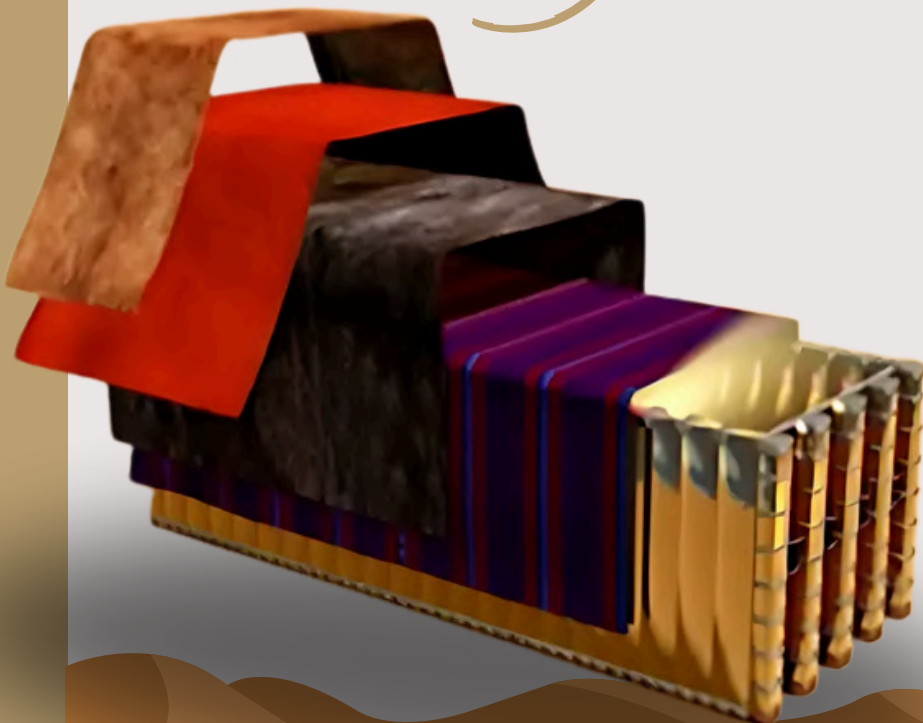
The Gershonites were given two chariots with four oxen (Numbers 7:7). Thirteen cities were assigned to the Gershonites in northern Palestine by Eleazar and Joshua (Joshua 21:6,27-33,6:62,71-76).



## Responsibilities:

“The responsibility of these two families of Levites was to take care of the Tabernacle, the inner tent (or sanctuary) of the covering, the curtain at the entrance to the Tabernacle, the outer curtains of the courtyard, the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard around the Tabernacle, the altar, and the ropes used to set up the Tabernacle.”

Numbers 3:25-26



The Gershonites are mentioned among those who purified the house of the Lord in the days of Hezekiah (2Chronicles 29:12).

## Merarites:

# Sons of Levi

Numbers 4:29-33

One of the three main families of Levites, descendants of Merari, son of Levi. The leader of the families of the Merarite clans was Zuriel, son of Abihail. The Merarites had to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. (Numbers 3:35) In the division of the Land of Promise under Joshua, 12 cities were assigned to the Merarites, four from each of the tribal territories of Reuben, Gad and Zebulun. One of them, Ramoth in Gilead (in the territory of Gad), was a “city of refuge” - Joshua 21:7, 34-40. There were Merarites among the Levites who returned from Babylonian exile in 537 B.C.E. (1 Chron 9:14) And there were Merarites among the Levites who accompanied Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem. - Ezra 8:1, 18.



## Responsibilities:

“The Merarites were responsible for taking care of the frames of the tabernacle, its beams, its pillars, its bases, all its utensils and everything related to this service, as well as the pillars of the surrounding courtyard, with their bases, their stakes and their ropes.”

Numbers 3:36-37



In the days of David, 220 Merarites, led by Asaiah, helped other Levites to bring the Ark from the house of Obed-edom to Jerusalem. (1Cor 15:1-6, 25)

## Kohathite

# Sons of Levi

Numbers 4:1-20-33

Descended from the family head Kohath, one of the three sons of Levi. (Gen 46:11) The “Kohathites” were divided into 4 families, descended from the 4 sons of Kohath: the Arminites, the Izharites, the Hebronites and the Uzzielites. (Num 3:19, 27) The other Kohathites, apart from Aaron and his sons, were not allowed to see the utensils even for a moment, nor to touch the holy place, because that would mean death. (Num 4:4-15, 20) Although Israel provided the Levites with cattle and wagons to transport the tabernacle equipment, the Kohathites did not receive them. No doubt because of the holiness of their burdens, they carried the load on their shoulders. (Num 7:2-9) They were the last Levites to leave the camp. - Num 10:17-21



### Responsibilities:

“They were responsible for taking care of the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the utensils of the sanctuary with which they ministered, the curtain and everything related to this service. The main leader of the Levites was Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest. He was appointed head of those who took care of the service of the sanctuary.”

Numbers 3:31-32



Moses and Aaron were Kohathites from the Arnamite family (Ex 6:18...); the rebellious Korah was a Kohathite from the Izharite family (Num 16:1), as was the prophet Samuel. 1Sa 1

# The 12 tribes of Israel

## Jacob God changes the name (Israel)



**Bilhah**

- DAN
- Naphtali



**Rachel**

- ~~Joseph~~
- Ephraim
- Manasseh
- Benjamin



**Leah**

- Reuben
- Simeon
- Judah
- Issachar
- Zebulon



**Zilpah**

- Gad
- Asher

- Joseph gave place to his two sons in the counting of the tribes.
- Levi: they separated to serve and did not gain land.

## Project of a Society

**1250 BC** – The experience of the desert is what prepares the people for entering the promised land. It was their stories of sensitivity towards God's project and also their concrete testimony of divine providence that made them able to set foot on the ground of the Promised Land.

### ...Sharing the land...

- The promise of the land is what mobilizes the people to build a fraternal society. The Exodus and the crossing of the desert made it clear that the earth is another gift from God and its use must be supportive and participatory.
- Joshua is the new leader of the people, because, above all, he understood this project and fought for it. He called his people to live according to God's law and to establish a covenant of faith with Him.

**“And Joshua gave the land as an inheritance to the Israelites, dividing it into lots according to the tribes...And the land was at peace..”  
(Js 11, 23)**

## Joshua the Successor of Moses



Joshua was Moses' successor and played a fundamental role in the history of the people of Israel. He led the Israelites after the death of Moses, guiding them in conquering the promised land.

Joshua was a brave leader and obedient to God, who instructed him to be strong and courageous in all his actions. He led the people across the Jordan River, where the waters miraculously parted. Joshua also led the conquest of Jericho, a historic victory in which the city walls fell following a divinely ordained strategy.

Under the leadership of Joshua, the tribes of Israel settled in the promised land, according to God's division. Joshua is remembered as a faithful leader, who led the people with confidence and devotion, demonstrating God's faithfulness by fulfilling his promises.

# Joshua

1. He led the crossing of the Jordan River, opening the way for the people of Israel to enter the promised land. (approximately 1230 BC)
  2. He conquered the city of Jericho, demolishing its walls according to the strategy revealed by God.
  3. He led the people of Israel in several successful military campaigns against the Canaanite peoples.
  4. He divided the promised land among the tribes of Israel, as God instructed him.
  5. He made the alliance with the Gibeonites, protecting them from destruction, despite having deceived the Israelites.
  6. He commanded the conquest of Ai, after correcting a previous strategic error, demonstrating his ability to learn from mistakes.
  7. He conquered several other cities and territories in the promised land, establishing the presence and influence of the people of Israel.
  8. Cities of refuge were established to provide protection to those accused of manslaughter.
  9. He renewed the covenant between God and the people of Israel, calling an assembly in which the laws and commandments were reaffirmed.
  10. He served as an example of faith and devotion to God, encouraging the people to follow him and remain faithful to his alliance.
- Collect the inheritance of Moses;
  - Cross the Jordan River and conquer the land of Canaan
  - Around the ancient sanctuaries, stories are transmitted that exalt some episodes of the conquest of the land.
  - The first center of the Israelite confederation was the Sanctuary of Shechem, where the Ark of the Covenant was deposited, a symbol of the divine presence at the time of Sinai.
  - The nomadic tribes become sedentary, the Canaanite populations mix: they assimilate the language and culture.



# The 12 tribes of Israel

## The history

In a basic bullet point summary, God made a promise to Abraham that he would be the father of multitudes, and this promise was extended to his generation, Isaac and Jacob, despite the impossibilities of the woman being barren, the one who promised is faithful.

Jacob, after the episode in which he fights with the angel, and asks for a blessing, then the angel blesses Jacob and changes his name to Israel, which would later become a nation through his children, who would form the tribes of Israel.



The nation of Israel became known by the union or division of the 12 tribes, who would be the sons of Jacob, whose name was changed by God to Israel.

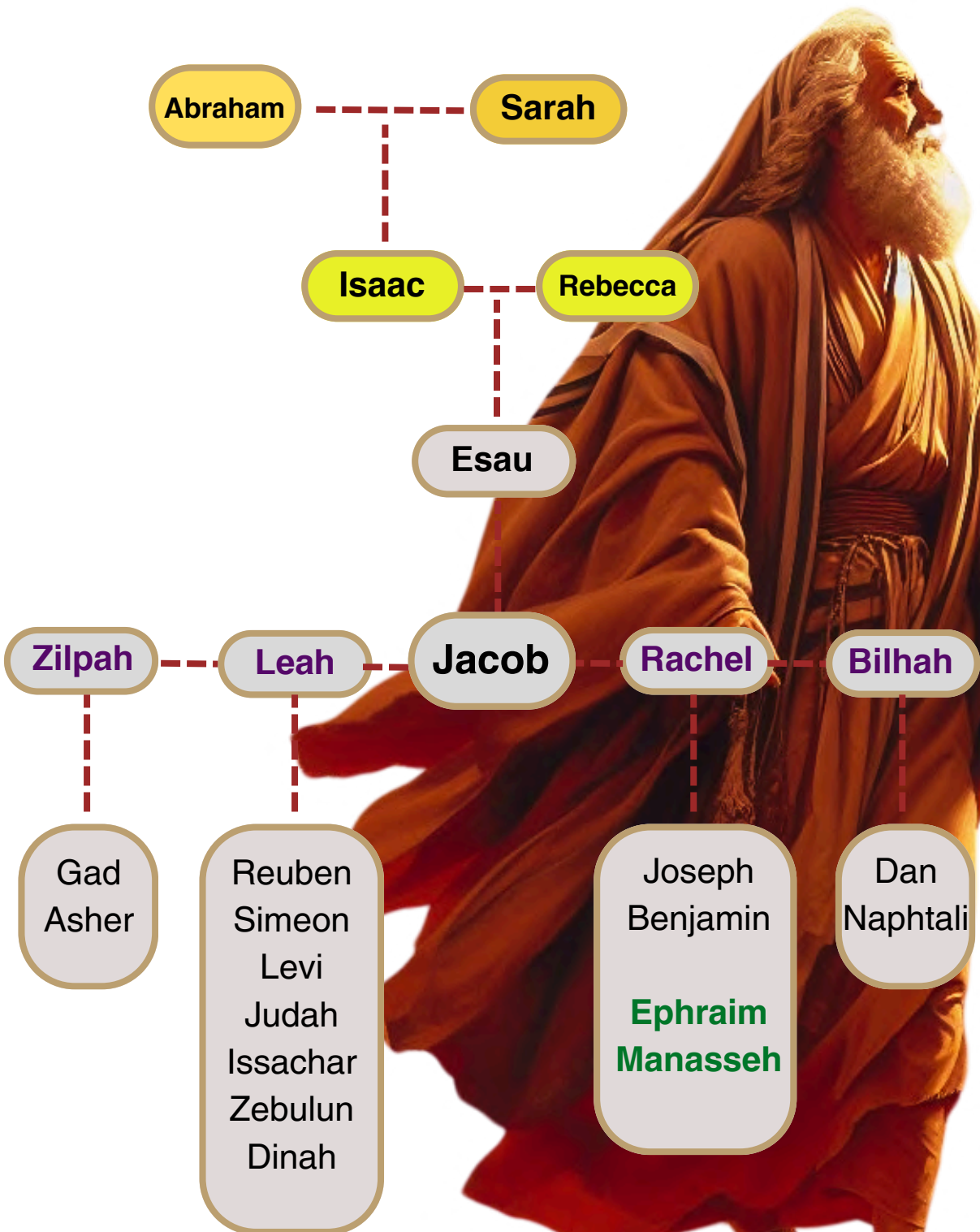
Before his death he gathers his children and then blesses their lives prophetically (Genesis 49:1,2).

We need to understand that not all of Jacob's children became tribes, like Dinah and Levi. And Joseph ended up “giving his place” to his sons: Benjamin and Ephraim.

Let's understand this:

# Genealogy of the Patriarchs

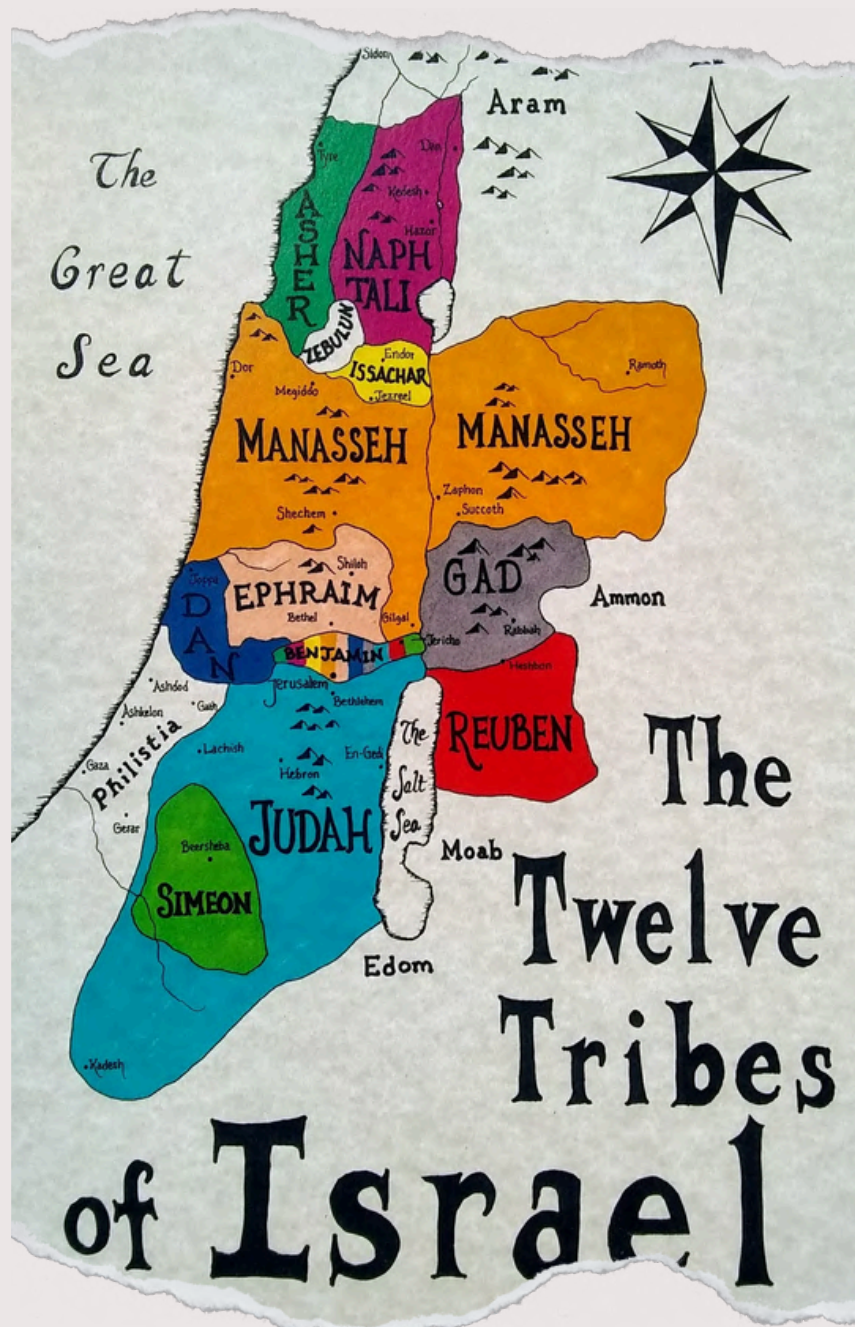
## The Sons of Jacob



## Why did this happened?

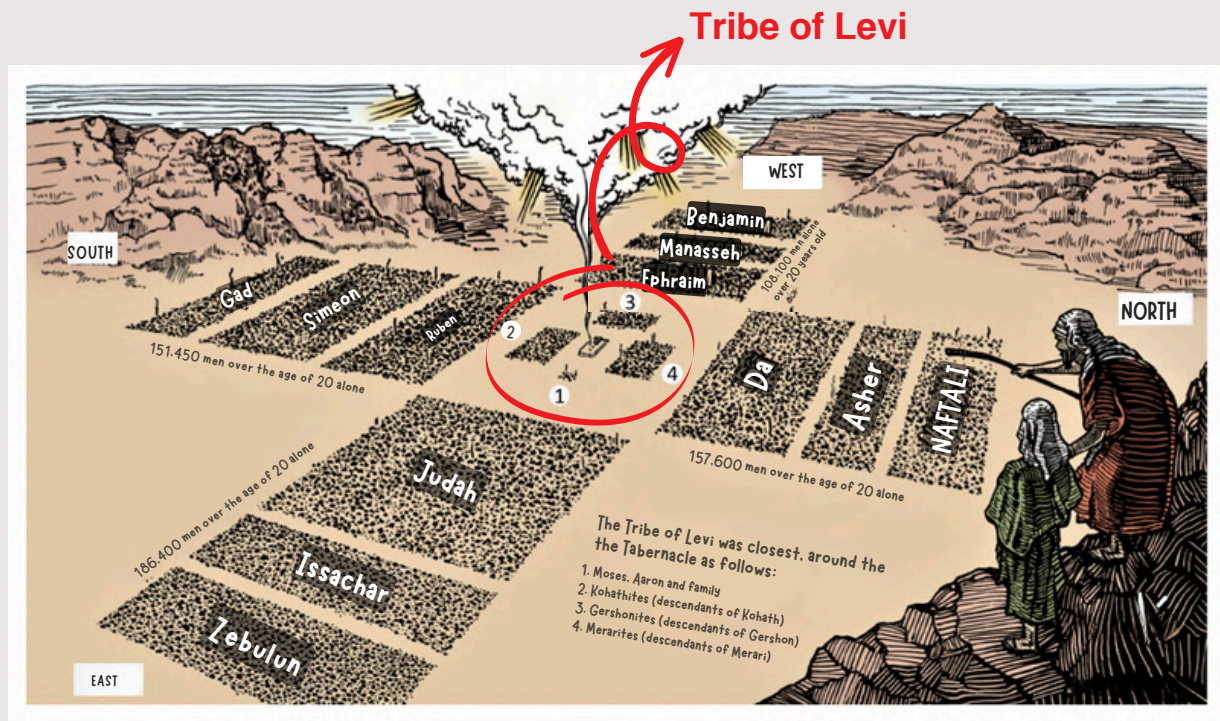
The Levites were determined by God himself, due to the care taken with the cult (Deuteronomy 18:1,2), they would not be a regional tribe, but they would gain some cities among the tribes.

Joseph's sons, Ephraim (younger) and Manasseh (older), were promised by their grandfather Israel that they would each be a great, strong, prosperous and powerful nation (Genesis 48:19,20). As a result, in the course of time, Joseph's generation was established with the names of his sons.



## The Distribution of the Tribes

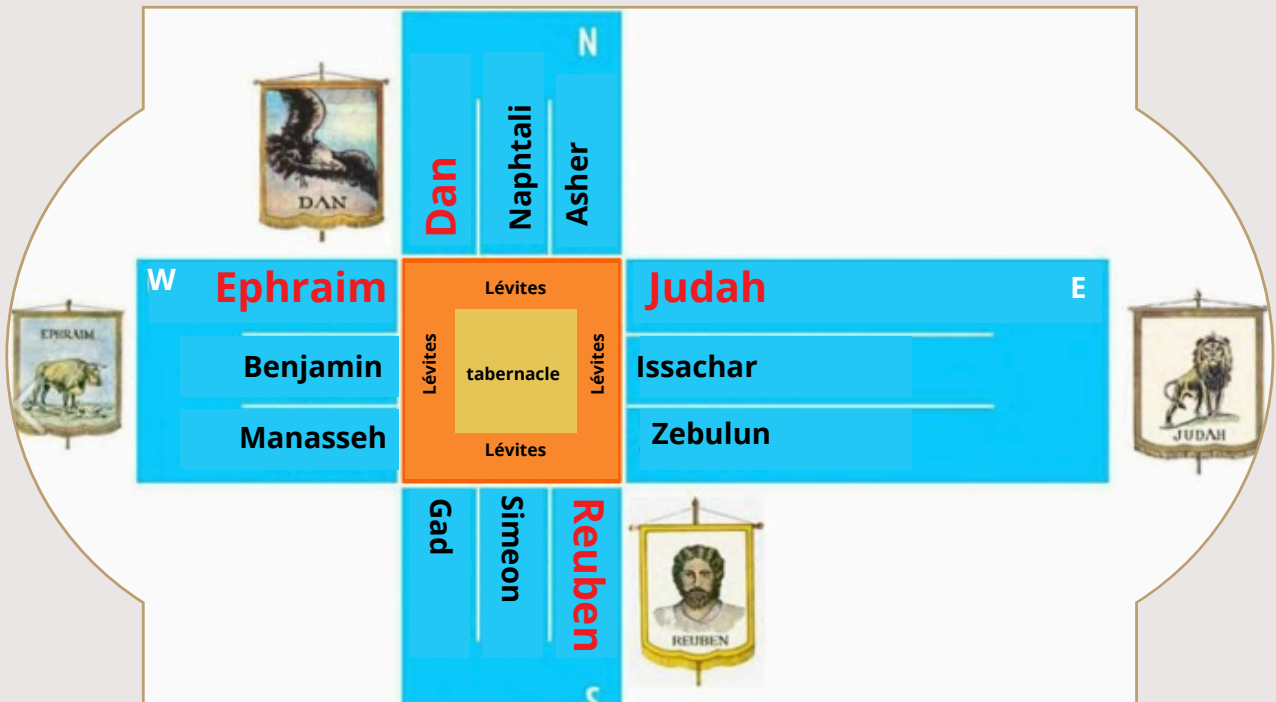
The 12 Tribes of Israel were to camp around the Tabernacle and organize themselves in groups of 3, which were called "camps."



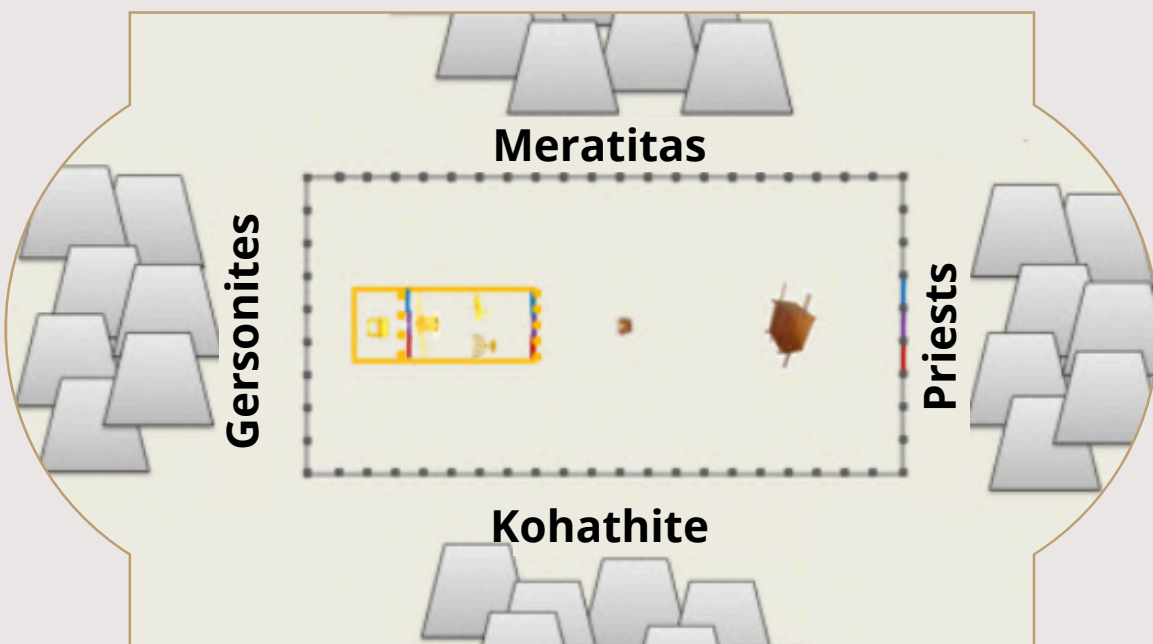
There were 4 main tribes: Judah, Ephraim, Dan and Reuben. The other tribes camped around the leading tribe.

All the tents in the wilderness camp of Israel were to have their doors facing the tabernacle.

The tribe of Levi, who were serving the Sanctuary and all sacred things, immediately camped around the Tabernacle.



The family of Moses and Aaron, the priests, were right at the entrance of the tabernacle, facing the tribe of Judah.



Family of Levites around the tabernacle, in front of the camp of the tribes.



## The 12 tribes of Israel

The 12 tribes of Israel, descendants of the sons of Jacob, formed the basis of the social, religious and territorial organization of the Israelite people. After the exodus from Egypt and the conquest of Canaan led by Joshua, the tribes received specific portions of land, according to God's promise to Abraham. Each tribe played unique roles, contributing to Israel's identity and history.

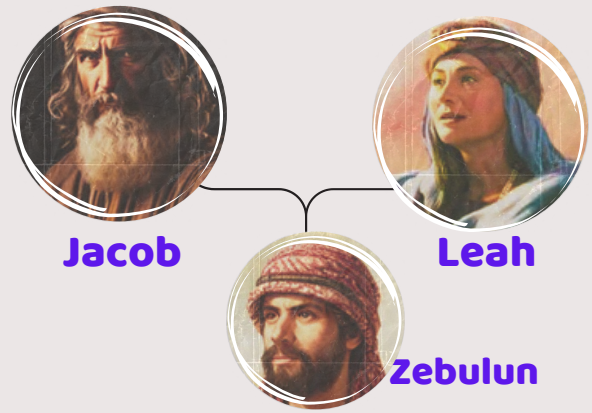
The division of the land represented the realization of divine promises and established the model of tribal organization in covenant with God. These tribes also had spiritual importance, pointing to God's faithfulness and the future of redemption in Christ.



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

## Zebulun

Great Gift



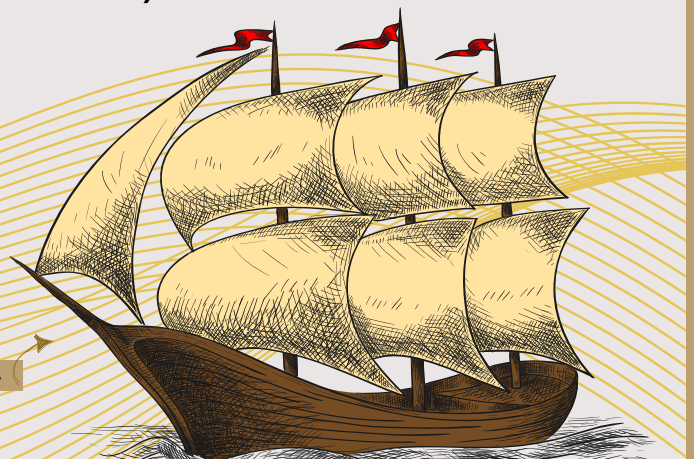
### Information:

Zebulun was one of the six tribes chosen to climb Mount Ebal and utter curses (Deuteronomy 27:13). Through these curses, the people promised God that they would stop doing certain things.

- The territory of Zebulun was in what later became known as Galilee, in the north of Israel.
- Moses' blessing on the tribe was that they would prosper in their foreign affairs with the Gentile nations (Deuteronomy 33:18-19).
- They took part in the battles led by Deborah and Barak, and fought bravely (Judges 4:6; 5:18).
- The judge Elon was a Zebulunite (Judg 12:11). During the years of his reign, Zebulun joined David in Hebron to hand over Saul's kingdom to David (1 Chronicles 12:33, 40).

**X** *He didn't drive out the Canaanites*

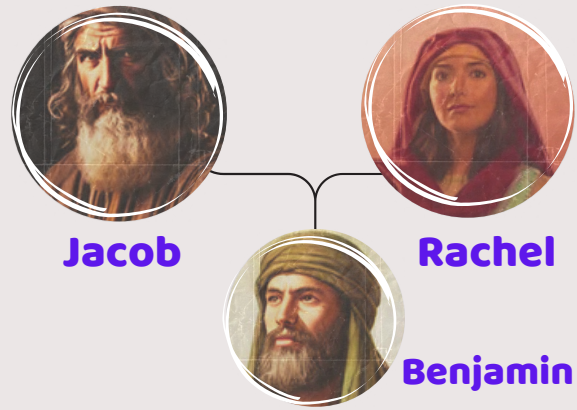
...who lived in Kitron and Nahalol, although he subjected them to forced labor (Judges 1:30). This was an incomplete obedience to God's clear command to expel all the inhabitants of the land (Numbers 33:52).



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

## Benjamin

My right son



## Information:

Great figures came from the tribe of Benjamin, despite being the smallest of the twelve tribes (1 Samuel 9:21). First, Ehud, a great warrior who freed Israel from Moab (Judges 3:12-30). Later, Saul became Israel's first king (1 Samuel 9:15-27). In later Jewish history, when many Jews lived in Persia, God used Mordecai and Esther from the tribe of Benjamin to deliver the Jews from death (Esther 2:5-7). Finally, in the New Testament, the apostle Paul states that he also came from Benjamin.

- Benjamin confronted the other 11 tribes and a civil war broke out. This period had a reputation for everyone doing what seemed right in their own eyes (Judg 21:25). What led to the war was the horrific abuse and death of the unidentified concubine of a Levite (Judg 19). Benjamin refused to hand over the culprits.



*Judge Éude was from Benjamin*

**“Benjamin is a wolf that tears: in the morning he devours the prey, and in the evening he divides the spoil” (Genesis 49:27).**

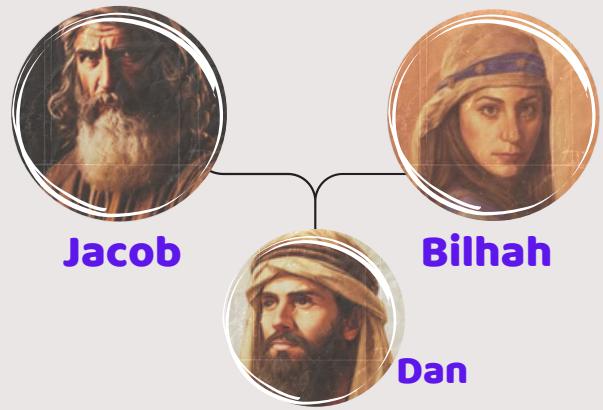


Tribal Symbol.



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

**Dan**  
Justice



## Information:

They didn't like the territory they had, so they sent spies to find a better place. In the north, some representatives of Dan found an area where a group of peaceful people lived. The tribe of Dan took it upon themselves to destroy the inhabitants of that land in order to move the whole tribe to a region near the sources of the River Jordan, south of present-day Lebanon. There they established their main city and called it Dan.



*Last tribe to receive land*



The people of Dan remained in the northern kingdom of Israel when the kingdom was divided! King Jeroboam feared that those who lived in his northern kingdom would continue to go to the southern kingdom to worship in Jerusalem. So he built +2 altars for the people to worship at, Bethel and in the north at Dan.

The tribe of Dan received a smaller piece of land than the others, but it was fertile and also had a border along the Mediterranean Sea, where they could fish and trade.

***Dan will judge his people like one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way side, an adder by the path, biting the horse's heels, and causing his rider to fall backward."***

*Genesis 49:16-17*

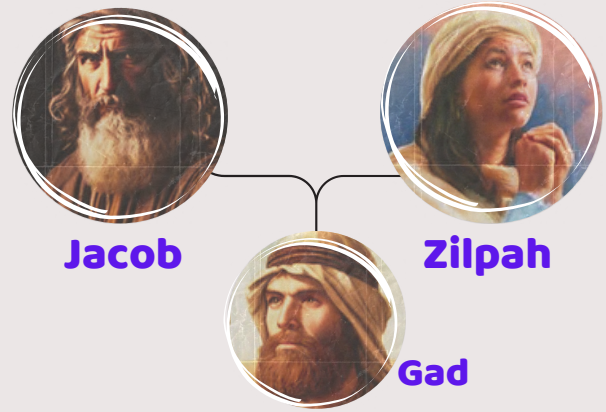


Tribal Symbol.



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

**Gad**  
Luck



## Information:

The tribe of Gad was one of the three (Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh were the others) who fought for and obtained land east of the Jordan River, at the gateway to the promised land (Joshua 12:6; 13:8-13). But Moses and they came to an agreement: “We will not return to our house until the children of Israel are each in possession of their inheritance. For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan or further on, because we have our inheritance on this side of the Jordan to the east.”

- The tribes were faithful to their commitment (Joshua 22:1-6). When they returned to their land, they built an altar. The other Israelites came out against them, thinking they were rebelling against the Lord. But it was only a memorial to remember God!
- The tribe of Gad was known for its bravery and military skills. They were described as “courageous warriors, ready for combat, and able to fight with shield and spear. They had the bravery of a lion and were agile like gazelles on the hills” (1 Chronicles 12:8; 5:19-22). This reputation made them essential in battles to protect Israel.



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

## Reuben

The Lord answered my prayer



Jacob



Leah



Reuben

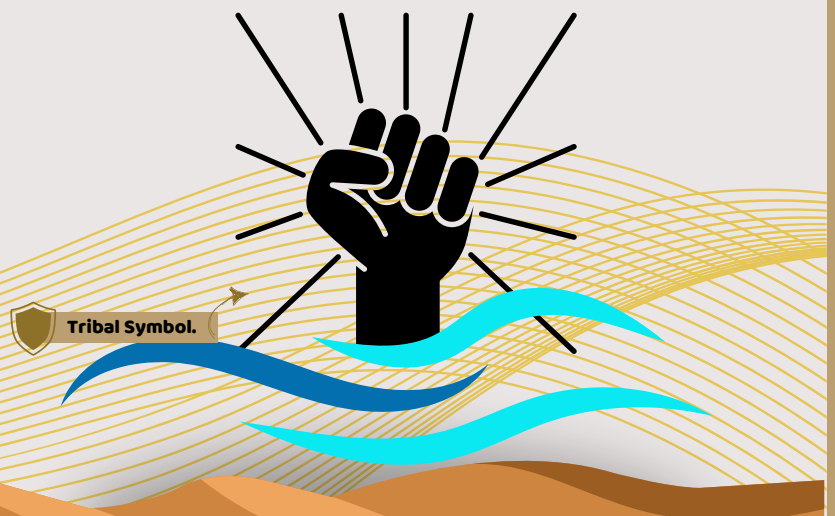
### Information:

Initially, the tribe of Reuben was organized into four main clans. When the people of Israel left Egypt, the tribe was led by Elizur (Numbers 1:5). At the time of the first count of the children of Israel during the pilgrimage, the tribe of Reuben numbered 46,500 warriors. Later, when the second count was made, the number of adult Reubenite men was reduced to 43,730 (Numbers 1:20,21; 26:7).

- In Moses' time, 3 Reubenites were part of Korah's revolt against the leadership of Moses and Aaron (Num 16:1-50). At least 2 of them, Dathan and Abiram, ended up dying with their families when the earth was opened up by God's judgment to swallow up the rebels (Num 16:27).
- They settled east of the Jordan. The condition for them to be able to inhabit that land was established through the commitment of the Reubenites to help the other tribes of Israel in the conquest of the western side of the territory of Canaan, on the other side of the Jordan.



*First-born of 12 children*



## The 12 Tribes of Israel:

# Naphtali

My Fight



Jacob



Bilhah



Naphtali

## Information:

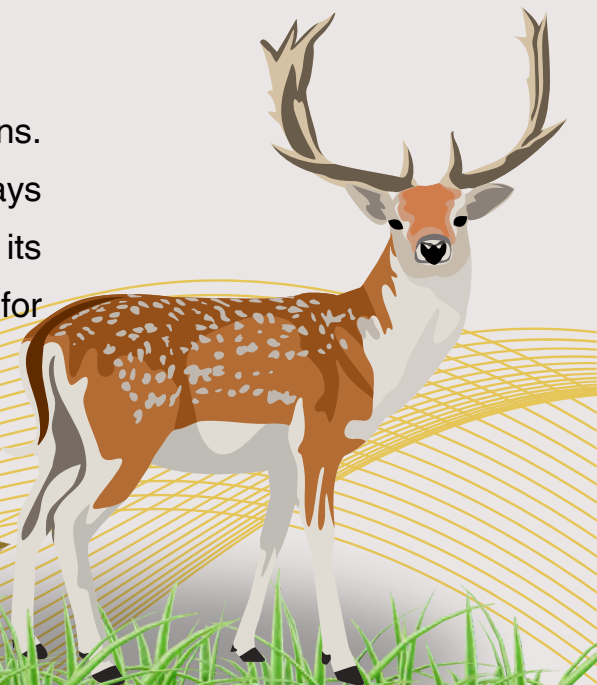
Naphtali was divided into four clans: the Jazeelites, the Gunites, the Jezerites and the Silemites, named after the sons of Naphtali (Num 26:48-49). Naphtali was born to Rachel's maid, Bilhah. When Naphtali was born, Rachel said: "I have competed with my sister in great struggles and I have prevailed" (Gen 30:8).

✗ He didn't drive out the Canaanites ✗

Naphtali did not expel the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath, living with the Canaanites in the land. However, he subjected them to forced labor (Judges 1:33).

*Barak was a Naphtalite.*

- He was chosen by God to lead a military force of 10,000 members of his tribe against the oppressors. But when it came time to act, Barak responded with fear, agreeing to fight against King Jabin's army only if the judge Deborah accompanied him.
- The tribe of Naphtali has had its ups and downs. Its history includes timid obedience and displays of cowardice, although it also includes its bravery under Gideon and devoted support for King David.



Tribal Symbol.

# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

## Judah

Thanking God



Jacob



Leah



Judah

## Information:

In the blessing that Jacob utters, he mentions a lion and a lion cub to represent the tribe of Judah. Judah was comparable to a young lion in strength, courage and vitality, and to a mature lion in that Judah's lineage contained people of national importance and royalty, including David and Solomon. Jacob gave Judah a blessing in which he told him that he would be a natural leader among his brothers and that Shiloh (Jesus Christ) would be his descendant (Gen. 49:10).

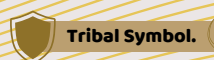
- After settling in Canaan, the tribe of Judah took the lead. Their greatest rival was the tribe of Ephraim. Moses blessed the tribe of Judah (Deut. 33:7). After Solomon's reign, this tribe became the kingdom of Judah.
- The inheritance of the tribe of Judah was at first a third of the entire country west of the Jordan, about 3700 square kilometers. But there was a second distribution, when Simeon received a portion of land from Judah (Joshua 19:9). What remained in Judah was still very large in proportion to the inheritance of the other tribes.



## Tribe of Jesus Christ

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the staff from his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs, and him the nations shall obey.”

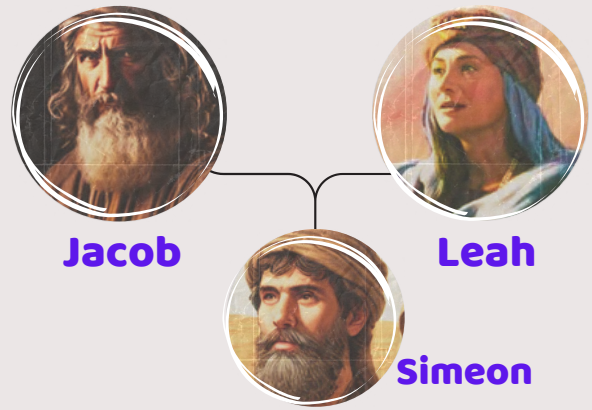
Genesis 49:10



## The 12 Tribes of Israel:

# Simeon

God heard my prayer




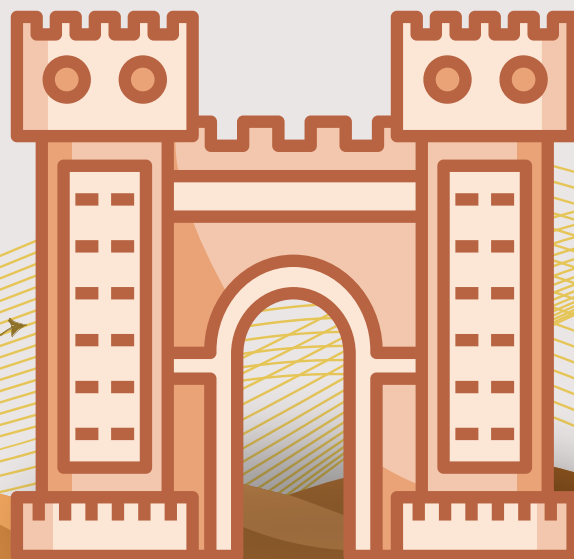
### Information:

Because of the massacre of Shechem, Simeon and Levi were punished by Jacob and their descendants were dispossessed. Simeon's anger was perverse, not because his indignation against sin was unjustified, but because his anger was marked by acts of ferocity and cruelty. Simeon's swords, which should only have been weapons of defense, were weapons of violence to harm others, not to save himself from evil.

 *The smallest and weakest*

- Jacob's words: "I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel" came true. The tribe of Simeon was the smallest and weakest of the tribes at the end of the wilderness wanderings, according to Moses' second census (Num 26:14), and the tribe of Simeon was not included in Moses' blessing (Deut 33:8).
- 
- Because of its size, the tribe of Simeon was forced to share territory with Judah, a larger and more powerful tribe (Joshua 19:1-9). Jacob did not exclude Simeon's descendants from any part of the promised inheritance, but divided and dispersed them.

 Tribal Symbol.



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

## Ephraim

God prospered me in the land of my affliction



Joseph



Asenath



Ephraim

### Information:

Ephraim was born in Egypt, the son of Asenath, Joseph's wife. Joseph called his second son "Ephraim" because "God has made me prosperous in the land of my affliction". When Jacob blessed his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh, he decided to bless the younger Ephraim first, despite Joseph's claims. In doing so, Jacob pointed out that Ephraim would be greater than Manasseh (Genesis 48:5-21).

- At the time of the judges, the Ephraimites were angry with Gideon because he had not initially asked for their help in fighting the Midianites. Gideon showed his kindness and exalted the tribe's willingness to serve the Lord, calming what could have become an unpleasant problem (Judg 8:2-3).
- Ephraim turns away from God and does evil things (Isaiah 28:1-3), but the tribe also recognizes the need to repent and obey by following the instructions of the prophet Oded (2 Chronicles 28:12).



*Self-centered" 'proud' tribe*



The tribe of Ephraim was considered "self-centered" and "proud" due to their constant search for recognition and prominence, as shown when they criticized Gideon for not including them initially in the fight against the Midianites (Judges 8:1). This behavior reflects their difficulty in accepting positions of lesser prominence.



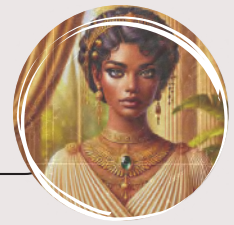
# As 12 Tribos de Israel:

## Manasseh

God made me forget all my work



Joseph



Asenath



Manasseh

### Information:

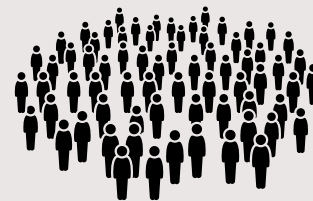
Manasseh is generally referred to as the “half tribe” of Manasseh. This denomination highlights the decision of some members of the tribe to live east of the Jordan River (Numbers 32:33; Joshua 13:29-31). They believed that Transjordan had the most suitable terrain for raising their flocks. The rest of the tribe settled west of the Jordan, in Canaan, following Joshua's order to enter and possess the Promised Land.

- The tribe of Manasseh and the tribe of Ephraim complained to Joshua because they wanted to receive more land - even though the territory they had received was very large. Among the cities of the tribe of Manasseh was also Golan, which was one of the cities of refuge (Joshua 20:8).
- In the time of the judges, the tribe of Manasseh produced men who marked the history of the people of Israel. On the west side, for example, the Bible highlights the story of Gideon (Judges 6:15). On the east side, the Bible mentions Jephthah (Judges 11:1). Both were judges in Israel.



*Very large tribe*

The tribe of Manasseh was numerous because, being divided into two groups (east and west of the Jordan), it had a large territory to graze and live in. This division highlighted their importance both in Transjordan and in Canaan.



Tribal Symbol.



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

## Asher

My happiness



Jacob

Zilpah

Asher

## Information:

In the time of Moses, Asher was divided into five clans: the Imnaites; the Ishvites; and the Beriaites; and, through Beriah, the Berite patriarch, two more clans: the Heberites and the Malchielites. The first three clans were named after the sons of Asher; the fourth and fifth after the sons of Beriah (Numbers 26:44-45). Asher was one of the six tribes chosen to stand on Mount Ebal and utter curses (Deuteronomy 27:13).

- Jacob said: “Asher, your bread shall be plentiful”. Later, Moses blessed the tribe: “Blessed be you among the sons of Jacob, please your brothers and bathe your feet in oil”. Washing the feet in oil was a symbol of prosperity; in Jacob's words, Asher would be “abundant”, indicating that he would have fertile land.
- At the time of Deborah and Barak, “Asher settled on the shores of the sea and rested in its bays” instead of joining the fight against Jabin, a Canaanite king (Judges 5:17). This lack of help for their fellow tribesmen may reflect a lack of trust in God, a lack of effort, fear of the enemy...

✗ *He didn't expel the Canaanites* ✗

The tribe of Asher did not expel the Canaanites from their land, but allowed them to remain among them, as mentioned in Judges 1:31-32. This coexistence brought challenges to their total obedience to God, jeopardizing their mission to conquer the Promised Land.

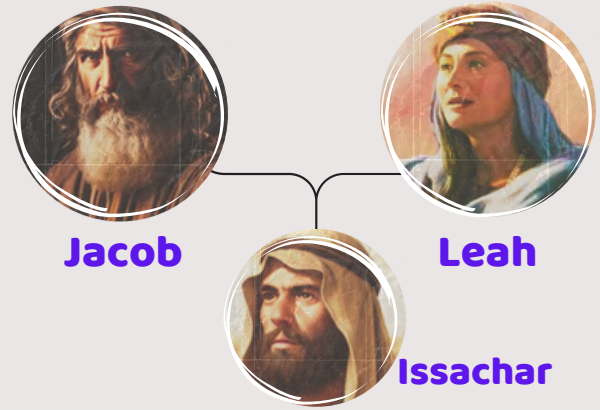
Tribal Symbol.



# The 12 Tribes of Israel:

## Issachar

God's reward



### Information:

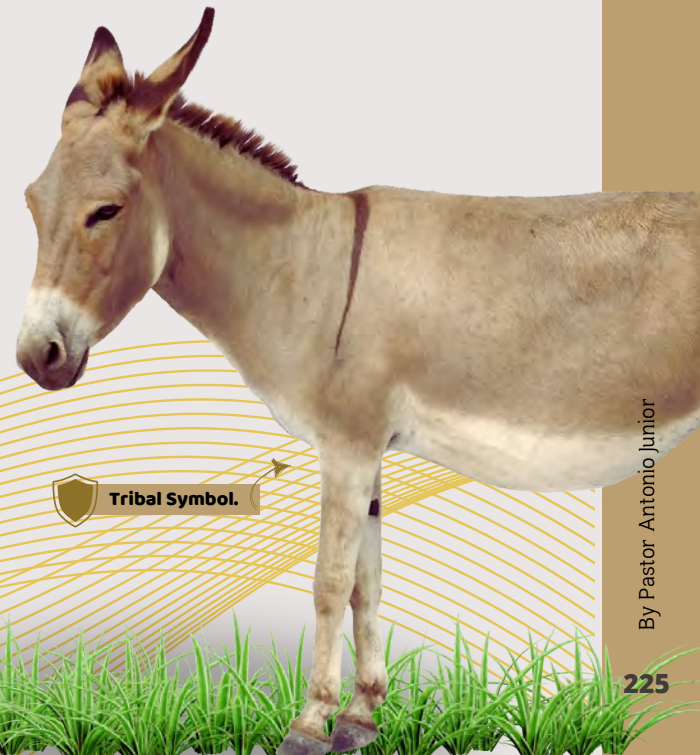
The tribe of Issachar was also one of the six appointed to attend the ceremony of cursing and blessing on Mount Gerizim (Deut 27:12). Despite the disastrous mortality at Peor, the tribe of Issachar increased rapidly during the march to the Land of Promise, because with fewer of its fighters at Sinai, it already numbered 145,600 in Joab's census (1 Chron. 7:2-5).

- Issachar is compared to a strong donkey carrying heavy loads. This symbolizes their strength and willingness to work hard. The tribe is attributed with a diligent and hard-working nature.
- Issachar was among those who supported the judge Barak in defeating the forces of Jabin under Sisera. (Judg 4:2; 5:15) Later, for 23 years, Tola, from the tribe of Issachar, was one of Israel's judges. (Judg 10:1, 2)



*Nazareth was in the inheritance of Issachar*

Nazareth, located in the region of Galilee, was within the inheritance of the tribe of Issachar, and is a significant area in the New Testament because it was the place where Jesus grew up. The geographical position of Nazareth, within the territory of Issachar, reinforces the historical and spiritual connection between the tribes and biblical events.



## Israel and the other nations

These neighboring nations have played different roles in Israel's history, from trade and diplomatic relations to military confrontations. The presence of these nations influenced the political, cultural, and religious development of Israel, and biblical accounts provide insight into these interactions and their consequences for the people of Israel.

- Canaanites
- Hittites
- Philistines
- Phoenicians
- Moabites
- Ammonites
- Edomites
- Midianites



**Canaanites** - The Canaanites were one of the main neighboring nations of Israel in Old Testament times. They inhabited the region of Canaan, a fertile land strategically located between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. The Canaanites were known for being a polytheistic people, who worshiped different deities in their religious cults. They built fortified cities, such as Jericho and Ai, and were considered a challenge to the Israelites as they occupied God's promised land. The conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, led by Joshua, marked an important part of biblical history and the fulfillment of God's promises to his people.

**Hittites** - The Hittites were an ancient civilization that existed in the region of Anatolia in what is now Turkey. They were one of Israel's neighboring nations in Old Testament times.

The Hittites were known for their powerful empire and their skill in war and diplomacy. They developed an advanced society and left a significant legacy in terms of laws, treaties and architecture. The Hittites were mentioned in several biblical accounts, such as Esau's marriage to Hittite women. His influence on the political and cultural scene of the region was notable during the Old Testament period.

**Philistines** - The Philistines were one of the main enemies of Israel in the Old Testament era. They were a warrior people who inhabited the coastal strip of the region that today corresponds to the Gaza Strip and part of the southwest coast of Israel. The Philistines were known for their military strength and for having fortified cities, such as Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron.

They were a major obstacle for the Israelites and engaged in frequent conflicts with them. The Philistines also had a distinct culture and religion and worshiped their own gods, such as Dagon. Gideon, Samson, and David are some of the biblical characters who had notable encounters with the Philistines.

**Phoenicians** - The Phoenicians were an ancient Semitic civilization that settled in the coastal region of the Levant, where Lebanon is currently located, between the 15th and 6th centuries BC. They stood out for their skill in navigation and maritime trade.

The Phoenicians established colonies throughout the Mediterranean, achieving considerable influence and economic prosperity.

They were master shipbuilders and developed a reputation as expert traders, exploring trade routes that stretched from Europe to Africa and the Middle East. The city of Tyre, especially, was one of the main Phoenician cities and an important commercial center.

The Phoenicians were also known for their talent in producing goods such as fine textiles, glass, ceramics, and precious metals. They played an important role in the international trade and cultural development of the region, being frequently mentioned in biblical accounts, both as trading partners and as opponents of the Israelites.

**Moabites** - The Moabites were a people who inhabited the mountainous region east of the Jordan River, in the area known as Moab, during the time of the Old Testament. They were descendants of Moab, son of Lot, nephew of Abraham. The Moabites were a neighboring nation of Israel and were often involved in political relations and conflicts with the Israelites. They had a distinct culture and religion and worshiped pagan deities, such as Chemosh.

At times, the Moabites were enemies of Israel, while at other times there were alliances and mixed marriages between both peoples. An important figure in biblical history related to the Moabites is Ruth, a Moabite who became part of the royal line of Israel and ancestor of King David. The Moabites are mentioned in several Old Testament stories and prophecies and play an important role in Israel's interaction with its neighbors.

**Ammonites** - The Ammonites were a people who inhabited the mountainous region east of the Jordan River, in the area known as Ammon, during the time of the Old Testament. They were descendants of Ammon, son of Lot, nephew of Abraham.

The Ammonites were a neighboring nation of Israel and had frequent interactions with the Israelites throughout biblical history. Like the Moabites, the Ammonites also had a distinct culture and religion, and worshiped pagan deities such as Milcom or Molech. On several occasions, the Ammonites were in conflict with Israel, seeking to conquer territories or harm God's people.

However, there were also periods of peace and alliance between both peoples. Biblical figures such as Jephthah and Rabshakeh had important encounters with the Ammonites. The Ammonites are mentioned in several passages of the Old Testament, revealing their importance in the political relations and conflicts of the time.

**Edomites** - The Edomites were a people who inhabited the mountainous region of Edom, southeast of Israel, during the time of the Old Testament. They were descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother, and were related to the Israelites.

The Edomites established their own kingdom with the city of Petra as its capital. They were known for their skills as traders and also for their military strength.

The Edomites were frequently involved in conflicts and territorial disputes with the Israelites throughout biblical history. Despite their kinship relationship, the Edomites did not show support or solidarity with the Israelites on several occasions, including during the exodus from Egypt.

The prophet Obadiah delivered a message of judgment against Edom because of its hostility and pride. The Edomites are mentioned in several Old Testament stories and prophecies, highlighting the importance of their interaction with the people of Israel at that time.

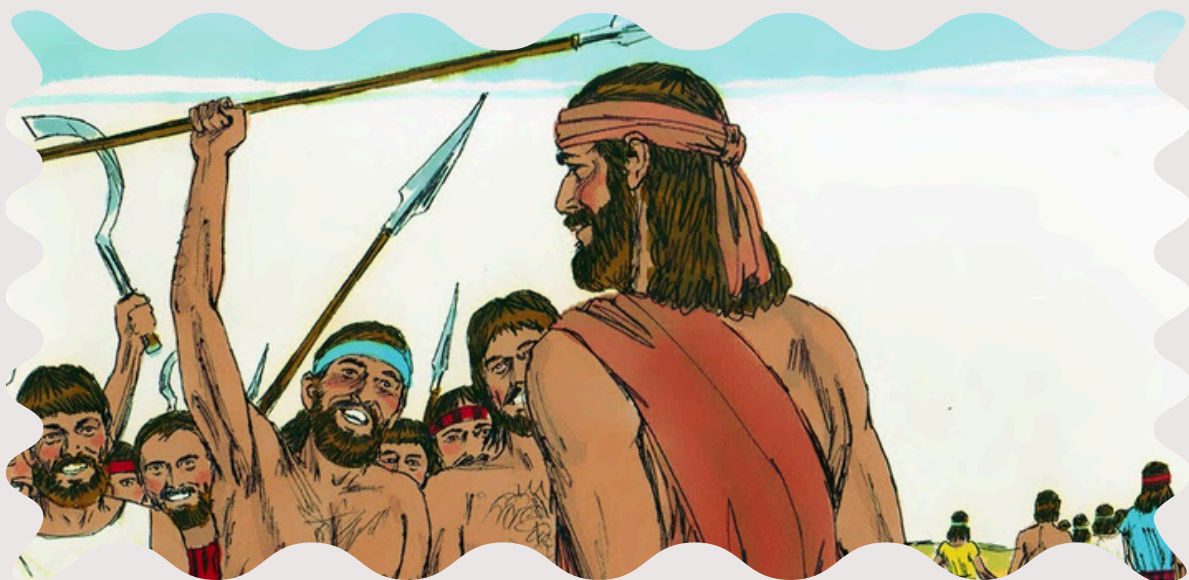
**Midianites** - The Midianites were a people who inhabited the region of Midian, located primarily in the northwest region of the Arabian Peninsula, during the time of the Old Testament.

They were descendants of Midian, son of Abraham by his second wife, Keturah. The Midianites were known for their commercial activities and herding of flocks.

They had significant interaction with the Israelites at various points in biblical history. The Midianites were mentioned in the story of Moses when he took refuge in Midian after fleeing Egypt.

Later, the Midianites became involved in conflicts with the Israelites during their wanderings in the desert. They were defeated by Gideon and the Israelite armies as a result of their idolatrous practices and hostility.

The Midianites are mentioned in several Old Testament narratives and prophecies, showing their role in the relationship between the Israelites and neighboring peoples.



## Main Canaanite Gods

| Main Canaanite gods |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>El</b>           | A very ancient god in Canaanite culture, without iconography or rituals, creator of the world.   |
| <b>Baal</b>         | Generic name for the god of mountains, storms and rain. Locally, a second name was added, such as Baal Mel-cart (in the case of Tyre), or Baal Ugarit (in Ugarit). |
| <b>Baalat</b>       | Also called Astarte, Ashtaroth or Asherah. She was the wife of Baal, goddess of nature's reproductive principle.   |
| <b>Eshmun</b>       | God of fertility, harvests, health and medicine.   |
| <b>Reshef</b>       | God of lightning and light.  |
| <b>Dagom</b>        | Philistine god of grain.   |
| <b>Moloque</b>      | God of Amon, devouring fire.   |
| <b>Mamom</b>        | The Aramaic god of wealth.   |
| <b>Camos</b>        | God of Moab, represented by a black star.  |

Virtually all cults of the Canaanite gods involve human sacrifice, which is a peculiar feature.

The only deity that had no ritual worship or sacrifice was the belief in Him, precisely the one whom Abraham identified as equal to his God and whose name was added to the Hebrew in El-Shaddai, El-Elyon (name that Melchizedek gave to God) and others.



## What is the difference between Hebrew, Israelite and Jew?

In fact, all three terms correspond to the same people. Hebrews, Israelites and Jews are names given to the people described in the Bible as “God's chosen people” or even in some passages “God's people.”

Although the terms "Hebrew," "Israelite," and "Jew" refer to the people of the Old Testament and share some similarities, they have distinct historical and cultural differences.

### Hebrew

(עִבְרִי, in Hebrew) - The first time in the books of Moses (Torah, for Jews; Pentateuch, for Christians) that the term “Hebrew” appears is in the book of Genesis 14:13, referring, exactly, to the father of this people, Abraham: Then one who had escaped came and said to Abram, the Hebrew; He dwelt by the oak of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; They were Abram's accomplices.

Although Jewish tradition offers at least two currents to explain the name, let us consider the one that is most accepted by most theologians. It refers to the descendants of Heber (חֵבֶר, in Hebrew).

Chapter 10 of Genesis tells of Noah's descendants and the nations that were formed from them. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth, in addition to others who were born after the flood. Heber was one of the great-great-grandsons of Shem, son of Noah. Eber's name is important because, according to Jewish tradition, it was thanks to him that the language they spoke was preserved by God.

According to Jewish tradition, Heber refused to participate in the construction of the Tower of Babel and, therefore, the Hebrew language was preserved and was named in honor of Heber, and in this way, it also gave its name to the people who spoke. Hebrew, the Hebrew people.

Thus, we can say that “Hebrew”, from an etymological perspective, comes from Heber. Regarding the group of people, we can say that the “Hebrews” are the people who descend from Shem, son of Noah, that is, they are the Semitic people.

## Israelite

The term "Israelite" refers to the descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel, who were descendants of Jacob (also known as Israel). After leaving Egypt and conquering the Promised Land, these tribes formed the Kingdom of Israel.

The term "Israelite" is used to refer to this people in their national and historical identity. According to the Tanakh (Jewish scriptures), Isaac was the only son of Abraham and Sarah. Isaac, in turn, had two sons with Rebekah, Jacob and Esau.

While the descendants of Esau formed the Edomites, the descendants of Jacob generated the Israelites (Remembering that Jacob's name was changed to Israel).

## Jew

The term “Jew” is related to the Kingdom of Judah, which arose after the division of the Kingdom of Israel in two, in the 10th century BC. The inhabitants of the Kingdom of Judah were known as Jews.

Over time, the term “Jew” came to be used to refer to all descendants of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, as well as those who profess the Jewish religion.

The term "Jew" refers to people from the 12 tribes. Let's see why this is so. As we see in the book of Esther, this tribe was predominant during the period that preceded the return of that people to the promised land, as well as during the first years of this return, according to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. – The fact that justifies the widespread use of the term Jew is that there was a predominance of the tribe of Judah in this period, so all the people of the twelve tribes were called Jews.

Although the first appearances of the name “Jew” in many Scripture translations occur only in the books of 2 Kings 16:6 and 2 Kings 25:25, in Hebrew the most appropriate translation would be “men of Judah.” Only in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther can we say that this term is actually used in the sense of people of the twelve tribes.

**In summary, "Hebrew" refers to the Semitic people descended from Abraham, "Israelite" refers to the descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel, and "Jew" refers to the descendants of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, and also to the followers of the Jewish religion.**

**It is important to note that these terms are not mutually exclusive, as an individual can be considered a Hebrew, an Israelite, and a Jew at the same time, depending on the historical and religious context.**

## Judges Period

**1200 BC – after Joshua, the people have judges as leaders: God-fearing men and women who continued the project of social equality inaugurated in the exodus.**

Judges played a crucial role in the history of Israel during the period shortly after the conquest of the Promised Land, recorded in the book of the same name in the Old Testament.

They were charismatic and military leaders that God raised up to free the people of Israel from the oppression of neighboring nations. Judges performed judicial, administrative and military functions, guiding the people and enforcing justice.

They were chosen by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to perform specific tasks. Although not all of the judges were examples of righteousness, their intermittent leadership provided periods of peace and restoration for Israel, paving the way for the monarchy that would come later.

### The Literature of this Time

- The letter reports from the Canaanite kings to Pharaoh, known as the Amarna letters;
- Book of Yahweh's Wars (Num 21:14) – recorded the route of the exodus;
- Book of the just (Js 10:13-14; 2 Sam 1:18) – collection of epic poems that narrate events related to the exodus and conquest of the land.

## The Period of the Judges 1200-1000 BC

- From 1250 BC. C., the New Egyptian Empire entered a crisis from which it would never emerge.
- Invaded by sea people, Egypt will never again be a great power in the Fertile Crescent.
- This void of a power dominating the Middle East allowed the emergence of a series of small independent kingdoms.
- Tribal traditions – preserved by storytellers. For example: the hymn of Miriam's liberation (Ex 15,21), the Song of the well (Num 21,17-18), the story of the emergence of the neighboring towns (Gn 19,30-38).
- All states of that time reproduced a certain sociopolitical model: centralized monarchies, where the rural population was dominated from a city.
- The king was at the same time commander and chief of the armed forces, supreme judge, supreme legislator and high priest of religion.
- The city concentrated all powers. Through the palace, the king ensured the collection of fees, taxes, tolls and tributes.
- The temples attracted believers to the religion of domination, fleecing them with offerings and tributes.
- All power was concentrated in the hands of the king, leadership for life.

# Kings in the Kingdoms and Israel and its Tribal Culture

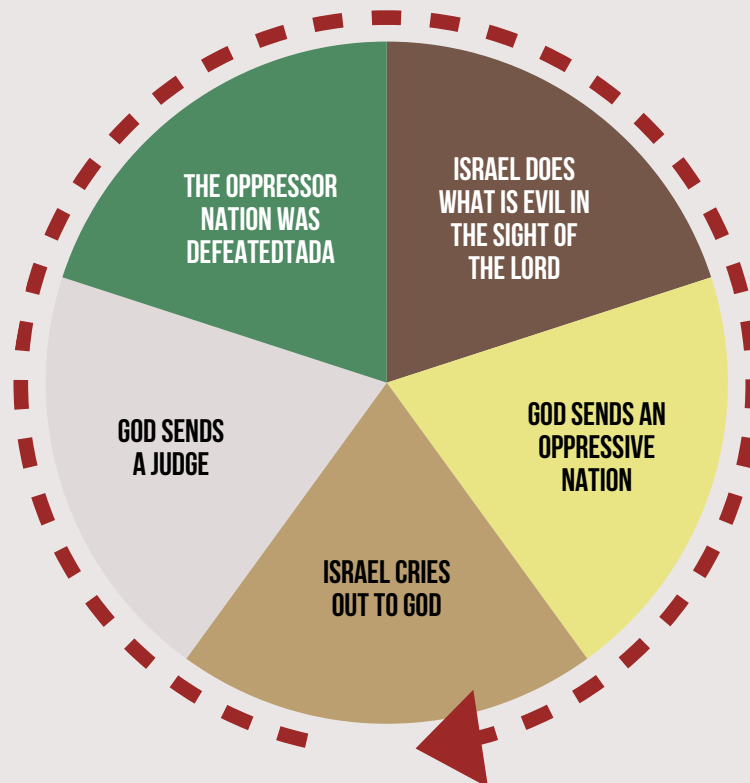
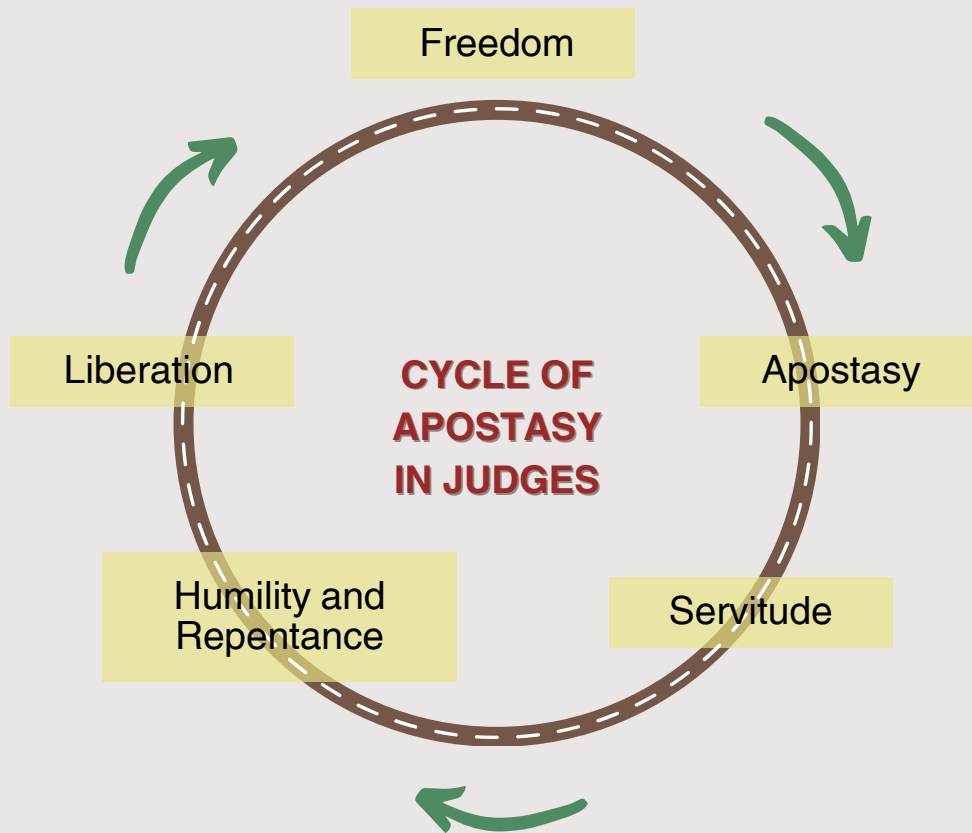
- In the midst of all these nations, Israel appears with an opposite organization: a network of tribes, a decentralized confederacy – governed by a judge, a temporary leadership.
- A new type of society emerges.
- Israel finds makeshift leaders who exercise some authority over a group of tribes. They are the judges.
- Over a period of two hundred years, Israel managed to overcome all challenges and maintain its participatory and decentralized social project.



## Judges and their areas. cities where they work.

- Otniel (3.9)
- Ehud (3.15)
- Chamgar (3.31)
- Deborah and Barak (4.4,6)
- Gideon (6.11)
- Abmeleque (9.1)
- Tola (10.1)
- Jair (10.3)
- Jephté (11.1)
- Ibsan (12.8)
- Elon (12.11)
- Abdon (12.13)
- Samson (13.2,24)

# The Cycle of Judges



| JUDGES   | TRIBE    | YEARS IN CHARGE | OPPRESSIVE PEOPLE | YEARS OF OPPRESSION | BIBLICAL EXT  |
|----------|----------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Othniel  | Judah    | 40              | Arameans          | 8                   | Judg 3:7-11   |
| Ehud     | Benjamim | 80              | Moabites          | 18                  | Judg 3:12-30  |
| Sangar   |          |                 | Philistines       |                     | Judg 3:31     |
| Deborah  | Ephraim  | 40              | Canaanites        | 20                  | Judg 4-5      |
| Gideon   | Manasseh | 40              | Midianites        | 7                   | Judg 6-8      |
| Tola     | Issachar | 23              |                   |                     | Judg 10:1-2   |
| Jair     | Manasseh | 22              |                   |                     | Judg10:3-5    |
| Jephthah | Manasseh | 6               | Ammonites         | 18                  | Judg10:6-12:7 |
| Ibsá     | Judah    | 7               |                   |                     | Judg 12:8-10  |
| Elom     | Zebulun  | 10              |                   |                     | Judg 12:11-12 |
| Abdom    | Ephraim  | 8               |                   |                     | Judg12:13-15  |
| Samson   | Dan      | 20              | Philistines       | 40                  | Judg 13-16    |
| Samuel   | Levi     | 12              |                   |                     |               |

- Othniel: He conquered a Canaanite city.
- Ehud: killed Eglon king of Moab and defeated the Moabites.
- Shamgar: Killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad.
- Deborah: Convinced Barak to lead an army in victory against Sisera's troops.
- Gideon: Led 300 men in victory against 135,000 Midianites.
- Tola: Judged for 23 years.



- Jair: He judged for 22 years.
- Jephthah: Defeated the Ammonites after making a vow to the Lord.
- Ibsa: Judged for 7 years.
- Elom: Tried for 10 years.
- Abdom: Judged for 8 years.
- Samson: Killed 1,000 Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey, was deceived by Delilah, destroyed a Philistine temple, sentenced to 20 years.
- Samuel: He was the last of the judges and the first of the prophets.

## The literature of this time

- The narratives record the memory of the judges' actions. This type of literature is called SAGA.
- It is a collective memory and a tribal memory, which remembers the exploits of a certain character.
- Most of these sagas are in the book of Judges.
- These sagas served as the basis for the first book of Samuel.
- Probably at this time we also have some stories remembering the patriarchs.



# THE MONARCHY

*"Choose for us a king  
that he may rule over us, as in  
all nations."*

*(1 Sm 8,5)*



## The Monarchy

1030 BC the influence of foreign nations causes the people to demand a king and allow themselves to be carried away by the seductions of economic power and military force, the one who reigned over Israel, Yahweh, loses his place for human self-sufficiency. Israel leaves. Their tribal experience and their fraternal movement retreat and enter the paths of monarchy, centralization, absolute power.



**“ Asking for a king was our greatest sin”  
(1Sm 12,19).**

## The Monarchy

### 1000-582 a.C.

- The rise of the monarchy was considered by biblical authors to be a crucial moment in the life of God's people.
- This process developed over a period of about fifty years, between 1050-1000 BC, and goes from the taking of the Sanctuary of Shiloh by the Philistines to the conquest of Jerusalem by David.
- This historical moment is recounted in the First Book of Samuel.

## SAUL

### 1030-1010 a.C

**He began his career as a liberating judge. It was he who commanded the popular army of Israel against the Ammonites who threatened the region of Gilead (1 Sam 11:1). He was the first king of the tribe of Benjamin.**

- Organize a standing army of three thousand men (1 Sam 13:2).
- He leads some tribes in the North.
- He had some authority over the tribes of Judah and Simeon (1 Samuel 15:7).
- To create bureaucracy, he chose the small city of Gibeah of Benjamin as his capital.
- He begins to delegate powers to direct assistants, starting a royal court.
- Abner, Saul's cousin, is appointed commander of the army (1 Samuel 14:52).
- He faced strong internal opposition, which greatly weakened his reign.
- He cannot win the support of large cities nor the support of the clergy of tribal shrines.
- He ruled for approximately twenty years.
- He dies in the battle of the mountains of Gelboé (1Sm 31), his son, Ishbaal, reigns over the tribes of Israel for more than seven years (2Sm 2,8).



## Breakup of the Project and Prophetic Announcements

**The beginning of the monarchy is turbulent. But God still teaches that all power is given to be returned in the form of service.**

**1000 BC – God chooses David; a humble young man.**

His goal is to reign with justice and equality. David manages to unify all the people, expand the territory and make Jerusalem the political and religious center of his entire kingdom.

He brings the ark of the covenant to this city and begins the construction of the Temple, to be a place of worship for IAWA.

## DAVID'S THRONE 1010-970 a.C

David was the second king of Israel and is known as one of the most prominent leaders of the Old Testament. He was born in Bethlehem and was anointed king by Samuel, succeeding Saul.



**“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. Great will be his dominion and peace will have no end, on the throne of David.”**

**(Is. 9,5)**

David is known for his courage, faith, and skill as a warrior. He defeated the giant Goliath and gained notoriety as a military leader.

- He conquered Jerusalem and made it the capital of his kingdom (1000 BC).
- The Philistines' threat to the territory is finally successful.
- He transported the Ark of the Covenant to establish the sanctuary of the tribes.
- The splendor period of his kingdom begins.
- He made the city a religious center, accumulating civil and religious power in his person.
- Successively defeat all enemies and impose tribute on them.
- Israel becomes the center of a small empire.
- David ruled Israel for approximately 40 years and established Jerusalem as the capital of the unified kingdom.
- He expanded the borders of the kingdom, conquered territories and established the nation as a regional power.
- In addition to his military skills, David is also remembered for being a talented musician and psalmist, who composed many of the Psalms found in the Bible.
- Although David made mistakes and faced challenges during his reign, he is considered a just king and is loved by the people.
- God made a covenant with David, promising that his throne would be established forever through a descendant. This promise is one of the bases of the messianic expectation in the Old Testament.
- David's career is an example of a leader who sought God and was used by Him to guide and bless the people of Israel.
- But, like any human being, David gives in to temptation and uses his power to benefit his personal whims. However, his sensitivity towards GOD makes him a Just King and upon whom will come Israel's future hopes for the restoration of justice and peace. The expected Messiah must come from the stock of Jesse, from the lineage of David.

## Solomon

970-931 a.C.

David's heir is Solomon. And, more than his father, he makes illicit alliances with neighboring nations and is inspired by his economic policies.



The state machinery becomes so heavy that it is no longer the king who serves the people, but the people who serve the king. Solomon stops being a servant and becomes as oppressive as Pharaoh was.

A great achievement of Solomon was the hiring of scribes, wise men in charge of telling the history of the people and putting it in writing.

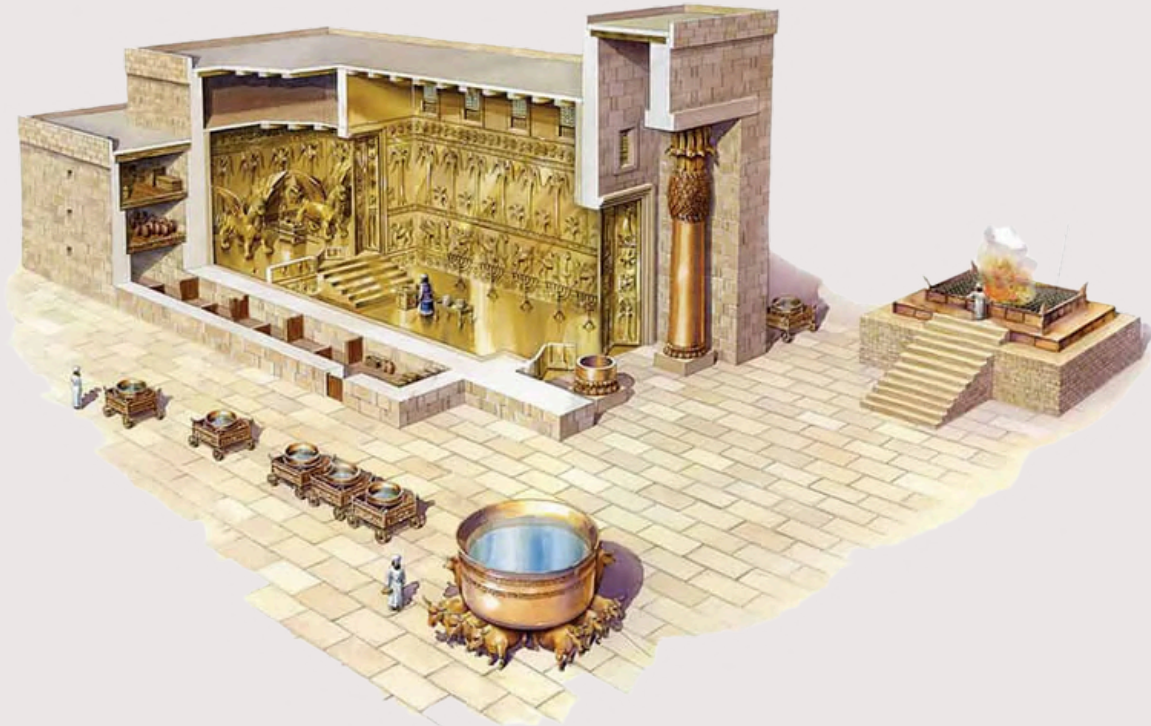


- Strongly centralized administration (the territory is divided into 12 prefectures)
- He built the magnificent Temple in Jerusalem and also the royal palace.
- There were also buildings outside Jerusalem, fortress cities, such as **HAZOR** and **MEGIDO** and **GEZER**.
- It favored the cultural growth of Israel.
- He is not a military conqueror like his father David.

## The territory of Israel (Saul, David, Solomon)



# Solomon's Temple



Both the Tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon were important sacred structures in the history of Israel. The Tabernacle was built during the pilgrimage of the people of Israel through the desert, while the Temple of Solomon was built in Jerusalem after the conquest of the promised land.

The Tabernacle was a mobile structure composed of tents and curtains, designed to be dismantled and transported during the travels of the people of Israel. It was divided into several parts, including the outer court, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place, where the Ark of the Covenant was located.

The Tabernacle symbolized the presence of God among the people and was the place where rituals and sacrifices were performed.

Solomon's Temple was a permanent structure, built with noble materials and architectural magnificence. It was a fixed place of worship in Jerusalem and replaced the Tabernacle as the central place of worship.

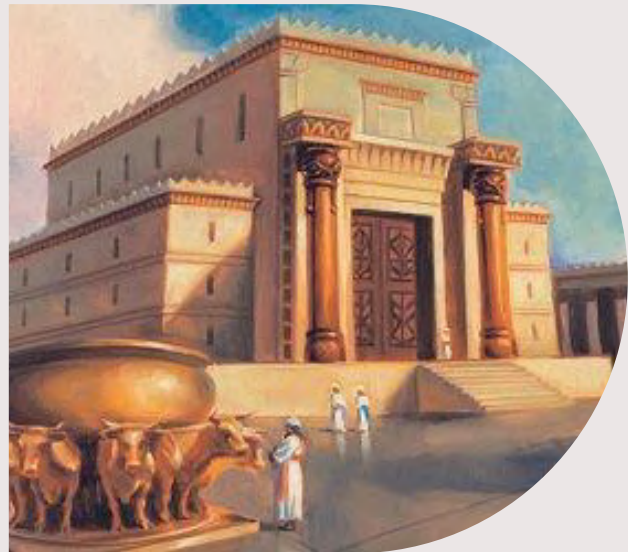
The Temple was composed of the Atrium, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, following a design similar to the Tabernacle.

In the Temple, the priests performed the rituals and sacrifices, and the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Holy of Holies. Both structures were primarily intended to serve as a meeting place between God and the people of Israel. However, Solomon's Temple was a grander and more permanent structure compared to the Tabernacle.

The Temple represented the pinnacle of worship and religious centralization in Jerusalem, while the Tabernacle represented the journey and presence of God during the time in the wilderness. Both structures played a vital role in the religious and spiritual life of the people of Israel at different periods in their history.



## Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple



Solomon's temple had the same liturgical concept as the Tabernacle. The Holy Place and the Most Holy Place formed its main sections. The furniture was the same. What stood out most about the structure of the holy temple was its decoration, considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

At the entrance to the porch. They were the pillars of Joachim and Boaz. In front of them was an enormous fountain, supported by twelve bronze bulls, containing forty thousand liters of water. Up ahead was the altar.

With an approximate height of five meters, it was used as a kind of incinerator for sacrifices, it is important to remember that Solomon's temple dedicated to God in 1004 BC was the first of three similar constructions in the same place (2 Sam 7, 13; 1 Rs 5,6; 6,1: 8,13; 2 Rs 12,5; 22,5; 24,13; 2 Chronicles 36,19). The second was built under the leadership of Zerubbabel and consecrated in 516 BC. C., shortly after the end of the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 2,68: 4,1: 6,8. 14: 7,16; Hag 1,2).

The third temple was erected by Herod the Great to win the approval of the Jewish people.

This one was larger and more imposing than the previous ones (Mt 24,1: Mc 11,15: Lk 2,27: Jn 2,20).

**Solomon** died in 931 and Israel divided into two kingdoms.

That of the north, with Samaria, lasts more or less two centuries (931-721 BC); that of the south, with Jerusalem as its capital, will survive for one hundred and fifty years, until the year 587, when Jerusalem will be besieged by Nebuchadnezzar and destroyed along with the Temple. Israel is deported to Babylon.



## The Literature of this Time

- With the rise of the court and state infrastructure, literature began to develop further, both in shrines and in cities.
- The collections of proverbs assembled by the royal house.
- The book of proverbs will only be ready in the Persian era.
- The liturgy of state temples encourages collections of liturgical songs.
- This is how the various psalters emerged, later collected in the book of psalms.
- The royal psalms stand out: 2;18;20;21;45;61;72;89;110;132;144). Used in the liturgy presided over by the king.
- In the royal palace we have the chronicles of the reigns.
- Some of these notes are found in the books of Kings and Chronicles.

## The Schism – The Division of the Kingdom

**935 BC – With the death of Solomon, the kingdom of Israel is easily divided. Two tribes are linked to Jerusalem and form the Southern Kingdom, whose capital is Jerusalem.**

The other tribes divide and form the Northern Kingdom, Israel, with its capital in Samaria.

*In this way Israel rebelled against the dynasty of David, and it remains so to this day. When all the Israelites heard that Jeroboam had returned, they called him to the community meeting and made him king over all Israel. Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the dynasty of David. 1 Kings 12:19-20*



After the death of King Solomon, a schism occurred that divided the kingdom of Israel into two: the Kingdom of Israel in the north and the Kingdom of Judah in the south.

This schism occurred as a result of political, religious, and tribal tensions that intensified during Solomon's reign. In the Kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam was proclaimed king and established his capital in Samaria.

He implemented a religious policy that kept people away from worship at the Temple in Jerusalem, fearing that it would strengthen loyalty to the Kingdom of Judah.

Jeroboam built altars and idols at Bethel and Dan, promoting the worship of other gods.

**This apostasy led to a deep religious division between the kingdoms.**

In the Kingdom of Judah, Rehoboam, son of Solomon, reigned in Jerusalem. He maintained temple worship and claimed the Davidic lineage as the basis of his reign.



Although there were some righteous kings in both kingdoms, in general the kingdoms faced political instability, idolatry, and a series of corrupt kings.

The schism between Israel and Judah had a lasting impact on Israel's history and eventually led to the exile of the ten tribes of the Kingdom of Israel at the hands of the Assyrians and the subsequent fall of Judah to Babylon.



# The Kings of Israel.

## The United Kingdom of Israel.

### SAUL



- **Reigned: 40 years (c. 1050-1010 BC)**
- **Summary:** Israel's first king, chosen by God, but lost divine favor due to disobedience. His reign ended tragically, with him and his sons killed in battle.
- **Reputation: Bad**

- **Reigned: 40 years (1010-970 BC)**
- **Summary:** A king after God's own heart, famous for unifying Israel and expanding its territory. He brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and composed many psalms. He made serious mistakes, but repented sincerely.
- **Reputation: Good**

### DAVID



- **Reigned: 40 years (970-930 BC)**
- **Summary:** Known for his wisdom and for building the Temple in Jerusalem. However, his marriages to foreign women led to idolatry in the kingdom, which resulted in future division.
- **Reputation: Bad**

### SALOMON



# Reign of David: Faith and History

## The King after God's own heart,

### David as the Founder of an Enduring Dynasty

- **Unification of Israel:** David united the 12 tribes of Israel, consolidating the kingdom under a single political and military leadership (2 Samuel 5:1-5). He established Jerusalem as the capital, creating a political and religious center that remains significant to this day.
- **Expansion of the Kingdom:** David led military campaigns that expanded Israel's borders, guaranteeing stability and security against enemies such as the Philistines, Moabites and Ammonites (2 Samuel 8).
- **Establishment of a Dynasty:** His royal lineage became a symbol of Israel's continuity and national identity. Even after the division of the kingdom and the exile, the Jews maintained their messianic hope in a descendant of David.

### A Man After God's Own Heart

- **Davidic Covenant:** God made a covenant with David, promising that his descendants would perpetuate the throne forever (2 Samuel 7:12-16). This promise became central to the messianic hope, pointing to an eternal kingdom.
- **Ark of the Covenant:** David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, centralizing the worship of God and preparing the way for Solomon's construction of the Temple (2 Samuel 6). He also organized Levitical worship, setting a standard for worship in Israel.
- **Israel's Psalmist:** David wrote many psalms, which not only express his personal relationship with God, but are also used as songs and prayers to this day. They address themes of praise, repentance, divine protection and hope.

## The Connection with Jesus Christ

- The Messianic Promise: The prophecy that the Messiah would come from the line of David is central to the New Testament. Jesus is identified as the “Son of David” in several passages (Matthew 1:1; Matthew 22:42-45), fulfilling the messianic expectation.
- A Type of Christ: David is a “type” of Christ, representing a shepherd king, chosen by God, who leads with justice and establishes a kingdom that points to Jesus' perfect rule. Just as David faced adversity before reigning, Jesus also suffered before being exalted.
- Eternal Kingdom: The promise of an eternal kingdom in 2 Samuel 7:16 is fulfilled in Christ, whose reign will have no end (Luke 1:32-33).

## Relevance to date

- Inspirational figure: David is remembered as a model of faith and repentance. Despite his faults, he demonstrated a heart willing to humble itself and seek God's forgiveness (Psalm 51). This makes him an example of how God can use imperfect people to fulfill His purposes.
- Israel's National Symbol: The “Star of David” is today a symbol of the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. His leadership is seen as the pinnacle of Israel's monarchical history.
- The Hope of God's Kingdom: For Christians, David points to the eternal kingdom of Christ, which is celebrated as the fulfillment of all the promises made to David and Israel.



**David is more than a king; he is a link between Israel's history and God's redemptive plan for all humanity. His life reflects leadership, faith, repentance and a hope that is fully realized in Jesus Christ, the eternal King.**

# Timeline of David's Life.

## 1- In secret and under God's direction, Samuel anoints a young shepherd boy called David as king:

God rejected Saul as king for his disobedience and sent the prophet Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint David, a young shepherd boy and the youngest of Jesse's sons (1 Samuel 16:1-13). This event, which took place in secret, marked the beginning of David's divine choice, emphasizing that God looks at the heart and not the outward appearance.

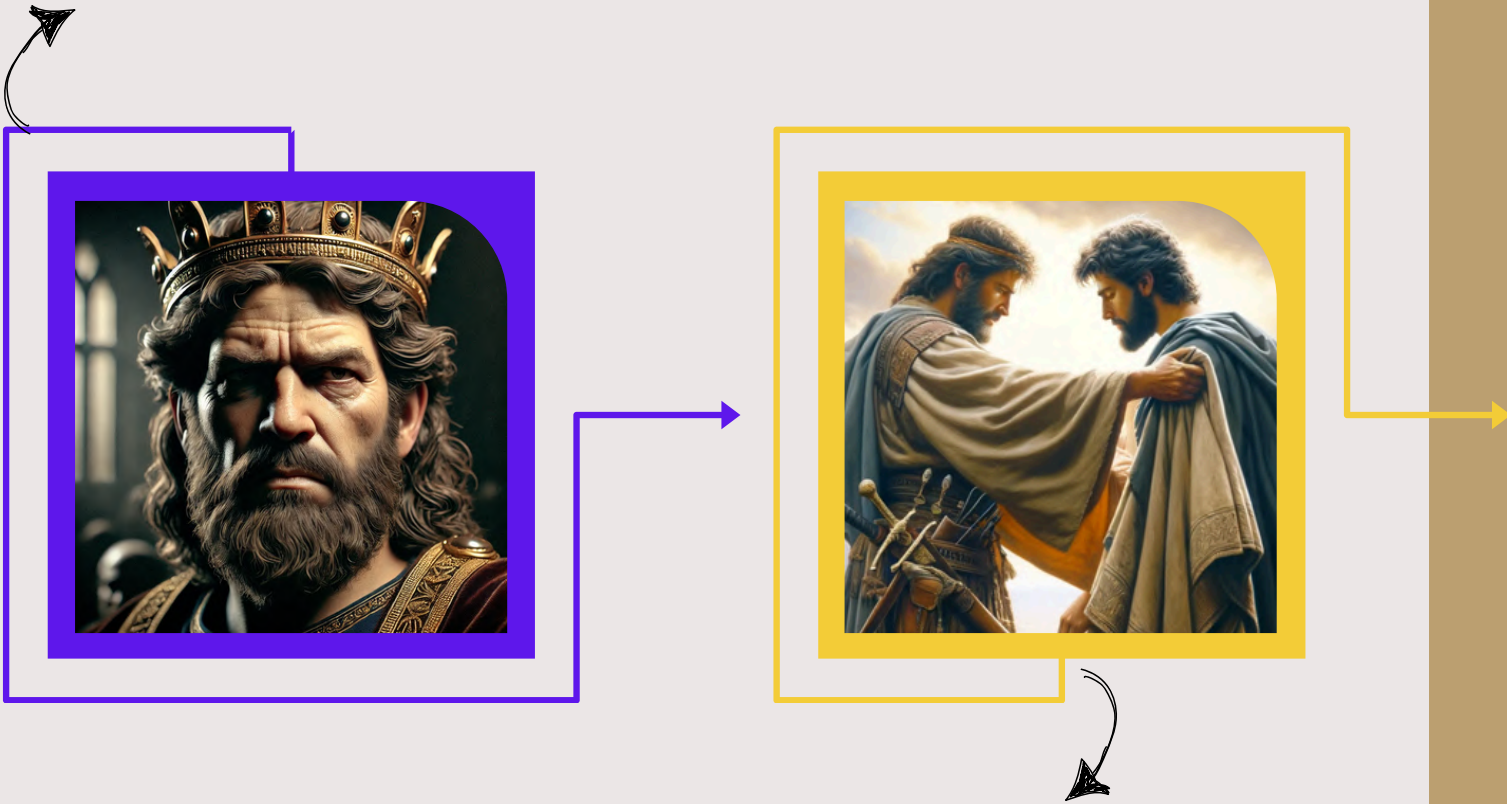


## 2- In battle, David kills a giant called Goliath:

David, as a young man, faced the Philistine warrior Goliath, who was frightening the army of Israel (1 Samuel 17). With unwavering faith in God and only a sling and stones, David defeated the giant, showing that victory does not depend on weapons, but on the power of God working through his servants.

### 3- King Saul is jealous of David's success:

After his victory over Goliath, David became a military leader admired by Israel, which caused Saul to become jealous (1 Samuel 18:7-9). Saul's insecurity and jealousy led to a relentless pursuit of David, demonstrating how human pride can turn the heart away from God's purpose.



### 4- Jonathan, Saul's son, declares his eternal friendship to David:

Jonathan, recognizing David's character and his divine choice as future king, formed a pact of deep friendship with him (1 Samuel 18:1-4). This relationship was marked by loyalty and selfless love, even in the midst of the tensions caused by Saul's persecution of David.

## 5- David marries Michal, daughter of King Saul:

Michal, Saul's daughter, was given in marriage to David after he killed Goliath and fulfilled a dowry demanded by the king (1 Samuel 18:20-27). This marriage initially strengthened the relationship between David and Saul, but later became strained due to Saul's jealousy and persecution. Michal is also remembered for saving David's life by helping him escape (1 Samuel 19:11-17).



## 6- Out of jealousy, Saul tries to kill David, who flees into exile:

David's growing popularity led Saul to try to kill him on several occasions (1 Samuel 19:1). David fled to the desert, living as an exile for years. During this time, he showed reverence for Saul, refusing to raise his hand against God's anointed king, even when he had the chance (1 Samuel 24:6-7).

## 7- As a fugitive, David gathers a group of warriors and they attack Israel's enemies:

In exile, David gathered together men who were discontented, forming an army of mighty men (1 Samuel 22:1-2). He led these warriors in strategic battles against Israel's enemies, such as the Philistines, protecting Israelite cities and strengthening his position as a military leader.



## 8- David marries two women: Abigail and Ahinoam:

David married Abigail, a wise woman and widow of Nabal, after she interceded to prevent a confrontation between David and her husband (1 Samuel 25:2-42). He also married Ahinoam, from Jezreel (1 Samuel 25:43). These marriages, as well as political alliances, reflect the cultural context of the time and the growth of David's influence.

## 9- Shortly after Samuel's death, King Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle:

After the death of Samuel, Israel's spiritual leader, Saul and Jonathan were defeated by the Philistines on Mount Gilboa (1 Samuel 31:1-6). Saul's death marked the end of his dynasty and paved the way for David to become God's anointed king, fulfilling the divine promise made years before.



## 10- David, at the age of 30, is declared king of Israel:

After Saul's death, David was anointed king of Judah in Hebron (2 Samuel 2:4) and, at the age of 30, became king of all Israel after the unification of the tribes (2 Samuel 5:3-5). His ascension fulfilled the divine promise made years before through Samuel, showing God's sovereign plan in the leadership of Israel.



## 11- David takes more wives and has many children:

Following the customs of the time, David took several wives, including Maachah, Haggith and Abital, as well as Abigail and Ahinoam (2 Samuel 3:2-5). Although this practice was culturally acceptable, it brought family and spiritual conflicts, as seen in the problems between his sons, including Absalom and Amnon.

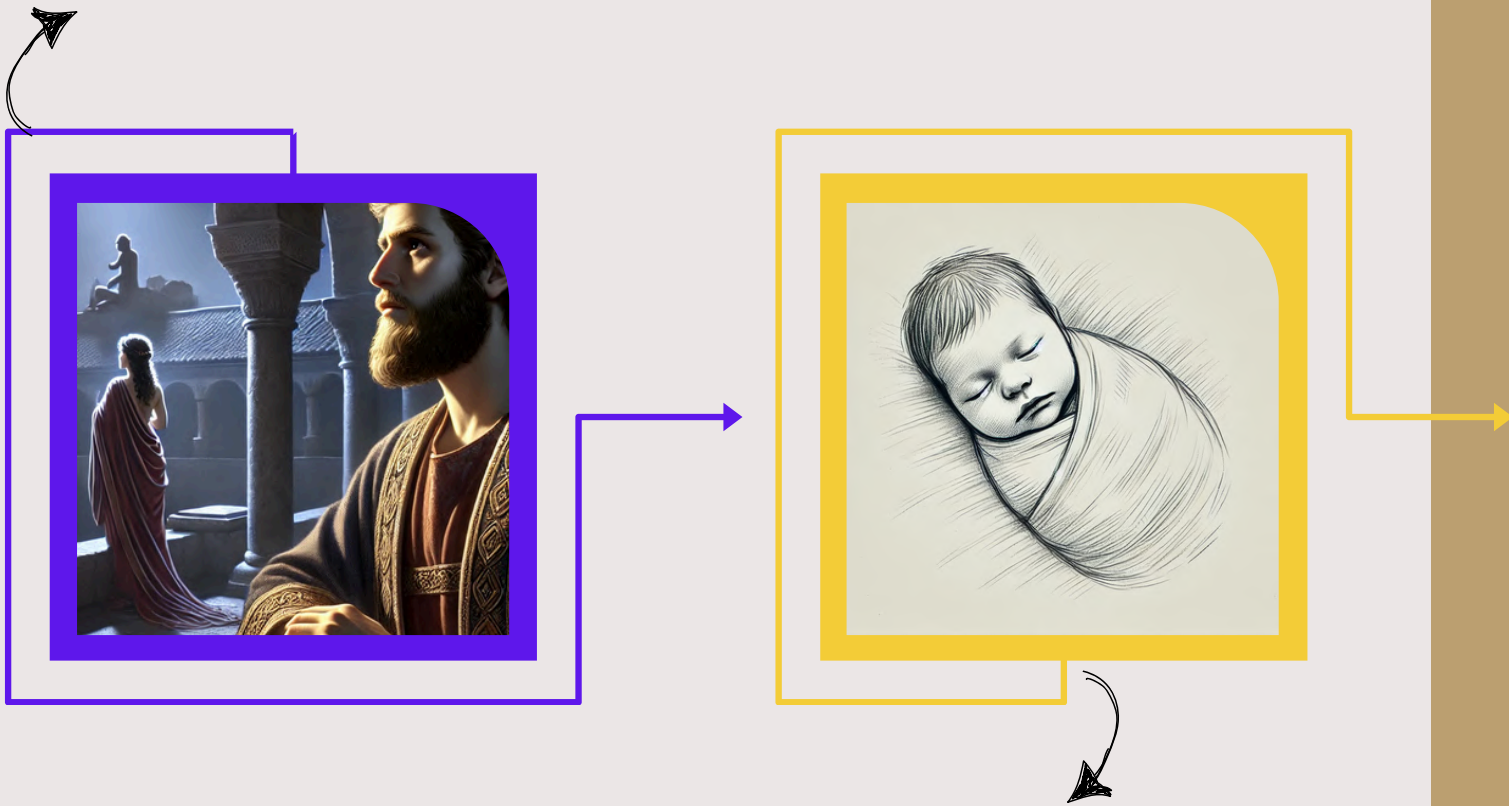


## 12- David conquers Jerusalem and makes it the capital of his kingdom:

David took Jerusalem from the Jebusites and established the city as Israel's political and spiritual capital (2 Samuel 5:6-9). Jerusalem became the center of the kingdom and later the site of the Temple, symbolizing God's covenant with Israel and pointing to the centrality of God's Kingdom.

### 13- David sins by taking Bathsheba and plotting the death of Uriah, her husband:

David committed adultery with Bathsheba and tried to cover up his sin by planning to kill Uriah, her husband, on the battlefield (2 Samuel 11). This grave mistake resulted in divine judgment, but also in David's sincere repentance, as recorded in Psalm 51, showing God's grace even in the face of sin.



### 14- David regrets it, but the child he bore to Bathsheba dies:

After being confronted by the prophet Nathan, David recognized his sin and expressed sincere repentance (2 Samuel 12:13). Despite his prayer and fasting, God allowed the child to die as a consequence of his actions. This event highlights the seriousness of sin and the need for repentance, recorded in Psalm 51.

### 15- David and Bathsheba had another son, Solomon:

After repentance and restoration, God blessed David and Bathsheba with a second son, Solomon, who was loved by God and called Jedidiah by the prophet Nathan (2 Samuel 12:24-25). Solomon was chosen by God to succeed David and build the temple, symbolizing grace and a new beginning.

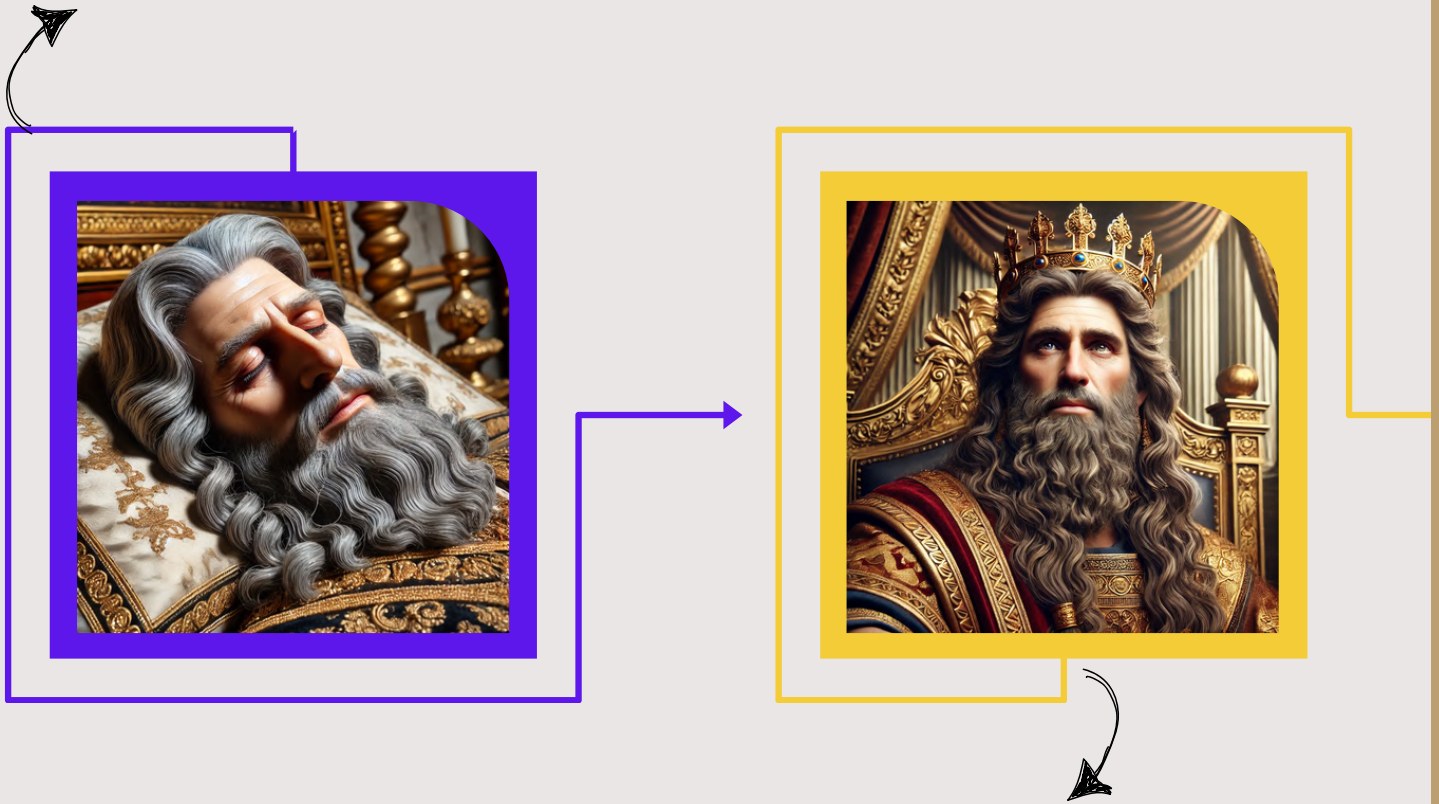


### 16- David's family and his kingdom experience violent incidents and conflicts:

David's sins brought turmoil to his family, including Absalom's murder of Amnon, Absalom's rebellion and other conflicts (2 Samuel 13-18). These events show the consequences of sin, but also God's faithfulness in preserving the messianic lineage.

## 17- David dies of natural causes and leaves his kingdom to Solomon:

David reigned for 40 years before dying peacefully and leaving the throne to Solomon (1 Kings 2:10-12). Before his death, he guided Solomon to follow God's ways, guaranteeing the continuity of the divine plan for Israel and the messianic promise through his lineage.



## 18- Solomon succeeded his father David on the throne of Israel.

Solomon, son of David and Bathsheba, succeeded his father as king of Israel and was known for his divine wisdom and for building the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 3-9). His reign brought great prosperity and peace, but his idolatry in later years led to the future division of the kingdom, fulfilling the divine warning (1 Kings 11).

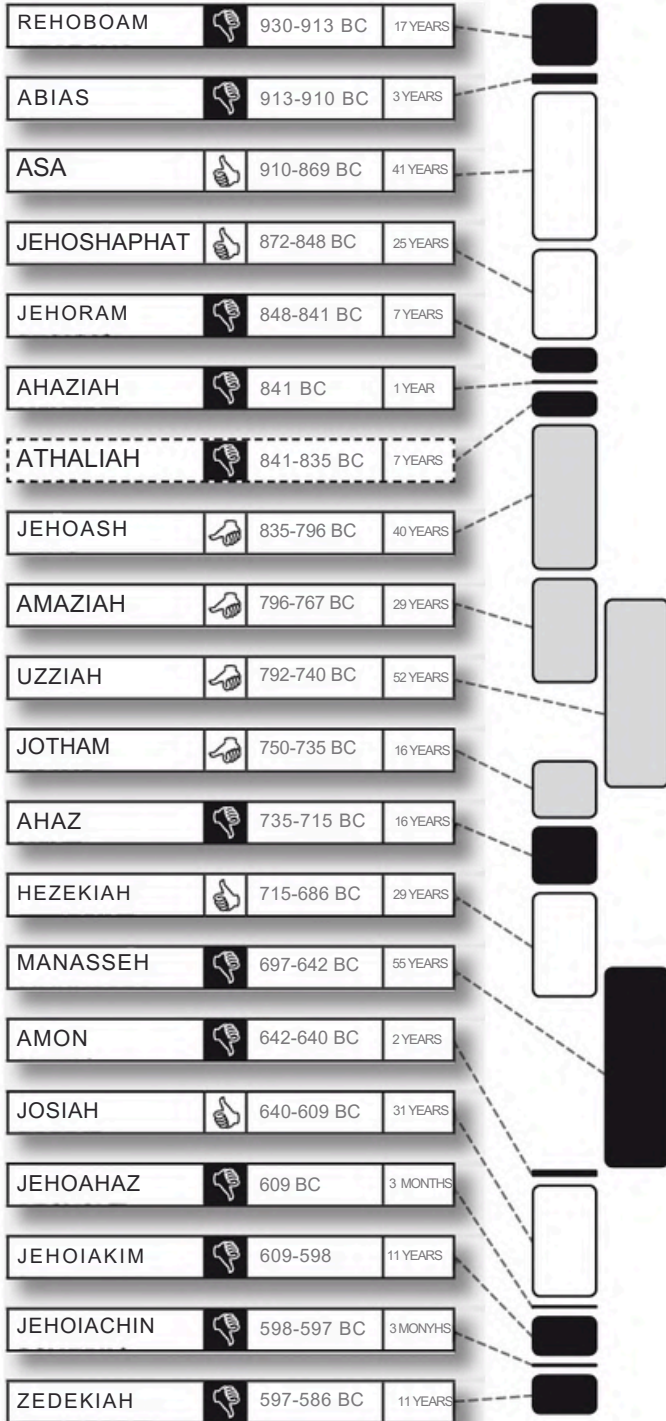
# KINGDOMS DIVIDED (922 BC)



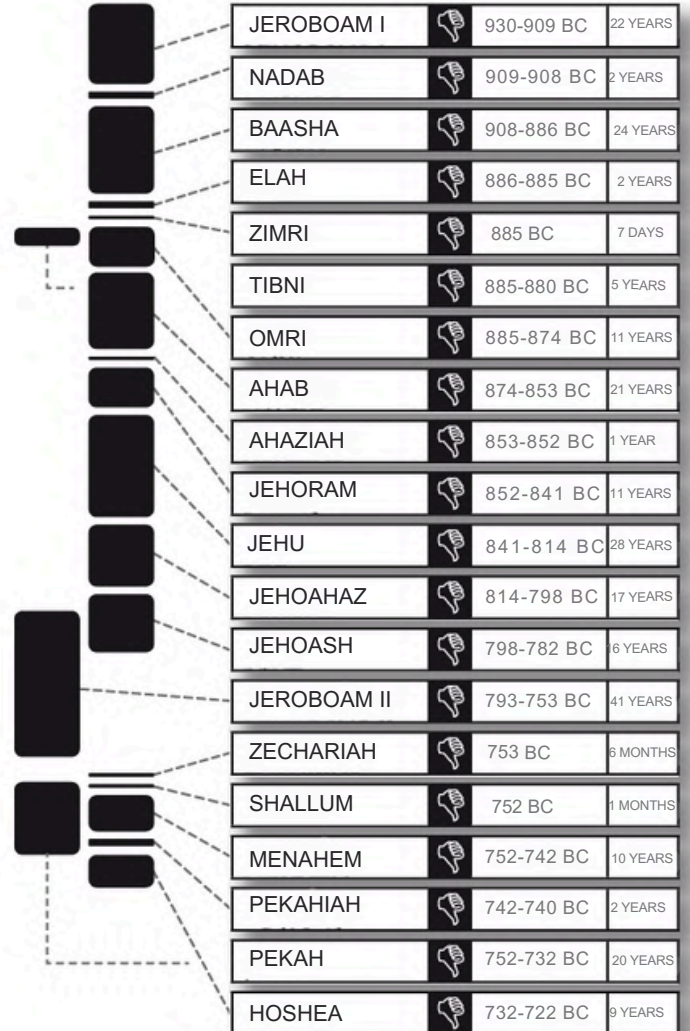
## KINGS OF JUDAH



## KINGS OF ISRAEL



JUDAH EXILED BY BABYLON (586 AC)



ISRAEL ASSIMILATED BY ASSYRIA (722 BC)

Below is a list of the Kings in Order and some information about each of them.



# KINGS OF ISRAEL

**Jeroboam I**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 40 years (c. 1050-1010 BC)**

**Summary:** Israel's first king, chosen by God, but lost divine favor due to disobedience. His reign ended tragically, with him and his sons killed in battle.

**Nadab**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 2 years (910-909 BC)**

**Summary:** Son of Jeroboam, he continued idolatry and was murdered by Baasha, who took the throne.

**Baasha**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 24 years (909-886 BC)**

**Summary:** Took the throne after killing Nadab, continued idolatry and fought wars against Judah

**Elah**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 2 years (886-885 BC)**

**Summary:** Son of Baasha, he was assassinated by his officer Zimri, who usurped the throne.

**Zimri**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 7 days (885 BC)**

**Summary:** He reigned for a week after assassinating Elah, but committed suicide when Omri surrounded him.

**TIBNI**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 5 years (885-880 BC)**

**Summary:** Tibni and Omri - emerged, leading to a division among the people. For about five years, both claimed the throne, and the people were divided between supporting Tibni or Omri, Omri eventually winning the dispute and taking full control of Israel,

**OMRI**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 12 years (885-874 BC)**

**Summary:** Reigned over Israel in Samaria for 12 years.

**Ahab**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 22 years (874-853 BC)**

**Summary:** Married to Jezebel, promoted Baal worship and confronted Elijah

**Ahaziah**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: less than 2 years (853-852 BC)**

**Summary:** Ahab's son, he continued his idolatry and died after an accident.

**Jehoram**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 12 years (852-841 BC)**

**Summary:** He fought against Moab and confronted Elisha's prophecy. He was assassinated by Jehu.

**Jehu**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 28 years (841-814 BC)**

**Summary:** He eradicated Baal worship, but maintained idolatry in Bethel and Dan.

**Jehoahaz**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 17 years (814-798 BC)**

**Summary:** Oppressed by Hazael, king of Syria, but sought the Lord in his last years.

**Jehoash**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 16 years (798-782 BC)**

**Summary:** He restored Israel's strength after the oppression of Syria and collaborated with Elisha.

**Jeroboam II**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 41 years (783-753 BC)**

**Summary:** Reigned during a period of prosperity, but maintained idolatry.

**Zechariah**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 6 months (753 BC)**

**Summary:** Last king of Jehu's dynasty, he was assassinated by Shallum.

**Shallum**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 1 month (752 BC)**

**Summary:** He took the throne after assassinating Zechariah, but was killed soon after by Menahem.

**Menahem**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 10 years (752-742 BC)**

**Summary:** He ruled cruelly and paid tribute to Assyria to maintain his power.

**Pekahiah**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 2 years (742-740 BC)**

**Summary:** He was assassinated by Pekah, one of his officers.

**Pekah**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 20 years (752-732 BC)**

**Summary:** He tried to resist Assyria, but was deposed by Hoshea with Assyrian support.

**Hoshea**  
Reputation: Bad



**Reigned: 9 years (732-722 BC)**

**Summary:** Last king of Israel; he was defeated and taken captive by Assyria, ending the Northern Kingdom.





# Kings of Judah



**Reigned: 17 years (930-913 BC)**

**Summary:** The division of the tribes took place under his reign Gave in to idolatry in Judah



**Rehoboam**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 3 years (913-910 BC)**

**Summary:** Waged war against Jeroboam, king of Israel, but followed idolatrous ways



**ABIAS**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 41 years (910-869 BC)**

**Summary:** He carried out religious reforms, abolished idolatry and restored the worship of God.



**ASA**  
**Reputation: Good**

**Reigned: 25 years (872-848 BC)**

**Summary:** Encouraged the worship of God, promoted reforms and strengthened Judah.



**Jehoshaphat**  
**Reputation: Good**

**Reigned: 7 years (848-841 BC)**

**Summary:** He married Ahab's daughter and introduced idolatry to Judah.



**Jehoram**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 1 year (841 BC)**

**Summary:** Influenced by his mother, Jezebel, he promoted idolatry.



**Ahaziah**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 7 years (841-835 BC)**

**Summary:** The only queen to rule Judah, she usurped the throne after the death of her son Ahaziah and tried to exterminate the royal lineage.



**Athaliah**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 40 years (835-796 BC)**

**Summary:** He began reforms and restored the Temple, but turned to idolatry after the death of Jehoiada, the priest who guided him.



**Jehoash**

**Reputation:**  
Good (beginning) / Bad (end)

**Reigned: 29 years (796-767 BC)**

**Summary:** He began his reign fairly, but was defeated by Israel when he challenged King Jehoash.



**Amaziah**

**Reputation:**  
Good (beginning) / Bad (end)

**Uzziah (or Azariah) Reigned: 52 years (792-740 BC)**

**Summary:** He expanded and strengthened Judah militarily, but was punished with leprosy for trying to perform priestly functions.



**Uzziah**

**Reputation:**  
Good (beginning) / Bad (end)

**Reigned: 16 years (750-735 BC)**

**Summary:** Ruled with righteousness and strengthened Judah's defenses; avoided popular idolatrous practices.



**Jotham**

**Reputation:**  
Good (beginning) / Bad (end)

**Reigned: 16 years (735-715 BC)**

**Summary:** He followed idolatrous practices, even sacrificing his own son and seeking help from Assyria instead of trusting in God.



**Ahaz**

**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 29 years (715-686 BC)**

**Summary:** He carried out great spiritual reforms, restored the Temple and trusted in God during the Assyrian invasion.



**Hezekiah**

**Reputation: Good**

**Reigned: 55 years (686-642 BC)**

**Summary:** Considered the worst king of Judah; promoted extreme idolatrous practices, but repented in his later years.



**Manasseh**

**Reputation: +Bad**

**Reigned: 2 years (642-640 BC)**

**Summary:** He followed the idolatrous ways of his father Manasseh, but without repentance; he was murdered by his servants.



**Amon**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 31 years (640-609 BC)**

**Summary:** One of Judah's best kings, he found the Book of the Law and carried out significant spiritual reforms.



**Josiah**  
**Reputation: Good**

**Reigned: 3 months (609 BC)**

**Summary:** Son of Josiah, he did the wrong thing and was deposed by the Pharaoh of Egypt.



**Jehoahaz**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 11 years (609-598 BC)**

**Summary:** Submissive to Egypt and then Babylon, but resisted spiritual reform and promoted idolatry.



**Jehoiakim**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 3 months (598-597 BC)**

**Summary:** Grandson of Josiah, he was taken captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.



**Jehoiachin**  
**Reputation: Bad**

**Reigned: 11 years (597-586 BC)**

**Summary:** Last king of Judah; tried to resist Babylon, but was defeated, resulting in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile.



**Zedekiah**  
**Reputation: Bad**



## Northern Kingdom

The Northern Kingdom, also known as the Kingdom of Israel, was formed after the schism that divided Israel in two.

The tribes followed: Reuben, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim and Manasseh.

Its capital was initially established at Shechem and later moved to Tirzah.

However, after a period of instability, King Omri founded the city of Samaria and established it as the new capital of the Kingdom of Israel.

The Kingdom of Israel has had a series of kings throughout its history. Jeroboam I was proclaimed the first king, followed by a succession of monarchs.

Some of the notable kings include Ahab and his wife Jezebel, known for their promotion of idolatry and their conflicts with the prophet Elijah.

Other important kings include Jeroboam II, who had a long and prosperous reign, and Hosea, who was the last king before the kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC.

The Kingdom of Israel, although it had moments of prosperity and power, was also marked by political instability, idolatry, and lack of loyalty to God.

These factors contributed to their eventual destruction and exile, with the ten northern tribes scattered and lost to history.

## Southern Kingdom

The Southern Kingdom, also known as the Kingdom of Judah, was formed after the schism that divided Israel in two, followed by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Its capital was Jerusalem, where the Temple built by Solomon was located.

The Kingdom of Judah had a line of kings descended from the house of David. After Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam took the throne and ruled in Jerusalem.

Over the centuries, there was a succession of kings in Judah, some of whom stood out as godly leaders, while others were marked by idolatry and deviation from the faith.

Some notable kings include Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, and Ezekiel.

The Kingdom of Judah had periods of political and religious stability, especially as its kings sought to follow God's commandments and restore Temple worship.

However, it also faced threats from foreign invasions, such as those from the Assyrians and later the Babylonians.

The kingdom finally fell to Babylon in 586 BC., which caused the destruction of Jerusalem, the Temple and the exile of the Jewish people to Babylon.

## Prophetism



The birth of prophetism in Israel is an important milestone in the religious and social history of the Israelite people. Prophetism emerged as a response to the spiritual and political needs of the people during the turbulent times of the Old Testament, more precisely in the times of the Monarchy. Prophets were spiritual leaders and messengers of God, responsible for transmitting his words and guidance to the people. Prophetism played a fundamental role in the religious and political history of Israel, influencing national consciousness and contributing to the preservation of the monotheistic faith.

The Northern Kingdom experienced periods of prosperity, but experienced idolatry and separation from God's plan. It is in this context that the denouncing voices of the prophets emerge: Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, Amos.

In the Southern Kingdom, the precursor prophets are: Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Prophets analyze the present situation, denounce errors and announce God's plan for the future. Its fundamental inspiration is the memory of liberation in the Exodus. The prophets were messengers of God, responsible for transmitting warnings, exhortations and guides to the people of Israel. They condemned idolatry, injustice and corruption, in addition to promoting the worship of the only true God, YHWH.

## **The Great Nations and their Impacts for Israel**

The presence of great nations, such as Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, in the history of Israel played a crucial role in significant and delicate moments. These nations had direct influence on the destiny and experience of the people of Israel, shaping their identity and faith.

### **Assyria**

Assyria was the first great power to conquer the Northern Kingdom of Israel, driving many Israelite tribes into exile.

### **Babylon**

Babylon subsequently destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple, taking the Southern Kingdom captive. These conquests caused the diaspora and the displacement of many Israelites, leaving a permanent mark on the history of the people.

## Persians

Persian domination brought a period of hope for the Israelites, as the Persian king Cyrus allowed the return of the exiles and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem.

## Greeks

However, Greek influence with the conquest of Alexander the Great brought with it a cultural and religious challenge for the Jews, which culminated in the Maccabean revolt and the temporary independence of Israel.

## Romans

Roman rule marked a tumultuous period in Israel's history, with the imposition of heavy taxes, religious restrictions, and an oppressive Roman military presence.

This oppression led to several Jewish revolts: in 70 AD, the Romans destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem, leading to the dispersal of the Jews and the beginning of the diaspora.

**Despite the difficulties and challenges these great nations posed, these periods of domination also witnessed the development and preservation of the Jewish faith.**

They shaped the resistance and resilience of the people of Israel, reinforcing their identity and beliefs.

Furthermore, these historical periods set the stage for the coming of Jesus Christ and the subsequent rise of Christianity, establishing a deep connection between the history of Israel and the history of the Christian faith.



## Assyria

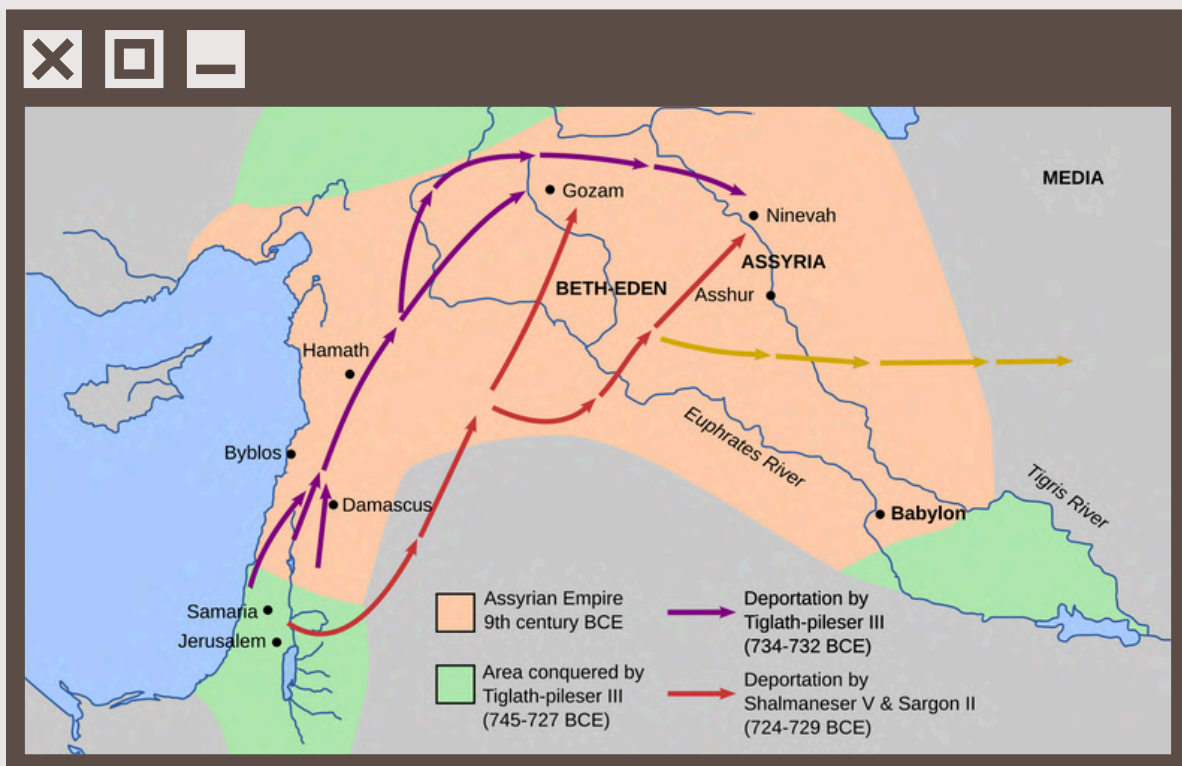
720 BC – Assyria invades the Northern Kingdom of Israel and disappears from history forever. The South remains, but suffers the consequences of foreign domination and idolatry.

**Once again, the prophets rise with denouncing voices. They criticize the dehumanizing power of the monarchy that violates the traditions of the people and their faith. They criticize cult religion without justice and call for conversion.**



# The Assyrians

The Assyrians were fierce warriors and used their great military strength to expand their empire. Freeing themselves from the Sumerians, they conquered a large part of their territory, but soon fell into the power of the Babylonians, a people who lived in southern Mesopotamia. In 1240 BC they undertook the conquest of Babylon, and from then on they began to expand the borders of their Empire until they reached Egypt, in North Africa. The Assyrian Empire experienced its period of greatest glory and prosperity during the reign of Ashurbanipal (until 630 BC). They levied heavy taxes on the defeated people, which led them to continually rebel.



The Assyrian people lived in ancient Mesopotamia, a region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Its capital, in its most prosperous years, was Nineveh, in a region that today belongs to Iraq. The Assyrian Empire covers the period between 1700 and 610 BC. C., more than a thousand years.



Even during the reign of Ashurbanipal, the Babylonians broke free (in 626 BC) and captured Nineveh. With the death of Ashurbanipal, the decline of the Assyrian Empire worsened and in 610 BC. C. the last of its cities fell into the hands of the invaders.

## Babylon

587 BC – Babylon invades the southern kingdom and takes these people captive. It is the beginning of the captivity (the Exile) and the end of God's people and his land. They lose:

- Your temple
- Her land
- His King

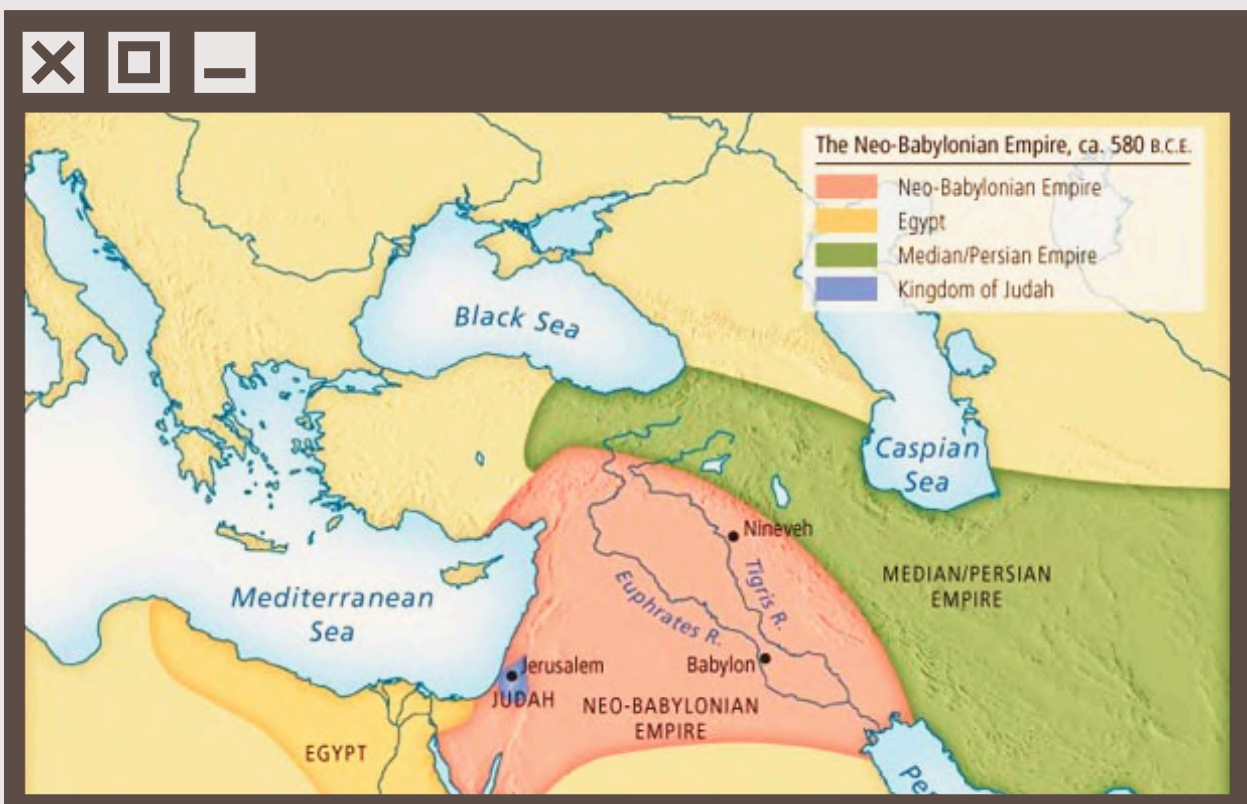
**They are orphans.**



## The fall of the last kingdom

- The fall of the Southern Kingdom, also known as the Kingdom of Judah, to Babylon occurred as a result of a series of historical events. After the reign of several corrupt and idolatrous kings in Judah, the people turned away from God's commandments and adopted pagan practices.
- In 605 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon invaded Judah for the first time and imposed his rule over the kingdom. King Jehoiakim became Nebuchadnezzar's vassal, but this was short-lived as Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylonian rule. In 597 BC C., Babylon invaded again and deported much of the Jewish elite, including Jehoiakim himself, to Babylon.

- The last king of Judah, Zedekiah, also rebelled against Babylon, resulting in a siege of Jerusalem in 587 BC.
- The city was finally conquered and destroyed in 586 BC., the temple was looted and burned and many inhabitants of Judah were exiled to Babylon.
- This period of exile became known as the Babylonian captivity.
- The fall of the Kingdom of Judah to Babylon was an event of great impact in the history of Israel, marking the end of the Jewish monarchy and the beginning of a period of exile and dispersion of the Jewish people.
- This experience had profound religious and cultural implications, leading to reflection on failures and regret, and keeping alive the hope of a return to the promised land in the future.



Babylon was an imposing and grand city in its heyday. It was known for its magnificent architecture, its impressive temples and palaces and its fortified wall.

The city was located on the banks of the Euphrates River, in the region of Mesopotamia, and became a political, economic and cultural center of the ancient Near East. One of the most emblematic monuments of Babylon was the Hanging Garden, considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Built by order of King Nebuchadnezzar II, the garden consisted of raised terraces with lush plantings and sophisticated irrigation. Furthermore, the Temple of Marduk, the main Babylonian god, was an imposing structure that symbolized the religious power of the city.



Babylon was also known for its commercial activities and cultural influence.

It was home to a diverse population, including different ethnic and cultural groups, which contributed to its cultural richness and exchange of ideas.

The city was famous for its advances in astronomy, mathematics, and literature, leaving a lasting legacy in the history of ancient civilization.

In short, Babylon was a city of great grandeur and prestige, exhibiting architectural grandeur, cultural influence, and political and economic importance in the region.

## The Babylonian Empire

In the first millennium, the power of Babylon is reborn with the destruction of the Assyrians by the Medes. Allies of the Medes, the Chaldeans took advantage of their victory against the Assyrians and regained dominance starting in 614 BC.

That year, Nabopolassar founded a new dynasty and began the Second Empire. The second phase highlights the reign of his son, Nebuchadnezzar (604 BC-562 BC), who transformed Babylon into queen of Asia.

Military leader of great energy and cruelty, he annihilates the Phoenicians and obtains hegemony in the Middle East, with the exception of Egypt.

In the second half of the 6th century BC he conquered Jerusalem and carried out the first deportation of Jews to Mesopotamia, in the episode known as the Babylonian captivity.

With his death, after 42 years of power, the kingdom entered into decline and, in 539 BC, Babylon was conquered by Cyrus, king of the Persians (559 BC-529 BC).

He obtains an alliance with the dominant classes (merchants and priests), who accept foreign domination in exchange for maintaining privileges.

## The Babylonian Religion

- There were a great number of divine kings, at the head of which was Marduk.
- Also important were Shamash, the sun god and justice, who is represented in the Code of Hammurabi; and Ishtar, the goddess of love and war.
- In addition to these, there were deities from the lower worlds and some angelic spirits. Each main god had, in one or more cities of Babylon, a great temple, in which animal sacrifices, offerings and libations were made daily.

### Influence of the Babylonians Gods for Israel

During the period in which the people of Israel came under Babylonian rule, there was a certain cultural and religious influence on them from the Babylonian gods.

This occurred due to the proximity and interaction between the two cultures. The Babylonians worshiped a variety of gods, such as Marduk, Ishtar, and Nabu, and had an established system of religious beliefs and rituals.





### **Ishtar and Shamas, Babylonian gods**

This influence can be seen in some aspects of Israelite religion, especially regarding the worship of gods other than Yahweh. On several occasions, the Israelites were tempted to follow the Babylonian gods and adopt their religious practices, which often resulted in apostasy and deviation from Yahweh's commandments.

However, despite this influence, the Israelites' faith in Yahweh remained central and distinctive. The worship of the true God and the maintenance of the laws and commandments established by Him were fundamental elements to preserve the religious identity of the people of Israel.

Therefore, although there was some influence of the Babylonian gods on Israel, fidelity to the one God and the preservation of the teachings and values transmitted by Him were fundamental for the continuity of the Israelite faith.

## Exile

### The Political Practice of Exiling Adversaries

- The military defeat of a people meant that the victor would take slaves as part of the loot;
- In 598 BC C., Jerusalem is taken and the ruling elite goes into exile in Babylon (2 Kings 24:10-17). Among these first exiles was the future prophet Ezekiel.
- In 587 BC. Nebuchadnezzar razes Jerusalem and deports its inhabitants to Babylon.
- In 582 BC C. with the death of governor Godolias, some Jews are deported to Babylon.

According to data present in the book of Jeremiah (Jer 52,28-30), approximately:

1ST DEPORTATION - **3.023** JEWS

2ST DEPORTATION - **832** JEWS

3ST DEPORTATION - **745** JEWS

= **4600** JEWS



## Daniel's Eschatological Visions

Daniel had apocalyptic visions during the period when Israel was under the rule of the Babylonian Empire. He was deported to Babylon along with other young Israelites, following the conquest of Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar, around the 6th century BC.

While in Babylon, Daniel served as a counselor in the kings' court, but he also received divine revelations through visions and dreams.

These visions addressed future events and revealed details about God's plan for Israel's history and destiny. Daniel's apocalyptic visions are recorded in the book of Daniel, chapters 7 through 12. They include symbols and images representing the kingdoms and empires that would arise throughout history, as well as events related to the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of the God's Kingdom.

**One of Daniel's best-known visions is the vision of the statue, which symbolizes the successive kingdoms that would rule the earth. This vision is described in Daniel 2:31-45. In the vision, Daniel describes a colossal statue with different parts made of different materials, representing four great kingdoms that would follow one another in history.**



The head of the statue was made of gold and represented the Babylonian Empire, symbolizing King Nebuchadnezzar and his powerful government.

Then, the chest and arms of the statue were made of silver, representing the Medo-Persian Empire, which succeeded Babylon. The belly and thighs were made of bronze, symbolizing the Greek Empire, led by Alexander the Great.

The iron legs represented the Roman Empire, which was extremely powerful and long-lasting.

And finally, the feet and toes were a mixture of iron and clay, indicating the fragility and division of the last kingdom that would arise before the coming of the Kingdom of God.

This view of the statue illustrates the succession of power of world empires throughout history, culminating in the establishment of the Kingdom of God that will last forever.

It demonstrates God's sovereignty over earthly kingdoms and reveals the divine plan for human history.

In another vision, Daniel saw four animals emerging from the sea. Each animal represented a specific kingdom:



1. The first animal was similar to a lion, representing the Babylonian Empire.
2. The second animal was similar to a bear, representing the Medo-Persian Empire.
3. The third animal was similar to a leopard with four wings and four heads, representing the Greek Empire, led by Alexander the Great.
4. The fourth beast was terrible and different from all the others, with iron teeth and ten horns. This animal represented the Roman Empire and its later subdivisions.

This vision of the four animals shows the succession of power of world empires throughout history, as does the vision of the statue. It reveals the kingdoms that would arise and dominate the Earth, highlighting the way in which each of them would be characterized. These prophetic visions of Daniel point to God's sovereignty over human affairs and the fulfillment of his divine plans throughout history.



# Golden Head

**BABYLON**  
626 B.C. to 539 B.C.

Head Chest and  
arms

**MEDO-PERSE**  
539 BC to  
330 BC

Broze hip

**GREECE**  
330 BC to  
146 BC

Iron legs

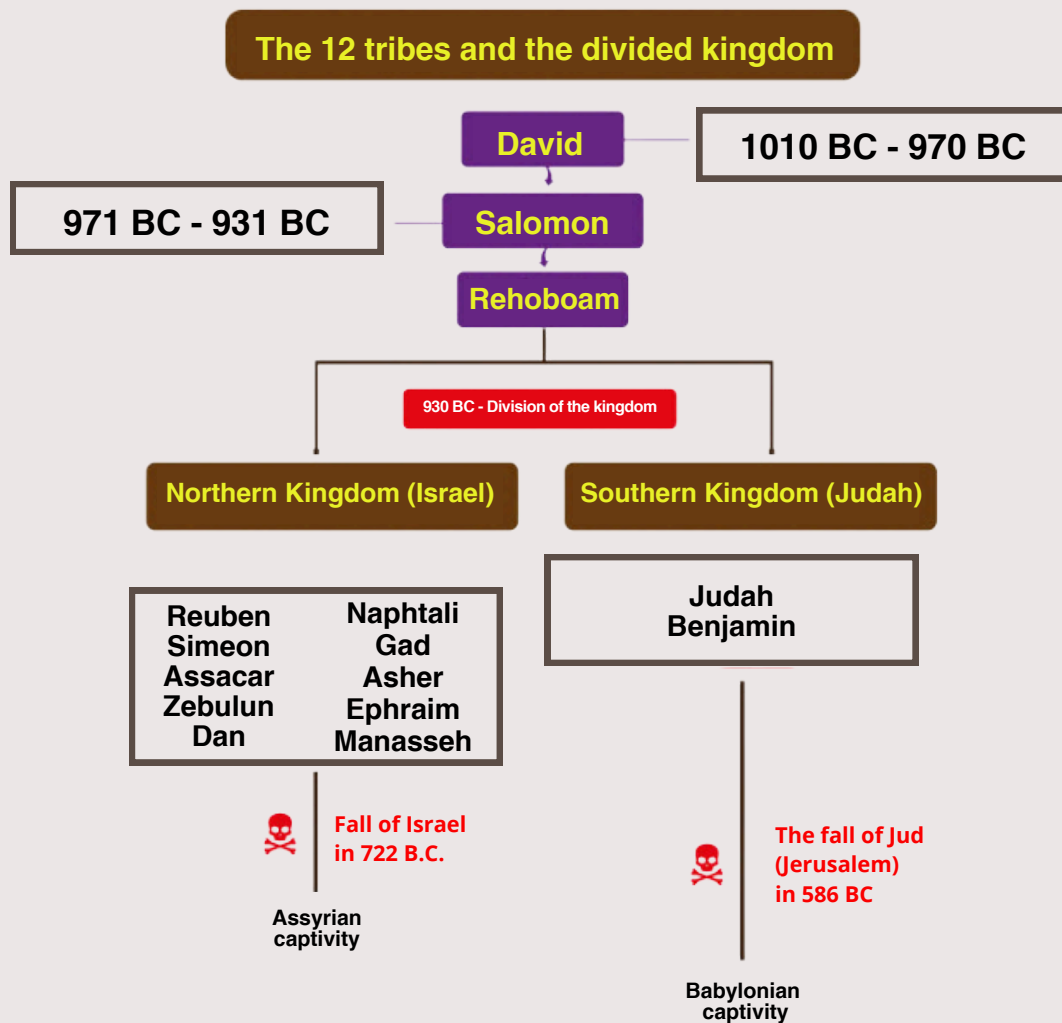
**ROME in 40 BC**  
to 476 AD.

clay foot

**Rome divided**  
**Time of the end**  
**of nations**

# The Literature of this Time

- At this time, books began to be collected to serve as support in the liturgy and teaching.
- The collection of historical books is practically ready.
- The canon of prophetic books.
- The wisdom collections of Psalms and Proverbs.





## Summary

According to the biblical account, Solomon disobeyed God's commandments by worshiping other gods, which resulted in the division of the kingdom. The prophet Ahijah confronted Solomon and announced that God would give ten tribes to Jeroboam, leaving only one tribe for Solomon's family, because of Solomon's transgressions.

In the Book of 1 Kings, chapter 11, the prophet Ahijah meets Jeroboam outside the city and tears a new cloak into twelve pieces, giving Jeroboam ten pieces. He told Jeroboam that God was giving him ten tribes and that God would establish a lasting kingdom for him as long as he walked in God's ways and kept His commandments. Therefore, although the division of the lands was a consequence of Solomon's disobedience, God blessed Jeroboam with a separate kingdom and promised him prosperity if he remained faithful

*At that time, Jeroboam left Jerusalem, and Ahijah, the prophet from Shiloh, who was wearing a new cloak, met him on the way. The two of them were alone in the field, and Ahijah took a firm hold of the cloak he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. Then he said to Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces for yourself, for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Know that I will take the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you ten tribes. But for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, he shall have one tribe. 1 Reis 11:29-32*

As the people complained about Solomon's oppressive rule and his heavy workload, Jeroboam emerged as leader and representative of the ten northern tribes of Israel. God sent the prophet Ahijah to Jeroboam and told him that the kingdom would be divided and ten tribes would be given to him.

God promised Jeroboam that if he would walk in God's ways and keep His commandments, He would be with him and build a lasting dynasty. After Solomon's death, Jeroboam returned from Egypt and was proclaimed king of the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom, while Solomon's son Rehoboam ruled the Southern Kingdom (Judah).

Jeroboam initially established his capital at Shechem and later moved it to the city of Tirzah. Jeroboam is remembered for not remaining faithful to God. He engaged in idolatrous practices, building altars and idols in Bethel and Dan to prevent people from coming to worship in Jerusalem. These actions resulted in the rejection of God and the loss of the promise of a lasting dynasty.

Jeroboam's story serves as a reminder of how disobedience to God can have negative consequences, even when it begins with a divine promise.

## From Exile to Judaism

In exile, Jerusalem is desolate and it is up to the poets to raise their voices and express the people's lament.

***“Look YAHWEH, at the shame we have gone through, our inheritance is given to foreigners. We are all orphans; we have to buy the water we drink and put out the wood we use. Groaning, the people struggle for bread. Outside, the sword kills the children and in the house, death prowls. Our leaders look like animals that can't find pasture. They walk without strength. We've already asked Egypt for help; we've already begged Assyria to feed us, so our hearts are sick and our eyes are dim..”(Lm 5)***

Many questions arise. These are questions for those who are far from everything and need concrete answers. They no longer have land, they no longer have Law and they no longer have a King, they question everything: nature, faith and God himself.

**“Who created this universe? Why are we in this? Where we come from? Where are we going? Who are our parents? And the good thing? And the bad? Where is God?”**

## **Preserving Hope**

*I remember my affliction and my delirium, my bitterness and my grief. I remember it all well, and my soul faints within me. However, I also remember what can give me hope: it is thanks to the Lord's great love that we are not consumed, for his mercies are inexhaustible. They are renewed every morning; great is your faithfulness! Lamentations 3:19-23*

## **Feeding Faith**

It is in this context that many writings arise in response to questions from a lonely people, in another nation and in search of hope.

**The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world and those who dwell therein. For he founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers. (Sl 24, 1-2)**

## Writing the Story

*Let this be written for the generation to come, that a people to come may praise the Lord. For he has looked down from his sanctuary; he has looked down from heaven to the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoners, to release those sentenced to death; that the name of the Lord may be proclaimed in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem, when the peoples and kingdoms are gathered together to serve the Lord.*

*(Sl. 102, 18-22)*

**It is these reflections that keep the faith of the people alive and encourage the hope of resisting and waiting for God's providence.**

## During periods of crisis in Israel's history, three empires played an important role: Assyria, Babylon, and Persia.

Assyria was a powerful empire that conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC. C., which caused the deportation of the ten northern tribes and the end of the Kingdom of Israel. The Assyrians were known for their brutality and the imposition of cultural assimilation policies, which resulted in the loss of identity and the dispersal of the northern tribes.



After the fall of Assyria, the Babylonian Empire emerged as a dominant power in the region. Under King Nebuchadnezzar II, Babylon conquered the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586 BC. C., destroying Jerusalem and the Temple and forcing the Jewish people into exile in Babylon. This period is known as the Babylonian captivity.

However, Babylonian rule was later supplanted by the Persian Empire, led by King Cyrus the Great. Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC. C., which allowed the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. The Persian policy of allowing the restoration of cults and regional autonomy made possible the rebirth of a Jewish community in the land of Israel.



**These three empires (Assyria, Babylon and Persia) played a crucial role in the history of Israel during periods of crisis.**

**They shaped the trajectory of the Jewish people, influenced their culture and religion, and challenged their identity and faith.**

**Each of these empires had a lasting impact on the history of Israel and contributed to the formation and preservation of the Jewish people throughout the centuries.**

# Persia

530 BC – King Cyrus of Persia invades Babylon and grants freedom to the enslaved people. It is the time when Israel returns to her land and begins the reconstruction of life, the city and the temple. Many stayed in Mesopotamia and gave rise to what is called the Jewish diaspora. Those who return begin Judaism.



## The Persian Empire

- From the 8th century BC, the Medes had established a kingdom and had an agile and organized army. Taking advantage of this, they subjugated the other Iranian peoples, including the Persians, charging them tribute.
- This situation continued until 550 BC. C., when Prince Cyrus the Great (559-530 BC) led a rebellion against the Medes and emerged victorious.

- With the aim of obtaining wealth and solving the problems caused by the increase in population and low local agricultural production, Cyrus the Great initiated Persian expansionism.
- In a few years, the Persian army took over an immense area. Cyrus then became emperor of the Ancient East.
- Cambyses II (530-522 BC): Son of Cyrus, expanded the empire to Egypt in 525 BC
- Darius I the Great (522-486 BC): divided the Persian Empire into provinces and appointed trusted administrators. In the Empire, great roads facilitated communications, trade, and the movement of troops.
- Darius and Xerxes were defeated when they tried to conquer Greece. These defeats, added to the rebellions of the dominated peoples and disputes for power, weakened the Persian Empire, which was conquered by Alexander of Macedonia in 330 BC.

## Return from captivity and reconstruction





After the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, king of Persia, he issued a decree allowing deportees, including Jews, to return to their home countries. This event is known as the Edict of Cyrus and marked the beginning of a period of repatriation and reconstruction of exiled Jews.

Zerubbabel, a descendant of David's royal line, led the first group of Jews to return to the land of Judah and played a key role in rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians. With the help of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, Zerubbabel encouraged the people to continue the work, overcoming obstacles and resistance.

Later, Nehemiah, a Jew who served as cupbearer to the Persian king Artaxerxes, was allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city walls. Nehemiah led this project, facing opposition and difficulties, but with divine support and the determination of the people, the walls were rebuilt in record time.

These reconstruction efforts were instrumental in restoring the identity and worship of the people of Israel.

The reconstruction of the temple allowed rituals and sacrifices to be reestablished, while the reconstruction of the walls provided protection and security to the city.

These events were extremely important for the history of Israel, since they represented a return to their homeland and their faith.

They symbolized the renewal of the covenant between God and his people, reaffirming the importance of worshiping Yahweh and the continuity of divine promise to bless and protect Israel.

## The "returns" from exile

| Return                                   | First  | Second   | Third   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Reference</b>                         | Ezra 1 - 6   | Ezra 7 - 10  | Nehemiah 1 - 13   |
| <b>Date</b>                              | 538 BC. J.-C.  | 458 BC. J.-C.  | 444 BC.   |
| <b>Managers</b>                          | Sheshbazzar,<br>Zerubbabel, Jeshua.  | Ezra   | Nehemiah  |
| <b>King of Persia</b>                    | Ciro   | Artaxerxe  | Artaxerxe   |
| <b>Elements Of Decree</b>                | The temple was rebuilt, partly financed by the royal treasury. The utensils were returned.   | They were authorized to establish their own civil magistrates. | They were authorized to rebuild the wall.   |
| <b>Number of of which returned</b>       | 42.360<br>7,337 (agents)<br>49.697.  | 1,500 men<br>38 Levites<br>220 assistants<br>1758              | Unknown   |
| <b>Events, Achievements and Problems</b> | Construction of the Temple began, sacrifices were made and the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated.<br>The Samaritans disturbed, and work ceased until 520. The temple was completed in 516. | Problems associated with mixed marriages                       | The wall was rebuilt in 52 days, despite opposition from Sanballah and Gesem.<br>The walls were inaugurated and the law was read. |

- In Persian times, the Old Testament was practically ready.
- Around the 5th/4th centuries BC the definitive writing of the Pentateuch emerged.
- At the end of the 5th century, the so-called work of the Chronicler was born, composed of books I and II of the Chronicles, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.
- After the exile, wisdom literature developed.

## **After the Exile, the Torah will be the “institution” capable of constituting a new Israel.**

Ezra played a key role in restoring the religious and legal identity of the Jewish people after the Babylonian exile. He was a priest and scribe versed in the law of Moses, and his arrival in Jerusalem coincided with a crucial moment in Israel's history. Ezra brought with him a copy of the Torah, the five books of Moses, which contained the laws and commandments given by God to the people of Israel.



He publicly read the Torah to the people, explaining and teaching its precepts and requirements. This had a profound impact, as many Jews had stopped observing the law during their exile. Under Ezra's leadership, the Jewish people renewed their commitment to the Torah.

They repented of their sins, confessed their transgressions, and committed to living according to God's laws.

Ezra also organized the educational system, establishing scribes and Levites to teach and interpret the law for the people. Furthermore, Ezra challenged the people to separate themselves from mixed practices and intermarriage with other nations. He stressed the importance of preserving the identity and purity of the Jewish people, encouraging them to marry only other Jews and to abandon idolatrous practices.

Ezra's work was essential to the preservation of Jewish faith and culture. He restored the observance of the law, reaffirmed the importance of obedience to God, and helped rebuild the religious community of Israel.

His legacy remains an important milestone in Jewish history and influenced the preservation of the Torah throughout the centuries.



| KING PERSEAN   | KING PERSEAN | CORRELATION BIBLICAL  | CORRELATION GREEK  |
|----------------|--------------|---|--|
| Ciro           | 539-530      | Return of Zerubbabel and Jeshua (Ezra 1.3)  |  |
| Cambises       | 530-522      | Reconstruction in Jerusalem interrupted (Ezra 4)  |  |
| Darius I       | 522-486      | Haggai and Zechariah prophesy (520) Temple completed in 516 (Ezra 5 and 6)                    | The Greeks defeat the Persians at Marathon (490 BC)  |
| Xerxes         | 486-464      | Story of "Esther" (Esther 1-9)  | The Greeks defeat the Persians at Thermopylae (480 BC) and Salamis (479 BC) Herodotus 485-425 BC |
| Artaxerxes I   | 464-423      | Return of Ezra (458) (Esd 7-10) Return of Nehemiah (445) (Neh 1-2), Prophecy of Malachi (433) | Golden Age 461-431 BC Pericles 460-429 BC Athens rules   |
| Darius II      | 423-404      | <b>SILENCE<br/>BIBLIC</b>   | Peloponnesian Wars 431-404 BC Athens falls (404 BC) Sparta rules                                 |
| Artaxerxes II  | 404-359      |   | Socrates 470-399 BC Plato 428-348 BC Aristotle 384-322   |
| Artaxerxes III | 359-338      |   | Philip II of Macedon defeats the Greeks at Ceronia in 338  |
| Arses          | 338-335      |   |  |
| Darius III     | 335-331      |   | Alexander the Great overthrows the Persian Empire  |
| Alexander      | 336-323      |   | Alexander  |

## Persian Religion

The Persians created Zoroastrianism, a dualistic religion that believed in the existence of two gods: Hormuz (Good) and Ahriman (Evil).

The principles of Zoroastrianism were collected in a book, the Zend Avesta. Zend Avesta, also known as Avesta, is a sacred collection of religious texts of Zoroastrianism.

It is considered the main sacred book of this religion and contains the teachings, prayers, hymns and rituals practiced by the followers of Zoroastrianism, it is a source of spiritual and moral guidance, and it is used in religious ceremonies and in the practice of the Zoroastrian faith.

## Interbiblical Period. Approximately 400 years

**The interbiblical period, also known as the period between the Old and New Testaments, was a period of about 400 years that separated the conclusion of the Old Testament writings and the beginning of the events recorded in the New Testament.**

During this period, several political, cultural, and religious changes occurred that had a significant impact on the Jewish people and surrounding nations.

One of the most notable changes was the rise and fall of different empires, including the Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire.

These empires exercised control over the Judean region and had direct influence on the life and culture of the Jewish people.



Additionally, there was a growing Hellenistic cultural influence, brought by the Greeks, which affected the religion, language and customs of the Jews. During this period, different religious and philosophical groups also emerged, such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and Samaritans.

Each group had its own interpretations of the Jewish faith and its different practices. Additionally, Jews faced political and religious challenges, such as religious persecution, the imposition of Greek culture, and the attempted desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Although the interbiblical period has no specific records in the books of the Bible, it played an important role in the context in which the New Testament was written and in the events that unfolded thereafter.

This period helped shape Jewish identity and set the stage for the ministry of Jesus Christ and the beginning of Christianity.

# The political-religious groups of Judah

## PHARISEES

### Historical Origin

In Hebrew, P'rushim (separated). They defined themselves as the ideological heirs of the priest Ezra. They emerged from the group of the Assideans (the pious people who supported the Maccabees in their resistance against Hellenism).

### Behavior

They were very concerned about following the divine Law. They integrated spirituality into their daily lives, understanding that sanctification should lead them to make a difference in the world. They accepted the debate over the interpretation of the Scriptures. They were divided into two large groups: the followers of Rabbi Hillel (in whom compassion was more favored) and the followers of Shammai (who interpreted the Law rigorously).

### Basic Beliefs

Free will of man. Immortality of the soul. Resurrection of the body. Existence of angels and demons. Eternal life and eternal punishment. They followed the oral tradition of the Law. All things are directed by God.



# The Political-Religious Groups of Judah

## SADDUCEES

### Historical Origin

In Hebrew, Tz'dukim, was what the priests of the Temple were called since the 1st century BC. They were defined as descendants of the high priest Zadok, from the time of David and Solomon.

### Behavior

They controlled the sacrifices and did not allow any type of pagan ritual to enter the Temple. However, to avoid social unrest, they cooperated with the Romans. They had serious doctrinal disagreements with the Pharisees.

### Basic Beliefs

Man is responsible for his destiny. With the death of the body the soul is extinguished. There is no resurrection of the body. There are no angels or demons. There is no eternal life nor eternal punishment. They only accepted the written Law

# The Political-Religious Groups of Judah

## ESSENES

### Historical Origin

This group is not mentioned in the Bible, but existed in the same period. The Essenes belonged to the same original circle as the Pharisees, the Assideians, but much more radical and dedicated to monastic life.

### Behavior

They were extremely stricter than the Pharisees in observing the Law. They could be married or monastic; In the second case, they led a celibacy life in communities outside the cities, where they dedicated themselves to work, manuscripts and prayer while awaiting the restoration of the true Temple.

### Basic Beliefs

They followed the same doctrines as the Pharisees. The goods were common to all members of the community. Emphasis on high moral practice. I need to love all men. They recognized man's limitations in doing good.

# The Political-Religious Groups of Judah

## ZEALOT

### Historical Origin

They were followers of Judas and Zadok, Jews who rebelled against the Romans in 6 BC. Possibly admirers of the ancient Assideans.

### Behavior

They were devout radicals who did not accept foreign rule and used violence to seek independence for Judah, believing that God would intervene to save them.

### Basic Beliefs

They followed the same doctrines as the Pharisees.

# The Political-Religious Groups of Judah

## HERODIANS

### Historical Origin

They were the Jews who became Hellenized during the Maccabean period. They then supported the Herodian dynasty, accommodating themselves to the Roman government.

### Behavior

They made many cultural concessions and the Jews became more Hellenized. They were very likely to become tax collectors.

### Basic Beliefs

There is no body of specific doctrines. The beliefs of the Sadducees were aligned.

## Intertestamental Period

- **Persian** period 536-331
  - **Greek** period 331-167
- a) **Greek** period proper 331-323
- b) **Egyptian** period (Ptolemy) 323-198
- c) **Syrian** (Seleucid) period 198-167
- **Maccabean** Period 167-63
  - **Roman** period 63-5

## Greece

**330 BC – The Greeks, under Alexander the Great, dominate Palestine and create many problems. It is the first time that a foreign-speaking people oppressed Israel and also forced them to practice pagan religions. Judaism, to resist, locks itself in the Law and defends it uncompromisingly.**

- The interaction between Greece and the Jews during the interbiblical period had a significant impact on Jewish culture and religion. With the expansion of the Greek Empire led by Alexander the Great, Hellenism (the spread of Greek culture) spread to several regions, including Judea.
- The Greek influence brought with it a new language, Greek, which became widely spoken in the region. This led to the translation of sacred Jewish texts such as the Torah into Greek in the famous Septuagint.

- The Septuagint allowed a broader audience, including Greeks and diaspora Jews, to access Jewish sacred writings.
- Furthermore, Hellenism brought a new philosophical and cultural mentality. This challenged Jewish religious and cultural traditions, creating conflict between those who sought to assimilate into Greek culture and those who held firmly to Jewish traditions. The Maccabees led a revolt against Greek influence in Judea, which resulted in the restoration of the Temple and the celebration of the festival of Hanukkah.
- The Greek influence also contributed to the development of different currents of thought within Judaism, such as the Pharisees, who sought to reconcile Jewish tradition with Greek philosophy, and the Essenes, who retired to live in isolated communities, preserving a stricter form of religious practice.
- In summary, the interaction between Greece and the Jews during the interbiblical period brought cultural and religious changes to the Jewish people. These influences and challenges shaped Jewish identity and contributed to the diversity of schools of thought and religious practices observed in New Testament times.



## Alexander, The Great

Following the defeat of the Persian armies in Asia Minor (333 BC), Alexander marched into Syria and Palestine. After fierce resistance, Tiro was conquered and Alexander moved south towards Egypt. Legend has it that when Alexander approached Jerusalem, the high priest Jaddua found him and showed him the prophecies of Daniel, according to which the Greek army would be victorious (Dan 8).

Historians do not take this narrative seriously, but it is a fact that Alexander treated the Jews singularly well. He allowed them to observe his laws, exempted them from taxes during their sabbatical years, and, when he built Alexandria in Egypt (331 BC), he encouraged the Jews to settle there and gave them privileges comparable to those of his Greek subjects.

## Ptolemies and Seleucids



## Judea under the Ptolemies

After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC, his vast Greek empire was divided among his generals in a series of wars known as the Diadochi Wars. These disputes resulted in the division of the Greek Empire into four kingdoms: Macedonia, Egypt, Seleucid, and Lysimachus.



After Alexander's death (323 BC), Judea was subject, for some time, to Antigonus, one of Alexander's generals who controlled part of Asia Minor.

It later fell under the control of another general, Ptolemy I (who had then dominated Egypt), surnamed Soter the Liberator, who captured Jerusalem on a Sabbath in 320 BC. Ptolemy was kind to the Jews.

Many of them settled in Alexandria, which remained an important center of Jewish culture and thought for several centuries. Under Ptolemy II (Philadelphus), the Jews of Alexandria began translating their Law, the Pentateuch, into Greek.



This division of the Greek Empire occurred around 301 BC. and laid the foundation for later Hellenistic influence in the region, as each of these kingdoms spread Greek culture and language in their respective areas of dominion. This division also had important implications for the Jewish people, who lived under the rule of the Ptolemies in Egypt and the Seleucids in Syria, and experienced varying degrees of autonomy and Greek cultural influence.

## Judea under the Seleucids

- After about a century of Jewish life under the rule of the Ptolemies, Antiochus III (the Great) of Syria conquered Syria and Palestine from the Ptolemies of Egypt (198 BC).
- The Syrian rulers were called Seleucids because their kingdom, built on the rubble of Alexander's empire, was founded by Seleucus I (Nicator).
- During the early years of Syrian rule, the Seleucids allowed the high priest to continue ruling the Jews according to their laws.
- However, conflicts arose between the Hellenistic party and the Orthodox Jews. Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) allied himself with the Hellenist party and appointed a man as priest who had changed his name from Joshua to Jason and who promoted the cult of Hercules of Tyre.
- Jason, however, was replaced after two years by a rebel named Menahem (whose Greek name was Menelaus). When Jason's supporters clashed with Menelaus's supporters, Antiochus marched against Jerusalem, sacked the temple and killed many Jews (170 BC).
- Civil and religious liberties were suspended, daily sacrifices were prohibited, and an altar to Jupiter was erected over the altar of the Holocaust.

Copies of the Scriptures were burned and the Jews were forced to eat pork, which was prohibited by the Law. A sow was offered on the altar of burnt offering to further offend the religious conscience of the Jews.

## The Maccabees

It didn't take long for the oppressed Jews to find a leader for their cause.

When Antiochus's emissaries arrived at the village of Modina, about 15 miles west of Jerusalem, they expected the elderly priest Mattathias to set a good example for his people by offering a pagan sacrifice.

However, in addition to refusing to do so, he killed an apostate Jew at the altar and the Syrian officer presiding over the ceremony.

Mattathias fled to the mountainous region of Judea and, with the help of his sons, waged a guerrilla war against the Syrians.

Although the old priest did not live to see his people freed from the Syrian yoke, he left the task to his sons.

Judas, known as “the Maccabee,” assumed leadership after his father's death. Around the year 164 BC. C., Judas had reconquered Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, and reestablished daily sacrifices.

Shortly after Judas' victories, Antiochus died in Persia. However, fighting between the Maccabean and Seleucid kings continued for almost twenty years.



Aristobulus I was the first of the Maccabean rulers to assume the title "King of the Jews."

After a brief reign, he was replaced by the tyrannical Alexander Janeu, who, in turn, left the kingdom to his mother, Alexandra.

Alexandra's reign was relatively peaceful. With his death, a younger son, Aristobulus II, dispossessed his older brother. At this time, Antipater, governor of Idumea, sided with Hyrcanus and the threat of civil war arose.

Consequently, Rome entered the scene and Pompey marched into Judea with his legions, seeking an agreement between the parties and the best interests of Rome. Aristobulus II tried to defend Jerusalem from Pompey's attack, but the Romans took the city and penetrated to the Holy of Holies. Pompey, however, did not touch the temple treasures.

# Rome

63 BC – after a long and turbulent history, from oppressor to oppressor, Israel falls under the tutelage of the Romans and experiences one of its worst moments.

**It is time to rekindle hope, the expectation of the coming of the Messiah, a Just and Faithful King. He is Advent, he awaits it.**



The first period of the Roman Empire had important implications for the Jews, especially in the Judean region.

In the year 63 BC. C., the Roman general Pompey conquered Judea and annexed it to the Roman Empire, placing it under direct Roman rule. This marked the beginning of a period of foreign control over the land of Israel. During the first centuries of Roman rule, Jews faced a number of challenges and tensions.

The Roman government imposed taxes and demanded loyalty to the emperor, which often conflicted with the Jews' religious fidelity to their God and their cultural practices.

The Roman political and administrative system also brought changes to the government of Judea, with the appointment of Roman procurators and the presence of Roman military garrisons in the region.



Tensions intensified with the imposition of policies and practices contrary to Jewish beliefs and traditions. This included interfering in the affairs of the Jerusalem Temple, desecrating its sacred rituals, and imposing pagan statues and symbols in Jewish cities.

These actions caused resentment and indignation among the Jews. This tension culminated in the Great Jewish Revolt of AD 66-70, which resulted in the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem by Roman forces. The subsequent period was marked by a decline in Jewish autonomy and presence in the region, culminating in the dispersal of the Jewish people and the diaspora.

In summary, the early period of the Roman Empire brought significant changes and challenges to the Jews, resulting in political, religious, and cultural conflicts that played a fundamental role in the history and evolution of the Jewish people.

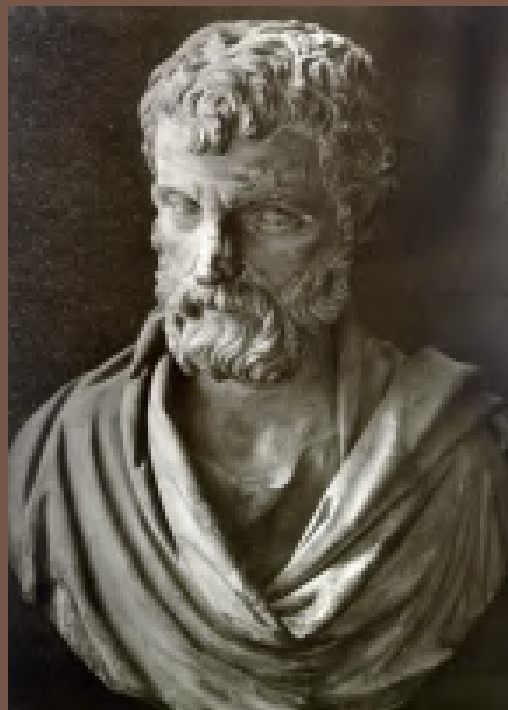
Herod the Great was king of Judea during the period when Jesus was born. He ruled with the support of the Romans, but many Jews questioned his authority. Herod was known for his power and cruelty, and sought to maintain control over his territory ruthlessly.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Herod felt threatened by the news of the birth of a "king of the Jews." Fearing loss of his own power, he ordered the execution of all the male children in and around Bethlehem, hoping to eliminate the perceived threat. However, Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, was warned by an angel in a dream and managed to flee with his family to Egypt, escaping the massacre.

After Herod's death, they returned to Nazareth. The figure of Herod the Great stands out in the story of Jesus as an example of an authoritarian leader fearful of losing power.

His acts of cruelty contrast with the message of love and peace brought by Jesus, and highlight the political and social tensions of the time in which he lived.

*When Herod saw that he had been deceived by the magi, he became very angry and had all the children who were in Bethlehem and all around it killed, from two years old and under, according to the time he had diligently inquired of the magi.*  
*Matthew 2:16.*

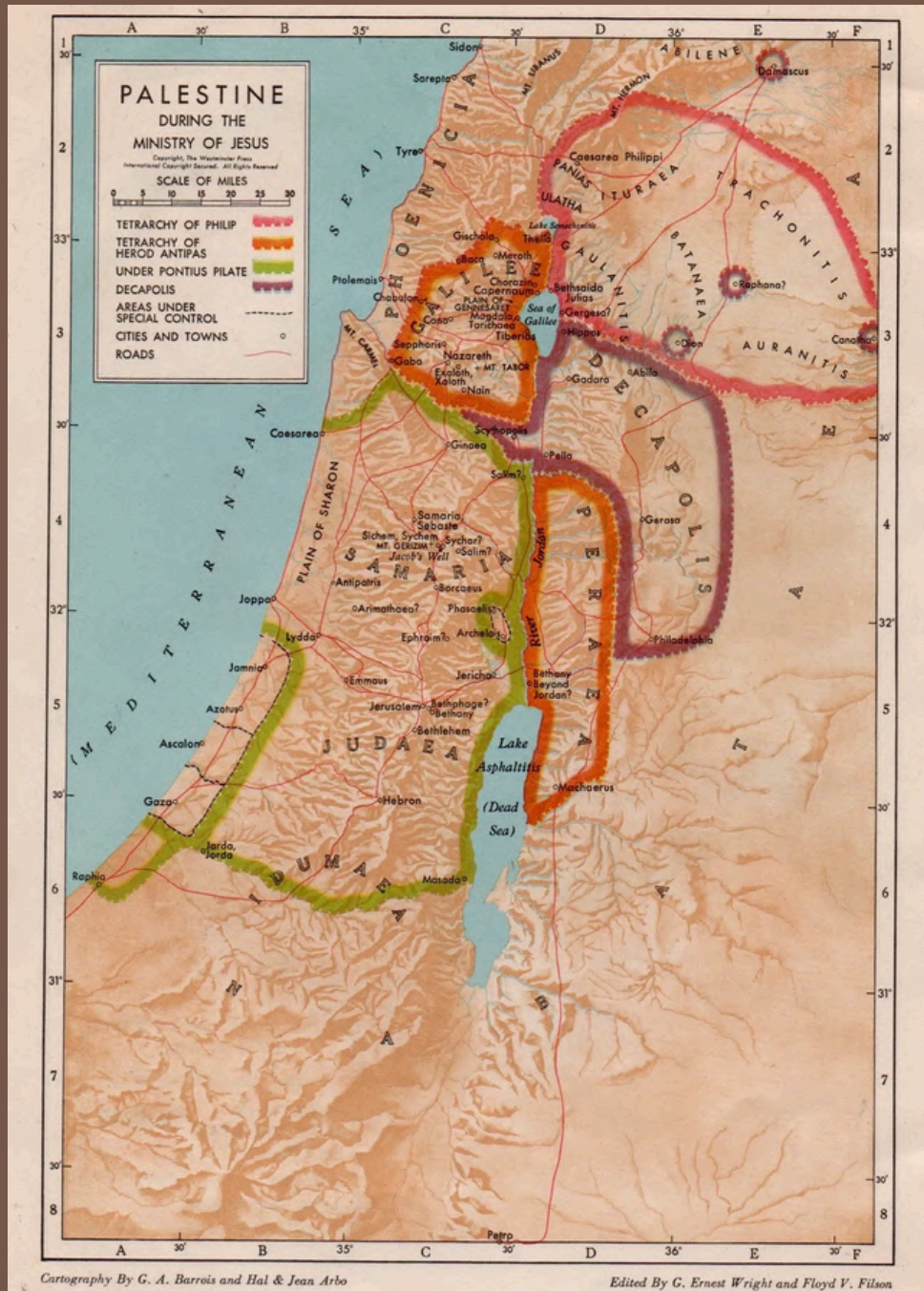


# Decapolis

## Tetrarchy of Philip

## Tetrarchy of Herod

## Dominion of Pontius Pilate



# NEW TESTAMENT



*For unto us a child is born, unto  
us a son is given: and the  
government shall be upon his  
shoulder. And he shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty  
God, Everlasting Father, Prince of  
Peace. Prince of Peace.*

*Isaiah 9:6*



## New Testament

Within the context of Roman domination, which brought political stability but also oppressed the people of Israel, Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, was born. He came into the world in Bethlehem, Judea, as prophesied (Micah 5:2), during the reign of Herod the Great, around the year 2-4 BC.

His coming had been expected for centuries, but many Jews imagined a political Messiah who would free Israel from foreign domination. Jesus, however, proclaimed the Kingdom of God as a spiritual and eternal reality, centered on love, justice and reconciliation between God and humanity.



His teachings challenged the Jewish religious authorities and the Roman political system, because Jesus preached the inclusion of the marginalized, social justice and the transformation of the heart through repentance and faith. He performed miracles that confirmed his divine authority and called people to follow him, but his growing popularity aroused opposition.

Under trial by the religious and Roman authorities, Jesus was condemned and crucified, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecies (Isaiah 53) about his sacrifice for the sins of humanity. His death marked redemption and inaugurated a new covenant between God and man, bringing eternal hope.

# The Story of the Birth of Jesus Christ



The birth of Jesus Christ is one of the most significant events in human history and in the Christian faith. It took place in Bethlehem, in Judea, and represents the culmination of God's promise of redemption for humanity. This event marked the beginning of God's incarnation in the person of Jesus, fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament and inaugurating a new era in the relationship between God and man.

To deny the birth of Jesus is to deny the core of the Gospel and the authority of the Scriptures, because all biblical revelation points to this event and its eternal implications.

## The Background to the Birth of Jesus Christ

Although the Scriptures don't give us the exact month or day of Jesus' birth, we do know that he was born during the reign of Herod the Great and in the context of Roman rule.

The calendar that divides history into “before Christ” (BC) and “after Christ” (AD) was based on later calculations which, although inaccurate, place Jesus' birth between the years 6 BC and 4 BC.

Jesus was born into a world dominated by the Roman Empire, which provided unique political stability through the “Pax Romana”. This era was also marked by Greek cultural influence, which introduced the Greek language as a common language, allowing communication between different peoples and cultures. However, this political and cultural unification brought tensions to Judaism, dividing Jews between those who favored Roman rule and those who hoped for a political liberator messiah.

At the time, the Roman emperor was Caesar Augustus, and Judea was ruled by Herod the Great, a vassal king who sought to please Rome but was widely rejected by the Jews. It was Herod who ordered the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem, trying to eliminate the newborn “King of the Jews” (Matthew 2:16-18).

## The Virgin Birth of Jesus

The birth of Jesus was a miraculous event, announced by God through the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary, a young woman promised in marriage to Joseph. The Gospel of Matthew records:

*“This is how Jesus Christ was born: Mary his mother was betrothed to Joseph, but before they were united, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 1:18)*

Mary was perplexed to hear from the angel that she would conceive a child, as she was a virgin. The angel explained:

*“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. And he who is to be born will be called Holy, Son of God.” (Luke 1:35)*

Joseph initially considered secretly abandoning her, but was told in a dream by an angel to accept Mary, because the child she was expecting was the work of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20-21).

## How the Birth of Jesus Happened

Joseph and Mary's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was motivated by a census ordered by Caesar Augustus. As Joseph belonged to the lineage of David, he needed to register in Bethlehem, the city of his ancestry. This providential circumstance fulfilled Micah's prophecy:

Joseph and Mary's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was motivated by a census ordered by Caesar Augustus. As Joseph belonged to the lineage of David, he needed to register in Bethlehem, the city of his ancestry. This providential circumstance fulfilled Micah's prophecy:

*“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though small among the clans of Judah, out of you shall come to me one who shall be ruler over Israel.” (Micah 5:2)*

Bethlehem was a modest village and, due to overcrowding, Joseph and Mary were unable to find accommodation. Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger, symbolizing his humility and identification with the marginalized (Luke 2:7).

**That same night, shepherds received the news of the birth from an angel who proclaimed:**

*“Today in the city of David a Savior has been born, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11)*



Later, Jesus was visited by magi from the East, guided by a star. They brought symbolic gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh, representing his royalty, divinity and sacrifice (Matthew 2:1-12).

# The Importance of Jesus' Birth

**1- The Incarnation of God:** The birth of Jesus testifies to the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity. John affirms:

*“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14)*

Jesus, being fully God, took on human nature to redeem humanity.

**2- Fulfillment of the Law:** Jesus was born under the Law to redeem those who were under it:

*“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.” (Galatians 4:4-5)*

**3- The Truth of His Humanity:** The virgin birth confirms that Jesus was fully human, capable of living as a man and experiencing our weaknesses, but without sin

*“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who, like us, has been tempted in every way, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).*

**4- The Exemption from Original Sin:** By being born of the work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus did not inherit Adam's sin, becoming the “second Adam” to restore humanity.

*“For as death came by one man, even so the resurrection of the dead came by one man. For as all die in Adam, even so shall all be made alive in Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:21-22).*

**5- The Sovereignty of God in Redemption:** The birth of Jesus in the fullness of time was a sovereign act of God, demonstrating that salvation is not a human work, but a divine one.

*“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” (Galatians 4:4-5)*

## Conclusion

The birth of Jesus Christ was not just a historical event, but a milestone in the history of redemption. He was born in humility so that, through his life, death and resurrection, humanity could be reconciled with God. His coming into the world was the fulfillment of divine promises and the revelation of God's redeeming love, which brought eternal salvation to those who believe.

## Jesus Calls the Disciples



After beginning his public ministry, Jesus called his apostles to follow him and become his disciples.

He selected twelve men to be his closest companions, for the purpose of walking together, learning from him, and continuing the work he had begun.

During their time together, Jesus taught his disciples about the Kingdom of God, shared parables, and revealed deeper spiritual truths.

He also commanded them to heal the sick, cast out demons, and proclaim the good news of the gospel.

Jesus gave his apostles authority and power to perform miracles and preach the message of repentance and salvation.



Furthermore, Jesus set the example of serving and loving others by washing the feet of his disciples and teaching them to love one another as he loved them.

He prepared the apostles for the task of witnessing his life, death, and resurrection, and of carrying the gospel message to all nations.

Therefore, Jesus' call to the apostles involved walking alongside him, learning from his words and actions, and continuing the work of expanding the Kingdom of God through the proclamation of the gospel and discipleship.

The apostles played a crucial role in spreading the message of Jesus and establishing the early church, leaving a lasting legacy for Christianity.

## John the Baptist – The Forerunner

- John the Baptist was the son of Elizabeth, cousin of Mary and therefore considered a cousin of Jesus. He was the son of the priest Zechariah. He played a crucial role as a precursor to Jesus, preparing the way for the coming of the Messiah. He was a charismatic prophet and preacher, known for his austere lifestyle and his message of repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
- John the Baptist appeared on the public stage preaching in the Judean Desert, attracting large crowds who came to hear him. He proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom of God and called the people to repentance, preparing their hearts to receive the promised Messiah.
- John also identified Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, a significant moment in which God Himself confirmed Jesus as His beloved Son. John was fully aware that his mission was to decrease so that Jesus could increase, and he rejoiced as he witnessed the fulfillment of the messianic promises in Jesus.
- John the Baptist's message and testimony about Jesus had a lasting impact on the history of Christianity. He prepared the way spiritually and emotionally for the coming of Jesus, opening people's hearts to the gospel message. His humility, courage, and dedication to God's purpose make him an inspiring example of how to prepare the way for the work of Christ.
- In John the prophecy that a prophet similar to Elijah would come was fulfilled and he followed his model by wearing skin clothes and eating wild honey and locusts. The books that talk about John the Baptist are the four gospels and some quotes from the apostles' preaching in Acts.



# THE TWELVE APOSTLES

## Simon Peter

**Simon, to whom he added the name Peter.**

Mtt 10:2:Mar 3:16  
Lk 6:14 Acts 1:13



## Andrew

**Simon Peter's brother.**

Mtt 10:2:Mar 3:18  
Lk 6:14 Acts :13



## James

**Son of Zebedee, brother of John, "Sons of Thunder".**

Mtt 10:2:Mar 3:17  
Lk 6:14 Acts 1:13



## Jhon

**Son of Zebedee, brother of James, "Sons of Thunder".**

Mtt 10:2:Mar 3:17  
Lk 6:14 Acts 1:13



## **Philip**

Mtt 10:3; Mar 3:18;  
Lk 6:14; Jn 1:43-46;  
Acts 1:13



## **Bartholomew**

**Possibly also  
known as  
Nathaniel.**

Mtt 10:3; Mar 3:18  
Lk 6:14 Acts 1:13



## **Thomas**

**His name is  
Didymus.**

Mtt 10:3; Mar 3:18;  
Lk 6:15; Jn 1:11-16;  
Acts 1:13



## **Matthew (Levi)**

**Son of Alphaeus,  
the publican.**

Mtt 10:3; Mar 3:18;  
2:14; Lk 6:15, 5:27;  
Acts 1:13



**James**

**Son of Alfeu.**

Mtt 10:3:Mar 3:18  
Lk 6:15 Acts 1:13



**Jude Thaddeus**

**Son of James.**

Mtt 10:3:Mar 3:18  
Lk 6:16 Acts 1:13



**Simon (Zealot)**

**Called Zealot.**

Mtt 10:4, Mar 3:18;1  
Lk 6:16, Acts 1:13



**Jude Iscariot**

**He was replaced by  
Matthias, son of  
Simon Iscariot, the  
traitor.**

Mtt 10:4, Mar 3:19; Lk  
6:16, Jn 6:71; Acts 1:26





# The Disciples of Jesus.



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Peter

His Call: Matthew 4:18-22

### Information:

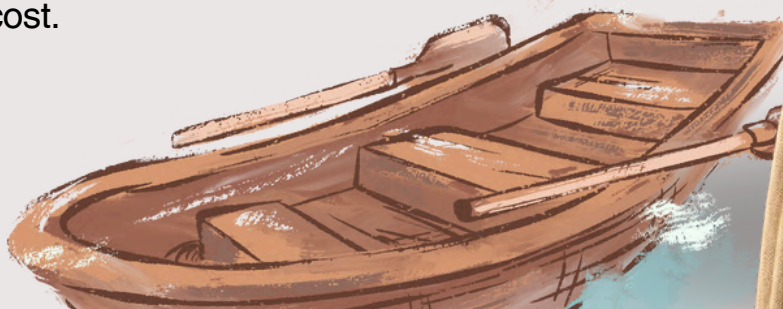
Peter, one of the apostles, was born in Bethsaida, but had his home in Capernaum in Galilee (Mark 1:21). When he met Jesus, he was called Cephas (Kefa), which means “stone” or “rock”, and is translated in Greek as Petros, or Peter (John 1:42). Scholars describe Peter as a country man, characterized by being impulsive, direct and simple.

### Did you know?

- Brother of Andrew, also an apostle, Peter was a fisherman by trade.
- He was married, and his mother-in-law was healed by Jesus, according to Mark 1:30.

## *Peter and the ministry of Jesus:*

Peter, in the episode of walking on water, asked Jesus to come and meet him (Matthew 14:28). He was present at the transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8). Before the cock crowed twice, Peter denied Jesus three times during the crucifixion. He was the one who preached the Gospel for the first time on the day of Pentecost.



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# James (Son of Alphaeus)

His Call: [Matthew 10:3](#)

### Information:

James, son of Alphaeus (Matthew 10:3; Acts 1:13), is identified by the evangelist Mark as “James the less” (Mark 15:40). The expression “the lesser” comes from the Greek term *ho mikros*, which translates as “the little one”. This title can refer to both his stature and his youth in relation to the other apostle James.

### Did you know?

- he only concrete information we have about James is his connection to Jesus Christ, apart from the fact that he is mentioned as the son of Alphaeus. This highlights that, in the end, his relationship with Christ is the most important thing.
- Also known as James the Just, he was a central figure in the leadership of the early Church.
- Some associate James, son of Alphaeus, with Jesus' brother, but this is debated.

## *James and the ministry of Jesus:*

Although the book of Acts and the epistles do not provide details about the ministry of James the son of Alphaeus, it is believed that he played an essential role as an influential leader in the early church.





## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Thomas

His Call: Mark 3:18

### Information:

Thomas' biography doesn't offer much information about his origins or personal details. The name "Thomas" comes from Aramaic and means "twin", as does its Greek form, Didymus. In the Bible, he is portrayed as someone who alternated between a marked pessimism and a deep devotion to the Lord.

### Did you know?

- When the danger of stoning hung over Jesus if he went to Judea, Thomas said: "Let us also go and die with him" (John 11:16).
- During a conversation with Jesus, he showed curiosity about the way to the Father, saying: "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" (John 14:5).

## *Thomas and the ministry of Jesus:*

After the resurrection, Thomas revealed a certain disbelief (John 20:24-25). He insisted on receiving concrete proof to believe that Jesus had come back to life. Eight days later, Jesus appeared to him, proving that he was alive.



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Andrew

His Call: Mark 1:16-17

### Information:

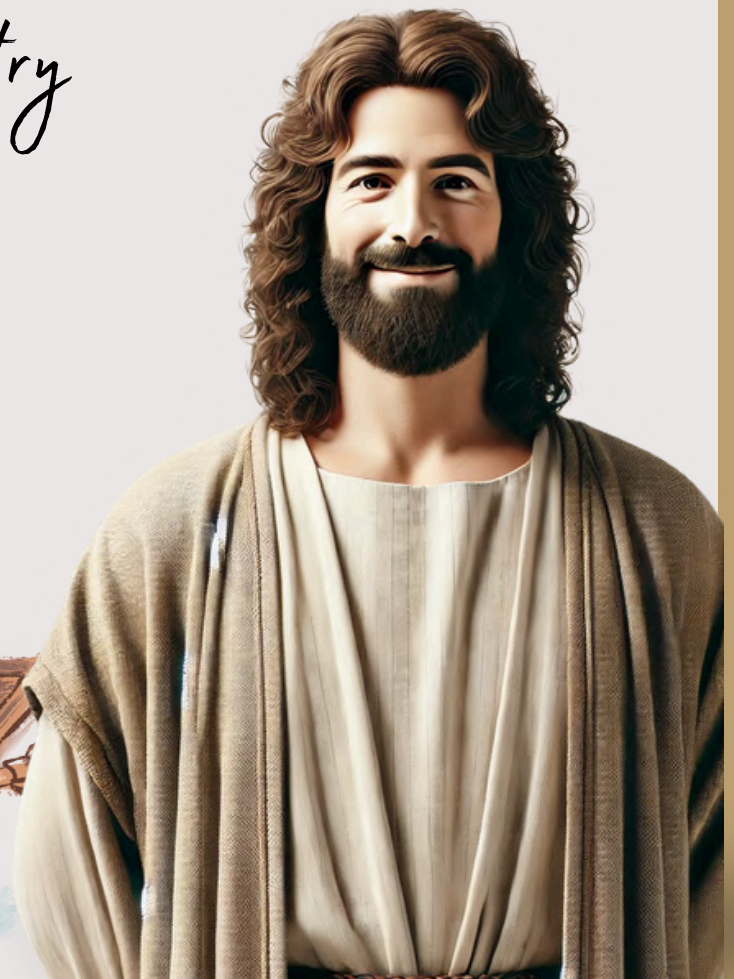
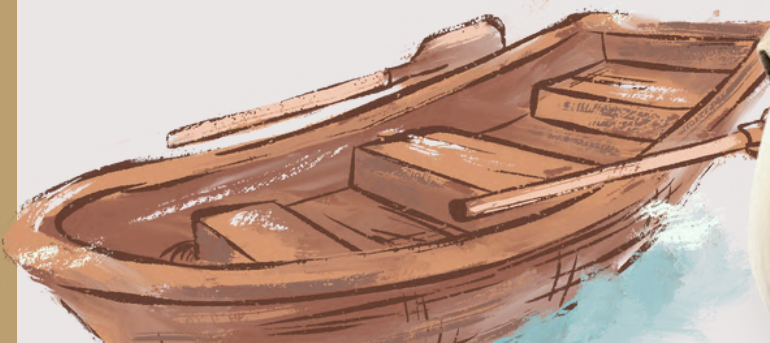
Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was also one of Jesus' Apostles. Born in Bethsaida in Galilee (John 1:44), he later moved to Capernaum, where he lived with his brother. Before following Jesus, Andrew was a fisherman (Matthew 4:18) and a disciple of John the Baptist (John 1:35-40). It was he who introduced Jesus as the Lamb of God.

### Did you know?

- Andrew was present at the multiplication of the five loaves and two fish, along with Philip, who was also from the same land (John 6:6-9).
- He is mentioned in Acts 1:3 as one of the apostles who accompanied Jesus until his ascension.

## *Andrew and the ministry of Jesus:*

In the Eschatological Sermon, Andrew, along with Peter, James and John, asked Jesus to explain in more detail the prophecies about the judgment that would fall on Jerusalem (Mark 13:3-4).







## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# John

His Call: Mark 1:19

### Information:

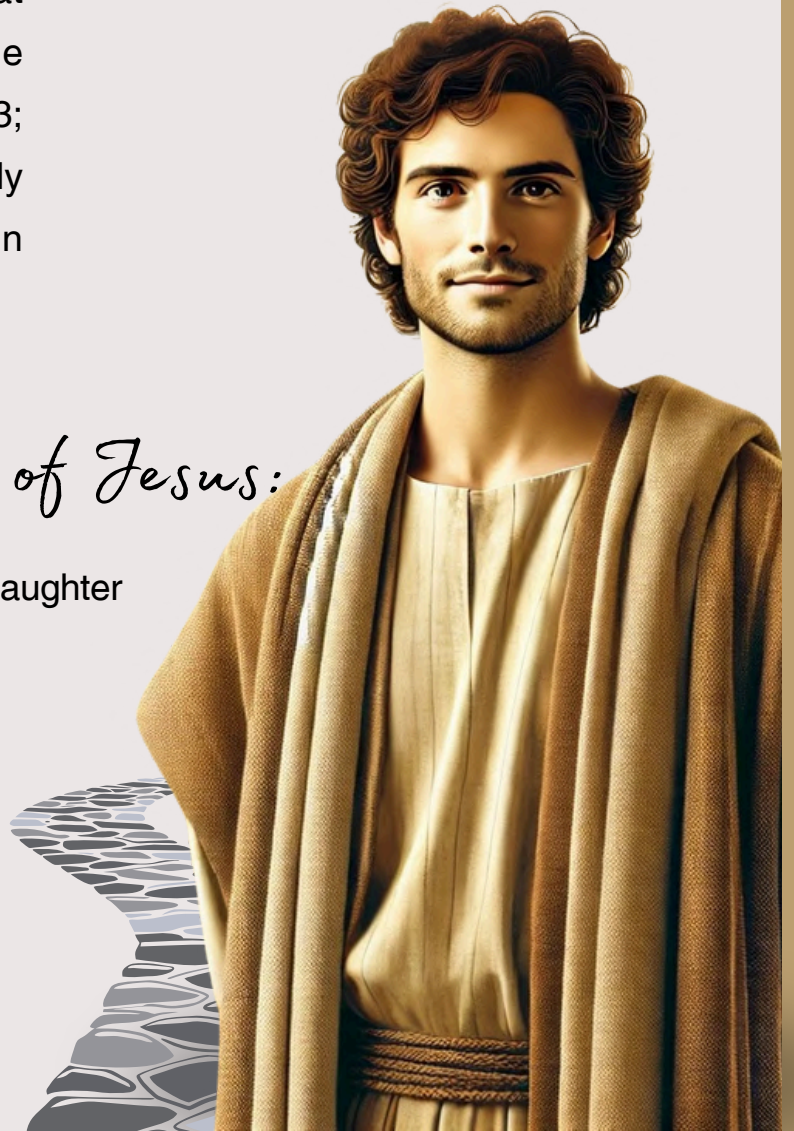
John, one of the disciples, was the son of Zebedee (Mark 1:19; 16:1,2; Matthew 27:56) and also the brother of the disciple James. He worked as a fisherman, his profession. At one point, Jesus called him and James “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). Furthermore, in the Gospel of John, there are several passages that mention a disciple described as “the one whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20), widely interpreted as the apostle John himself.

### Did you know?

- John was among the central leaders of the early church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:6; Galatians 2:9).
- He was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, where he received the visions that form the content of the Book of Revelation.

## *John and the ministry of Jesus:*

- He witnessed Jesus raising Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mark 5:37);
- Accompanied Jesus' transfiguration (Mark 9:2);
- He was with Jesus during his time of anguish in Gethsemane (Mark 14:33).



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Philip

His Call: John 1:43

### Information:

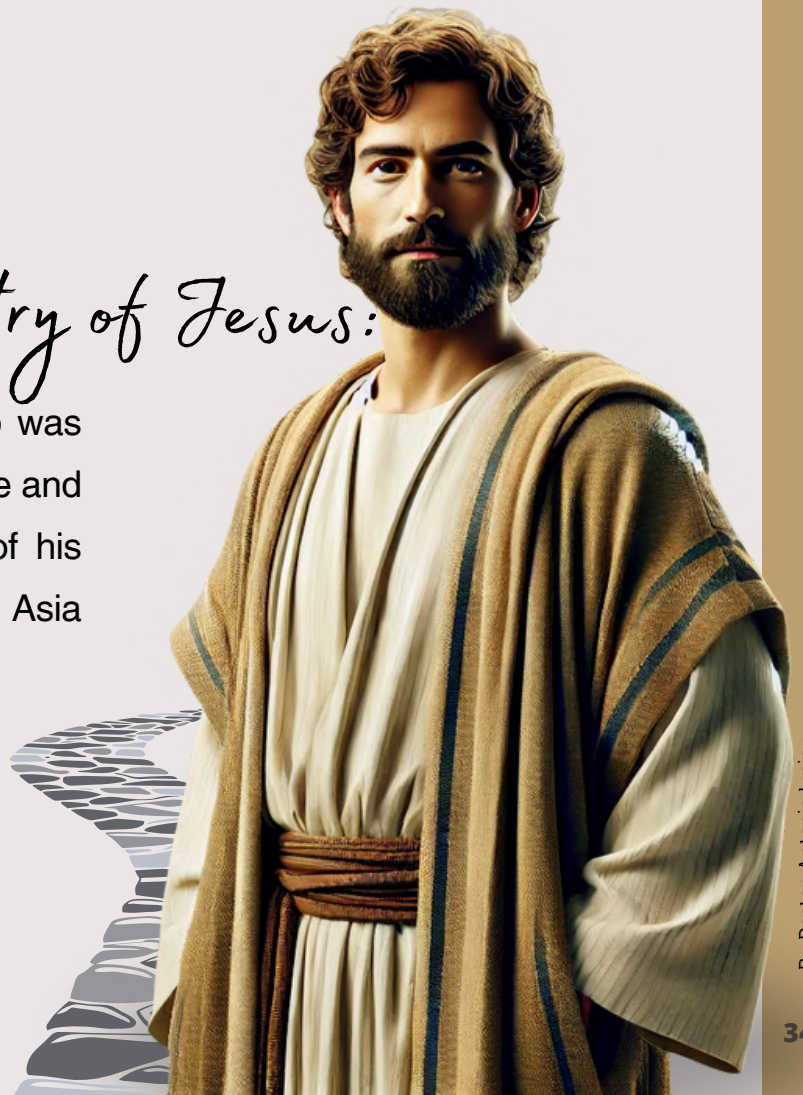
Philip, originally from Bethsaida in Galilee (John 1:44; 12:21), shared his hometown with Andrew and Simon. He played a key role in leading Nathaniel to Jesus, being described as an “instrument” in this call (John 1:43-46). The last mention of Philip in Scripture occurs in Acts 1:13, where he is mentioned among those gathered in prayer in Jerusalem after Christ's ascension.

### Did you know?

- In John 6:5, Jesus asked Philip how they would feed the crowd that had gathered.
- Philip asked Jesus to show him the Father (John 14:8).
- Some Greeks interested in getting to know Jesus sought out Philip.

## *Philip and the ministry of Jesus:*

According to Christian traditions, Philip was active in evangelization in both Palestine and Greece, dedicating a significant part of his ministry to preaching the Gospel in Asia Minor.



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Matthew

Called: Matthew 9:9

### Information:

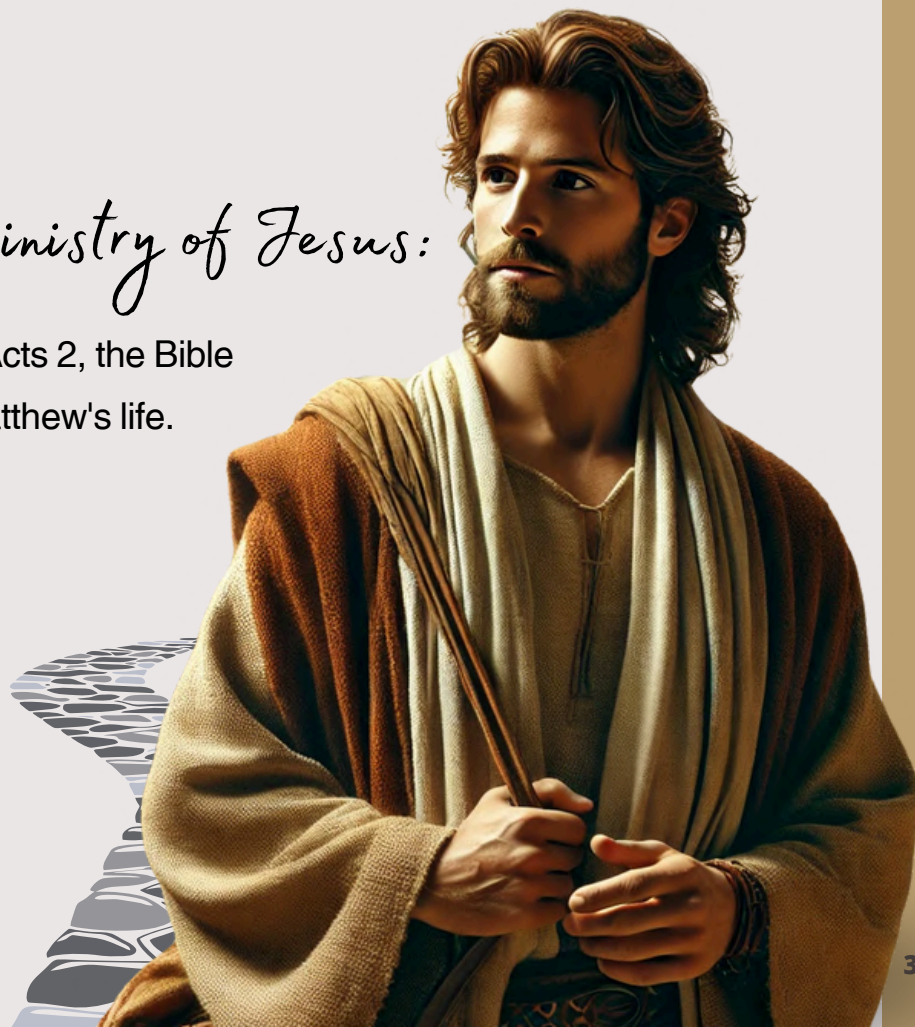
Matthew was a publican, a tax collector who worked for the Roman Empire. This type of occupation was widely despised by the Jews, who saw publicans as traitors to their own people. He was called by Jesus while he was “sitting in the tax collector's office” near Capernaum, where he worked. Jesus invited him to follow him (Matthew 9:9).

### Did you know?

- Matthew was also known as Levi (Luke 5:27).
- He was probably one of the most educated of Jesus' disciples.
- Matthew organized a great banquet at his home (Luke 5:29), where he gathered publicans and sinners, marking the beginning of his journey alongside Christ.

## *Matthew and the ministry of Jesus:*

After the Pentecost reported in Acts 2, the Bible gives no further details about Matthew's life.



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Judas Iscariot

Call: Mark 3:13-19

### Information:

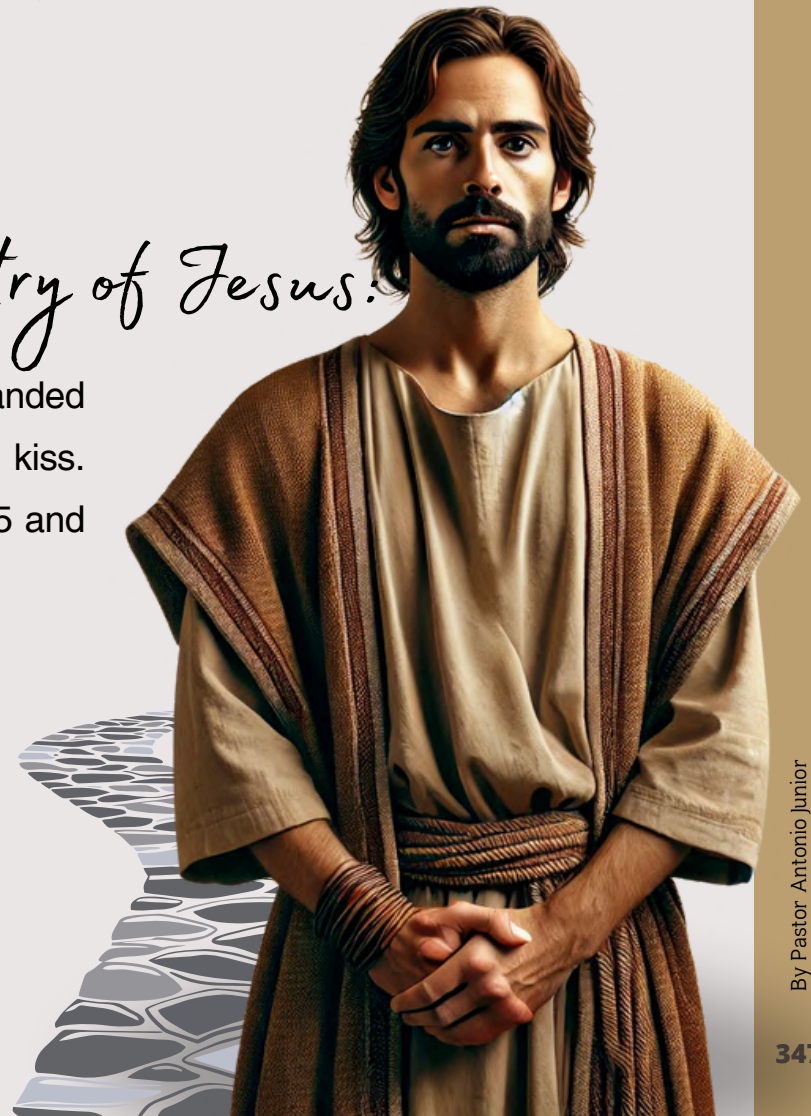
Judas Iscariot was called by Jesus to follow him, but his name often appears last in the lists of the apostles. He was the son of a man called Simon (John 6:71; 13:2,26) and his name was often accompanied by a description such as: “Judas, who betrayed him”, “Judas Iscariot, son of Simon”, or simply “the traitor”.

### Did you know?

- Judas Iscariot was the treasurer of the apostolic group (John 13:29).
- He used to embezzle money from the collection he kept in his purse, for which he was responsible (John 12:6).

## *Judas and the ministry of Jesus:*

For 30 pieces of silver, Judas Iscariot handed Jesus over, sealing his betrayal with a kiss. His death is reported in Matthew 27:3-5 and Acts 1:18.



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Nathanael

Called: John 1:47

### Information:

Bartholomew and Nathanael are the same person and are mentioned by both names in the Gospels. He was introduced to Jesus by Philip. When Jesus met him, he said, “Look, here is an Israelite in whom there is no falsehood” (John 1:47). Nathanael, surprised, asked, “How do you know me?” and Jesus replied, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you” (John 1:48). Recognizing Jesus, Nathanael declared: “Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel” (John 1:49).

### *Nathanael and the ministry of Jesus:*

Later, Bartholomew is mentioned as being present at the meeting of the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 1:13). Apart from this mention, the New Testament provides no other details about his history.

### Did you know?

- Bartholomew is known for his famous question: “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46).
- Jesus promised him: “You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (John 1:51).



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# James (son of Zebedee)

Mark 1:16-20

### Information:

James, son of Zebedee and brother of the apostle John, was a fisherman by trade before being called by Jesus. He is often mentioned alongside John, which suggests that James was the older brother. James was part of Jesus' inner circle of disciples, along with Peter and John.

### Did you know?

- James witnessed key moments in Jesus' ministry, such as the resurrection of Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration and the prayer in Gethsemane (Mark 5:33; 9:2; 14:33).
- Jesus gave James and John the nickname “Boanerges”, which means “sons of thunder”, possibly because of their intense and impulsive behavior.

## *James and the ministry of Jesus*

James was the first of the apostles to suffer martyrdom. He was executed with a sword by order of Herod Agrippa I around the year 44 AD (Acts 12:1-2).



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Judas (Thaddaeus)

Call: Mark 3:13-19

### Information:

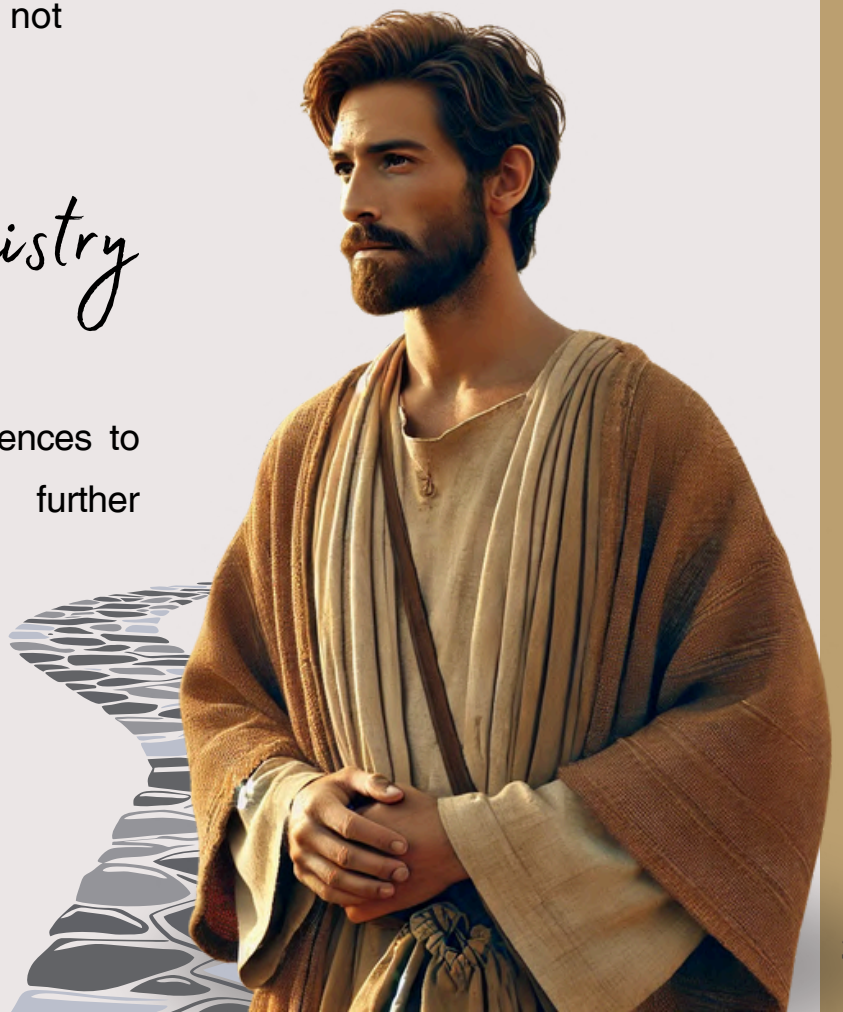
In Matthew's Gospel, he is identified as Thaddaeus, or "Lebeus, surnamed Thaddaeus", according to some variants of Matthew 10:3. The evangelist Mark calls him simply Thaddeus (Mark 3:18), while the evangelist Luke refers to him as Judas (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13). The apostle John also mentions Judas, but makes a point of differentiating him from Judas Iscariot, calling him "Judas, not Iscariot" (John 14:22).

## *Judas and the ministry of Jesus:*

Apart from these few biblical references to Judas Thaddeus, there is no further information about his story.

### Did you know?

- The only information about his origin comes from Luke, who mentions that he was the son of James (Luke 6:16).
- Judas Thaddaeus asked Jesus an important question: "Lord, why are you going to show yourself to us and not to the world?" (John 14:22b).



## 12 Disciples of Jesus:

# Simon the Zealot

Call: Mark 3:13-19

### Information:

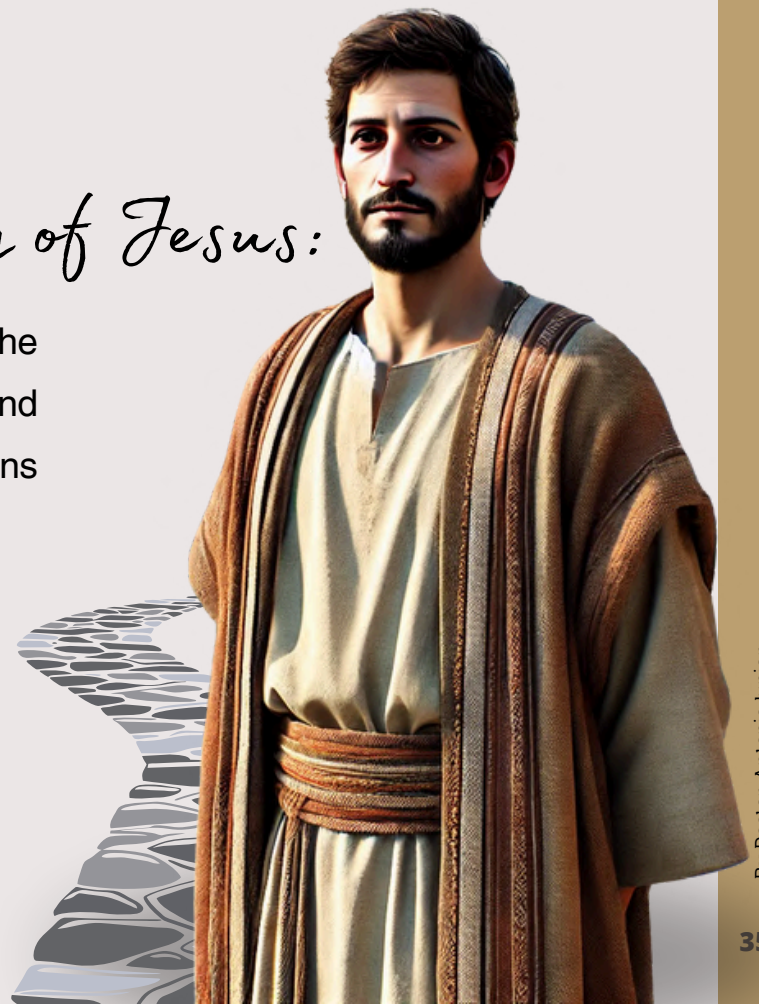
Simon is listed among the apostles, but little detailed information is found about him. The title “the Zealot” comes from the Greek term zelotes, used by the evangelist Luke both in his gospel and in the book of Acts, possibly to differentiate him from Simon Peter. This nickname may indicate that he was part of a Jewish group known as the Zealots.

### Did you know?

- According to Luke, Simon was present with the other apostles at Jesus' ascension after the resurrection and took part in moments of prayer together.
- The Zealots were a Jewish faction that opposed Roman domination, using resistance and even violence to fight against foreign domination.

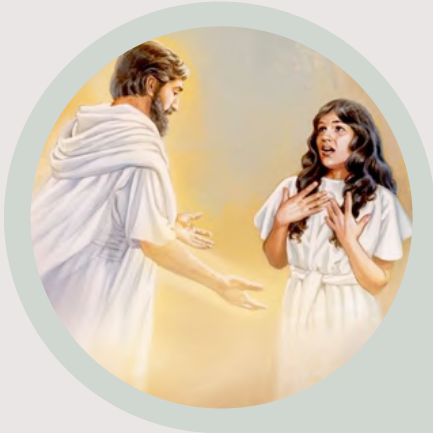
## *Simon and the ministry of Jesus:*

Most of what we know about Simon the Zealot comes from historical sources and Christian tradition, since the Bible mentions little about him.





# Timeline of the Life and Ministry of Jesus



## Before the Birth of Jesus + or - AD 2

- Elizabeth and Zechariah
- Mary and the Angel
- The Birth of John the Baptist
- Joseph and the Angel



## + or - D.C 0 - 2

- The Birth of Jesus Christ
- The Presentation in the Temple
- The Magi
- The Wicked King Herod



## + or - A.D 11

- The Child Jesus



### + or - A.D 31

- Jesus' Baptism
- Jesus Is Tempted
- The Wedding at Cana
- Jesus and the House of the Heavenly Father
- Nicodemus
- The Woman at Jacob's Fountain \*\*
- The Healing of a Nobleman's Son
- The People of Nazareth Get Angry at Jesus
- Jesus Chooses His Apostles
- The Sermon on the Mount
- Jesus Teaches About Prayer
- Jesus Calms the Storm
- The Man with Spirit Hands
- The Man Who Could Not Walk



### + or - A.D 32

- Jairus' Daughter Is Raised from the Dead
- A Woman Touches Jesus' Clothes
- Jesus Forgives a Woman
- Jesus Does His Father's Work on Earth



## Why Jews Didn't Get Along with the Samaritans?



***The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) João 4:9***

### Historical Origin

The divergence between Jews and Samaritans has its roots in the Old Testament period. After the division of the kingdom of Israel into the northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria) and the southern kingdom of Judah), the Samaritans became a community separate from the Jews. They had a different form of worship and religious practices than the Jews who worshiped in the Temple of Jerusalem.



In short, the division of the kingdom of Israel occurred due to political discontent and the unmet demands of the northern tribes for taxes and forced labor. These events resulted in the separation of the tribes and the formation of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Samaria) and the Kingdom of Judah (Jerusalem).

Throughout history, the Samaritans were considered a distinct ethnic and religious community from the Jews. This distinction is due to the mixture of ethnic and religious origins that occurred in the region of Samaria.

After the conquest of the region of Israel by the Assyrians in 722 BC. C., many Israelites were deported and replaced by settlers from other regions of the Assyrian Empire. These settlers intermarried with some of the remaining Israelites, forming a mixed community in Samaria.



**This ethnic mix contributed to the group known as Samaritans.**

## The Samaritans

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The Samaritans maintained their own distinct identity and religion, incorporating elements of Judaism and other religious traditions. They claimed to be descendants of the northern tribes of Israel and considered Mount Gerizim to be a sacred place to worship God.

## The Jews

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Essa mistura étnica e a prática religiosa distinta dos samaritanos levaram à percepção de que eles eram uma "raça mista" pelos judeus, que viam a pureza étnica e a aderência estrita ao judaísmo como elementos fundamentais de sua identidade.

Tensions between Jews and Samaritans increased when the Jews returned from exile and rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem.

There were territorial and religious conflicts, with each group claiming the authenticity of their religious practices and the appropriate place of worship.

During the New Testament period, mutual antipathy between Jews and Samaritans was evident. For example, in John 4:9, a Samaritan woman is surprised when Jesus, being a Jew, asks her for water.

The Jews generally avoided passing through Samaria and instead took a detour when passing through the region.



### + or - A.D 33

- Jesus Feeds 5,000 People
- Jesus Walks on Water
- The Bread of Life
- Jesus Heals a Deaf Man
- Peter Testifies of Christ
- Appearance in Glory: The Transfiguration
- The Boy with a Bad Spirit
- The Good Samaritan
- Jesus Tells Three Parables
- The Lost Sheep
- The Lost Drachma
- The Prodigal Son
- The Ten Lepers
- The Pharisee and the Publican
- Jesus Heals a Blind Man
- The Good Shepherd
- Jesus Blesses the Little Children
- The Rich Young Man



### D.C 34

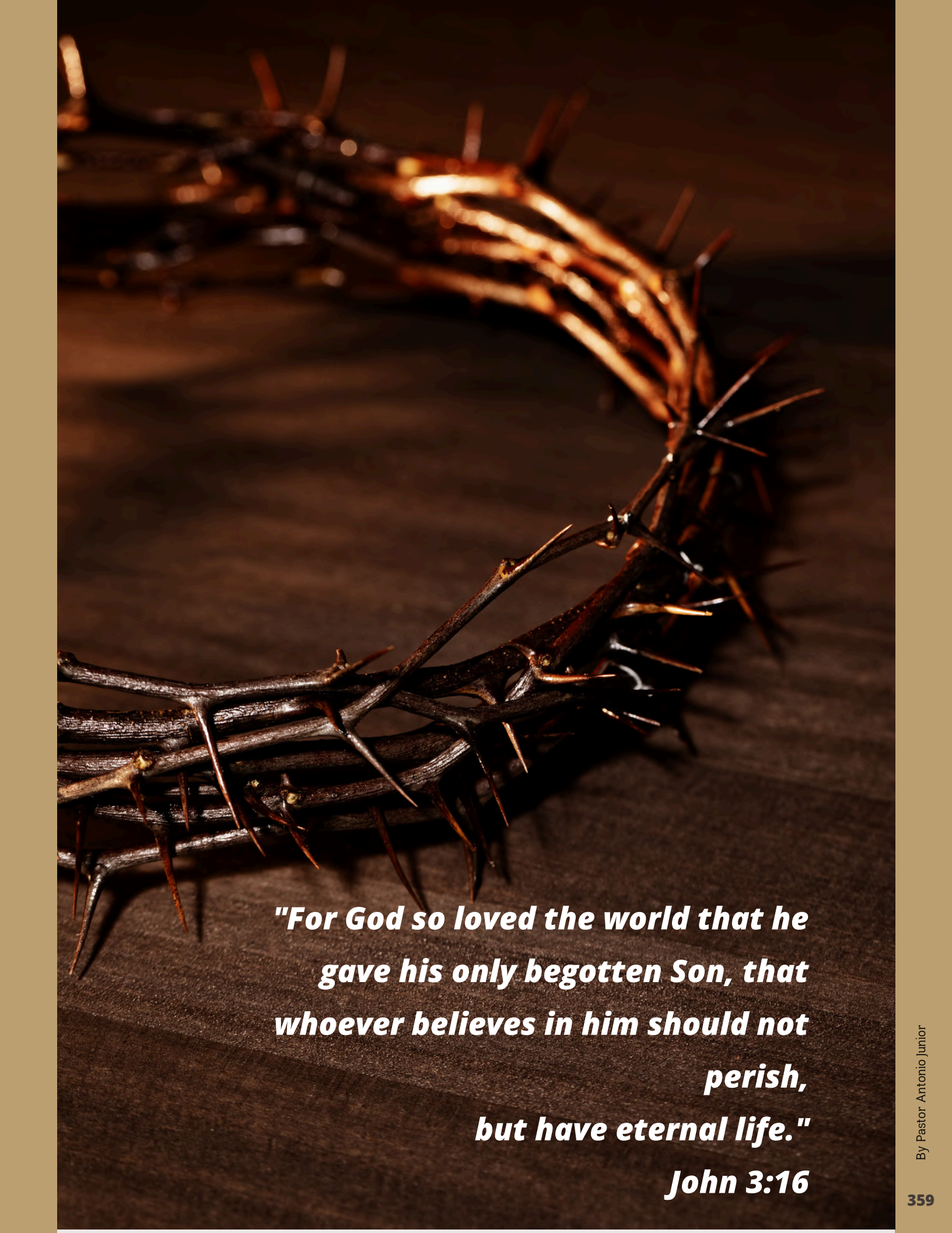
- Jesus Brings Lazarus Back to Life
- Last Week of the Savior's Life



- The Savior Goes to Jerusalem
- The Widow's Coins
- The Second Coming
- The Ten Virgins
- The Talents
- The First Sacrament
- Other Teachings at the Last Supper.
- The Suffering of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- The Trials of Jesus
- The Crucifixion of Jesus
- The Resurrection of Jesus

### + or - AD 34 - 70

- The Apostles Lead the Church
- Peter Heals a Man
- The Death of Stephen
- Simon and the Priesthood
- Saul Hears the Voice of Jesus and Is Converted
- Peter Gives Tabitha Her Life Back
- Paul and Silas in Prison
- Paul Obeys the Holy Spirit
- Paul Finishes His Mission



***"For God so loved the world that he  
gave his only begotten Son, that  
whoever believes in him should not  
perish,  
but have eternal life."  
John 3:16***



## Death and Resurrection of Jesus

The death and resurrection of Jesus are central and defining events of the New Testament.

Through his death on the cross, Jesus sacrificed himself as the Lamb of God to pay the price for humanity's sins, offering redemption and reconciliation with God.

**His death was an act of incomparable love, demonstrating his compassion and desire to restore the lost relationship between God and humanity.**



# The Crucifixion of JESUS

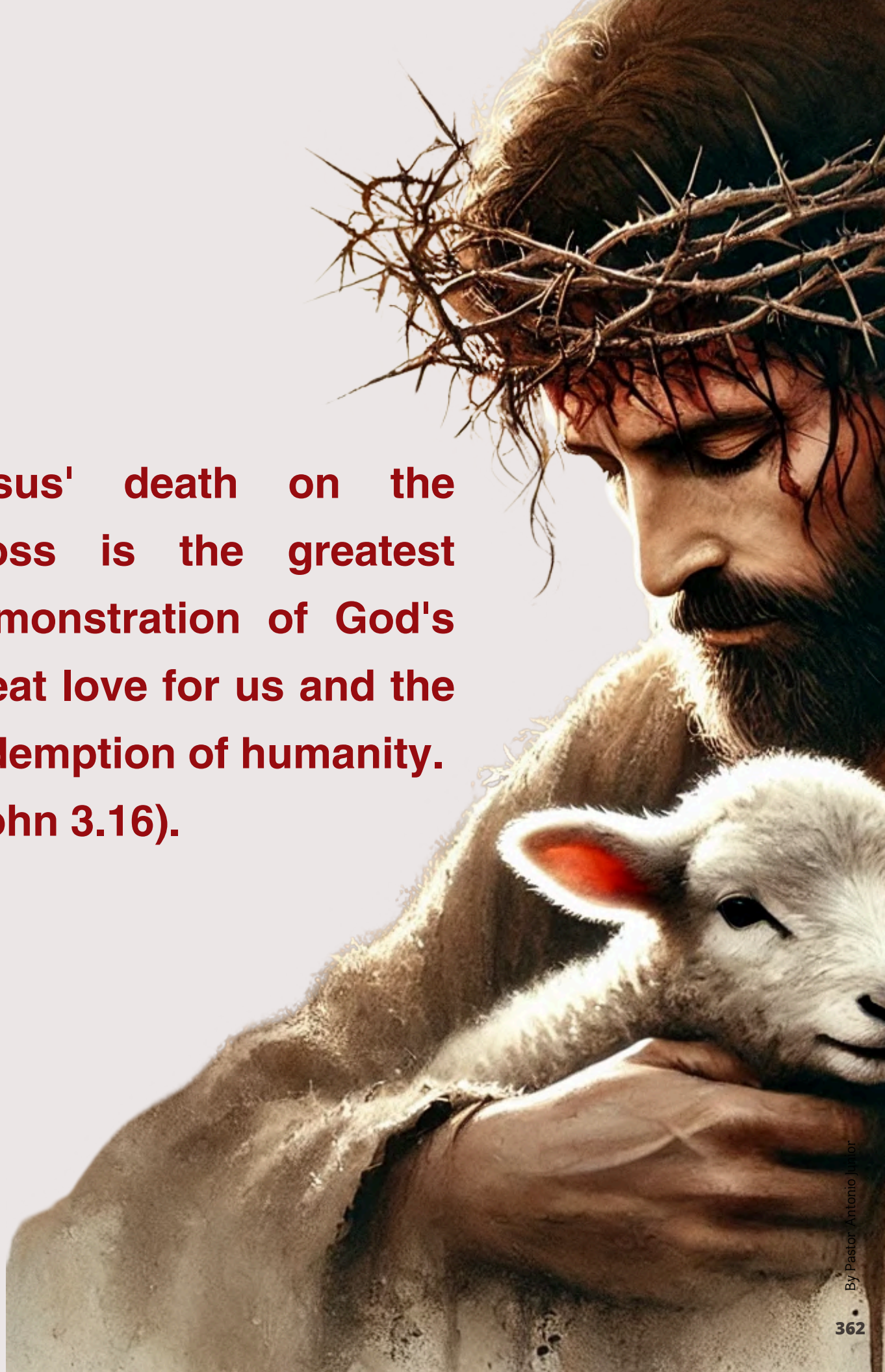
Jesus' death on the cross was the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan to save humanity. Ever since Adam's sin, divine justice demanded atonement, for “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Jesus, the Son of God, lived a sinless life and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice, replacing us and paying the penalty we deserved.

Crucifixion, a painful and humiliating form of execution used by the Romans, symbolized the depth of Christ's love and obedience. He took on not only physical suffering, but also the weight of the world's sin, enduring God's abandonment and wrath.

His death fully satisfied the demands of divine justice and opened the way to reconciliation with God, as expressed in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son”. Furthermore, the cross became a symbol of victory and hope, representing Christ's triumph over sin, death and Satan.



**Jesus' death on the cross is the greatest demonstration of God's great love for us and the redemption of humanity. (John 3.16).**



# The Crucifixion of JESUS

Jesus



## The floggings:

The whip was made of strips of leather. At the end were pieces of iron, lead or bone. The intention was to tear the condemned man's body apart.



## The crown of thorns:

The raw material for the crown was branches of hawthorn or Syrian acacia, representing the royal diadem. The soldiers' intention was to make Jesus into a royal caricature



## The mantle:

This red mantle was the traditional short mantle worn by soldiers, officers, magistrates, kings and emperors. In this way they continued to hurt the Lord physically and emotionally.



## Road of Sorrow

On the way to the cross, Jesus was weak and needed help to carry the cross. The Roman soldiers would never lower themselves to carry it, so they called Simon the Cyrenian to help him.




## Golgotha:

There are several hypotheses about the name, but the most widespread belief, however, is that the name is a reference to the rock formation on the hill, which does look like a skull.



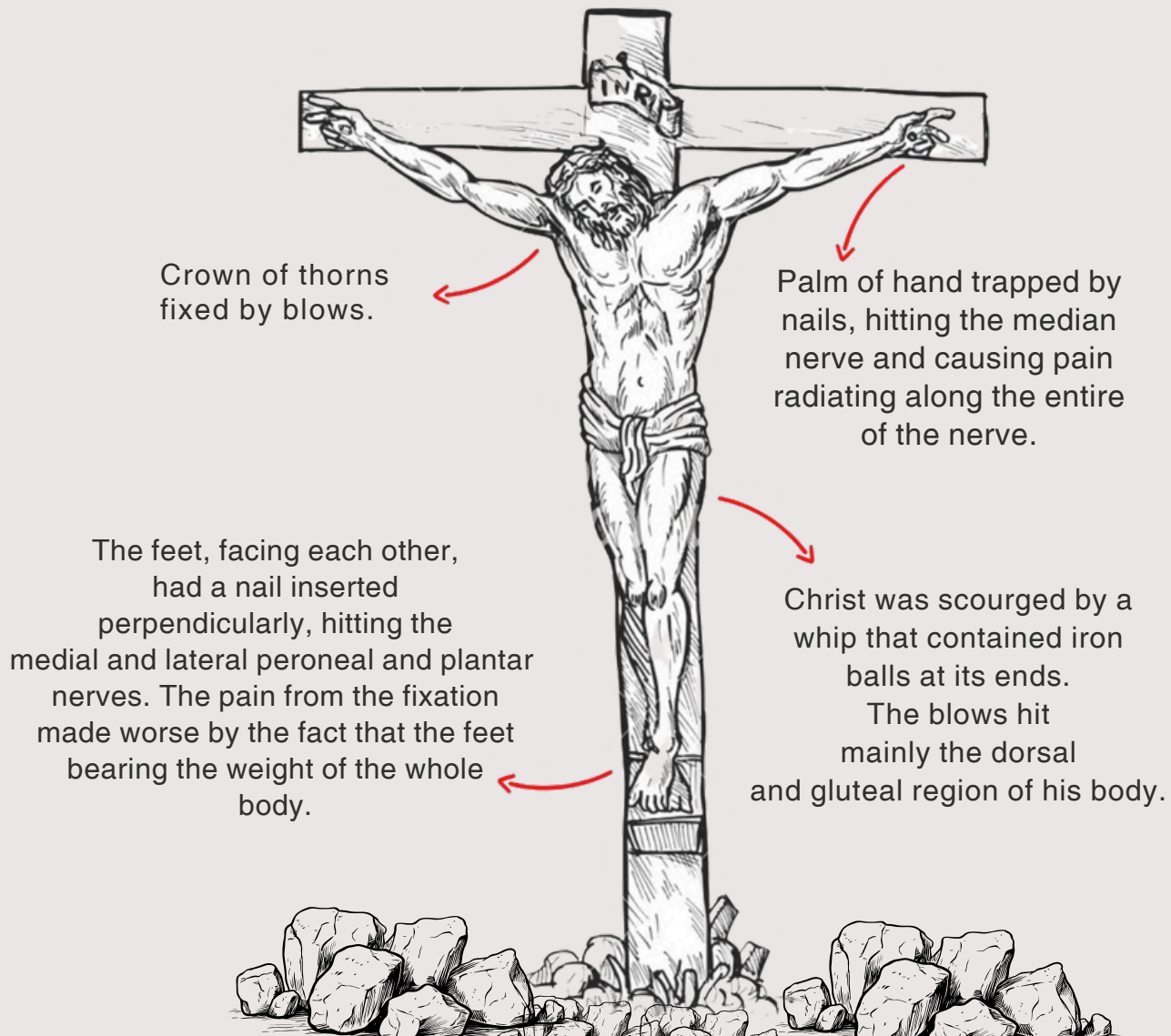
## The cross:

There were three types of cross:

- 1- X - The cross of St. Andrew, shaped like an X.
- 2- T - St. Anthony's cross, shaped like a T.
- 3-  - The Latin cross, the most popular shape in the world.

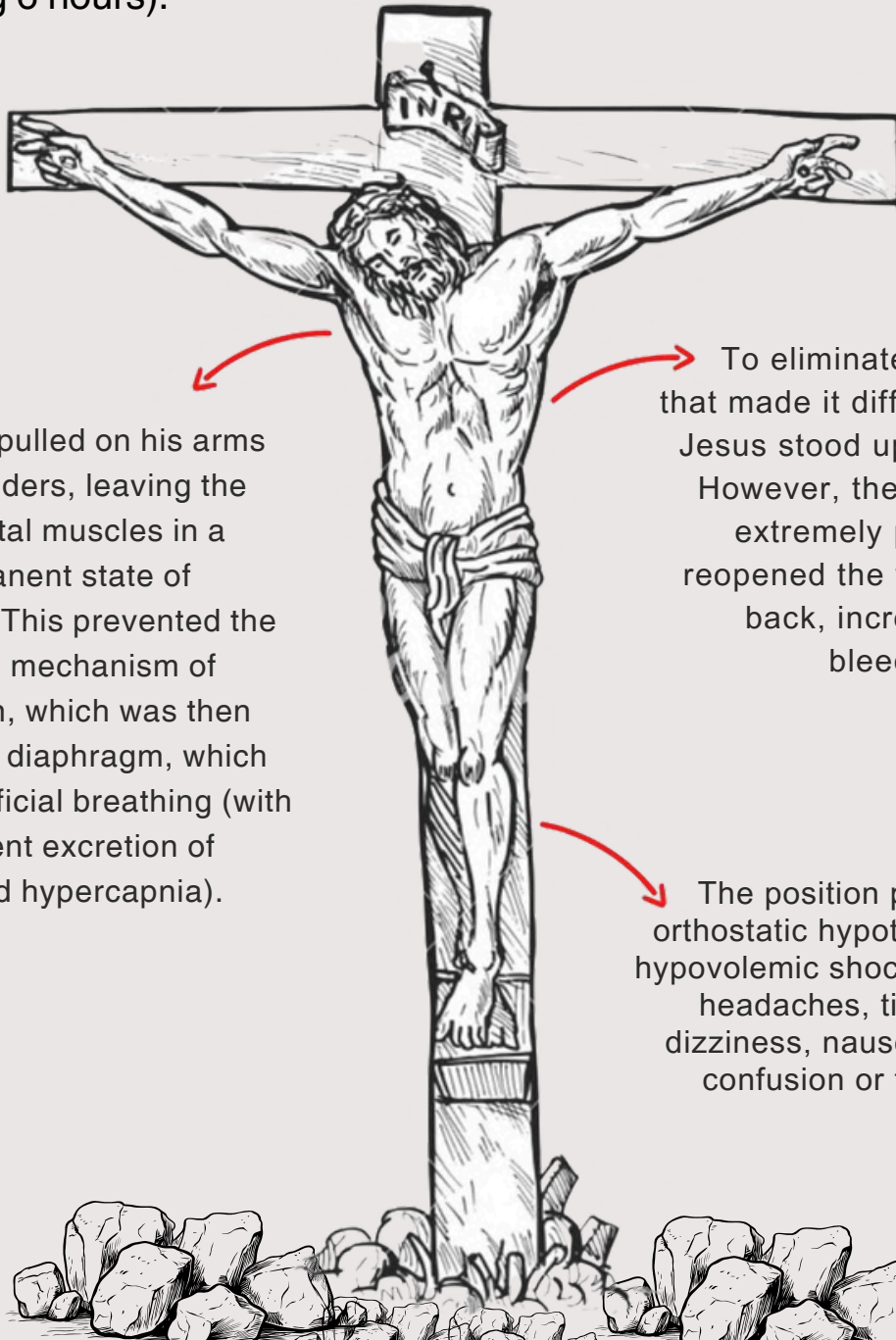
## This is how the crucifixion took place on Golgotha:

- The prisoner's clothes were removed;
- Hands: wrist or metacarpal were stuck, first the right, then the left with the body of the condemned on the ground;
- The body: supported or tied to the pathibulum;
- Feet fixed to the post, together or apart, one foot above the ground so that the knees remained bent.



# The Suffering of Jesus Christ on the Cross:

- Thirst;
- Exposure to the elements, such as the sun and scorching heat;
- Paralysis of blood circulation;
- Intense pain;
- Arteries in the head and stomach full of blood;
- Traumatic fever;
- Continuous loss of blood;
- Slow and painful death (although Jesus' is still considered quick, lasting 6 hours).



his weight pulled on his arms and shoulders, leaving the intercostal muscles in a permanent state of inspiration. This prevented the passive mechanism of exhalation, which was then only by the diaphragm, which led to superficial breathing (with inefficient excretion of CO<sub>2</sub> and hypercapnia).

To eliminate the weight that made it difficult to breathe, Jesus stood up on the cross. However, the process was extremely painful and reopened the wounds on his back, increasing the bleeding.

The position provided orthostatic hypotension and hypovolemic shock, leading to headaches, tiredness, dizziness, nausea, mental confusion or fainting.

## Jesus' death

# Jesus



The other men executed alongside Jesus were still alive and, as such, their legs were broken to hasten their deaths. Jesus had already died, but to be sure, he was pierced with a spear.



It's astonishing that Jesus died so quickly (Matthew 27:50). He was only on the cross for six hours. From nine in the morning until three in the afternoon.

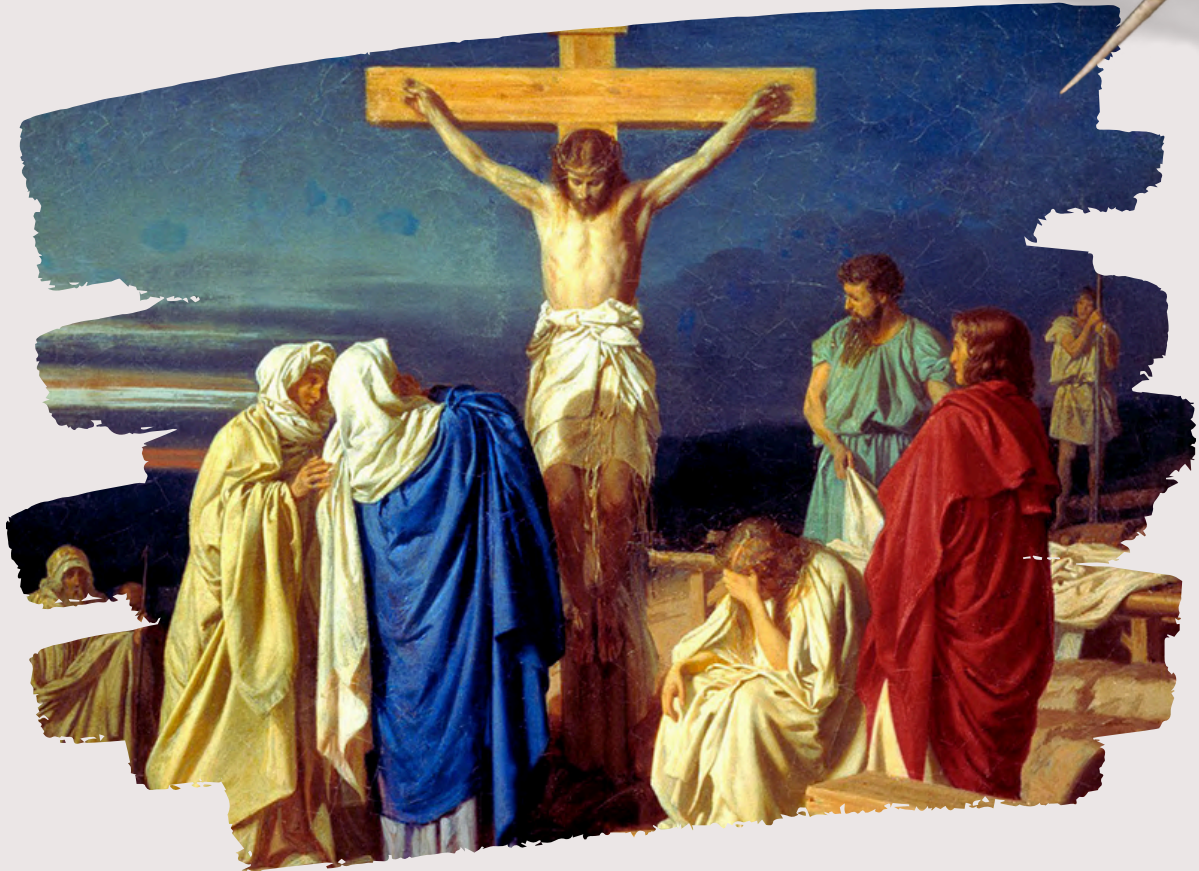


Jesus' death on the cross was real. His death proves his humanity. He identified perfectly with us.



# Jesus' words on the cross:

- Jesus' prayer asking forgiveness for his enemies. Probably said when the crucifixion was just beginning (Luke 23.34);
- The promise to the repentant robber (Luke 23.42);
- He entrusts his mother to John's care (John 19.26,27);
- The scream of physical anguish (John 19.28);
- The scream of victory (John 19:30);
- The scream of resignation (Luke 23:46);



# The veil of the temple has been torn!

- The veil divided the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, where the high priest presented himself on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1-30).
- God's presence was directly linked to the Holy of Holies, so it was a place of greater access to God. Jesus' death on the cross put an end to this separation.



**When Jesus died, Matthew's gospel records a powerful event:**

*"Then Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and gave up the Spirit. Behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth shook, the rocks split" (Matthew 27:50-51).*

## This tearing of the veil has a profound theological significance:

- Abolition of the separation between God and man: The veil symbolized the separation of sinful man from the holiness of God. The tearing of the veil from top to bottom demonstrates that it was God who removed this barrier, opening free access to His presence through Jesus Christ.
- Fulfillment of Christ's atoning work: Jesus' sacrifice is presented in the New Testament as the definitive sacrifice that replaces all the Old Testament sacrifices. He entered the “heavenly Holy of Holies” as our eternal High Priest (Hebrews 9:11-12, 24).
- New access to God: From the death of Jesus, all believers can approach God with confidence, without the need for human intermediaries, because Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant (Hebrews 4.14-16; Hebrews 10.19-22).



*“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter the Holy of Holies through the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, through his flesh.”*

*Hebrews 10:19-20:*

**However, the story did not end at the cross.**

Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, defeating the power of sin and death. His resurrection is the cornerstone of the Christian faith, as it confirms his divinity, his victory over evil, and his promise of eternal life to those who believe in him.

**The resurrection of Jesus instituted a new covenant, a new era of salvation and hope, in which all who trust in him have the opportunity to receive forgiveness, abundant life, and communion with God.**

The death and resurrection of Jesus are the basis of Christianity, permeating all the doctrines and teachings of the New Testament. These events demonstrate the immense love and power of God, offering everyone the opportunity to receive grace and salvation through Jesus Christ.



## Death and Resurrection of Jesus

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to many people over a period of forty days, teaching about the Kingdom of God and strengthening the faith of his followers. He instructed his disciples to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit that the Father would send.

**On the day of Pentecost, while the disciples were gathered in prayer, the Holy Spirit came upon them with power and fullness.**

This life-changing experience empowered them to boldly witness and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

The coming of the Holy Spirit ushered in the Christian church age, granting power, wisdom, and direction to the followers of Jesus. The Holy Spirit strengthened them with spiritual gifts and fruits of the Spirit, enabling them to fulfill the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations.



## The Church Grows and Develops

Beginning with Pentecost, the Christian church began to form definitively and grow rapidly.

The apostles, led by Peter and Paul, took on leadership roles in the fledgling church, teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**During this period, the apostles performed many miracles and signs, demonstrating the power of God and the validity of the message they proclaimed.**

Healings, deliverances, and even resurrections bore witness to the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the church and confirmed the truthfulness of the gospel.

Additionally, the church faced challenges regarding social assistance.

To address the growing need to care for those most in need, deacons, such as Estêvão and Filipe, were chosen to lead this specific area.

These deacons, coming from Greek culture, were tasked with meeting the social needs of people, especially Hellenistic widows, demonstrating the importance of serving and caring for each other within the Christian community.

These events and dynamics in the early church helped shape and strengthen the identity of the Christian community, laying the foundation for the spread of the gospel and the expansion of the church throughout the world.

## Establishing and organizing the Church

With the growth and expansion of the church, it became necessary to establish an organizational structure for its effective functioning.

The apostles wrote pastoral letters addressing doctrinal issues and defining the fundamental principles of the Christian faith. Especially Paul's letters were written to answer questions and solve complex problems facing local churches, as well as organize ministries within the church.

A recurring theme in these letters is the distinction between the Old and New Covenants, addressing the question of whether Christians are obligated to follow the rituals and precepts of the Mosaic law.

**It has been established that, through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, Christians are freed from the obligations of the law and live under grace.**

Emphasis is placed on faith in Christ, salvation by grace, and the importance of a life transformed by the Holy Spirit.

These pastoral letters not only resolved theological doubts but also provided practical guidance for the functioning of the church.

They address topics such as leadership, worship, discipline, ministries, and interpersonal relationships.

These epistles served as a guide for the early churches.

## The Persecuted Church

After the growth of the church through Paul's disciples and ministry, persecution by the Roman Empire began to intensify.

The early Christians faced hostility and opposition for their faith in Jesus Christ, which was considered a threat to authority and the established religious and political system.

The Apostles did not have a different end, practically all of them were martyred for love of the gospel and Jesus Christ, with the intention of stopping the growth of the church.





Although the story of the apostles' death is based on traditions and historical accounts, not all details are known with absolute certainty.

Below is some information about the death of the apostles, according to traditions:

**1. Peter:** According to tradition, Peter was crucified face down in Rome during the persecution of Emperor Nero.

**2. Paul:** Paul was beheaded in Rome, also during the reign of Nero. Since he was a Roman citizen, he received a more "honorable" death than crucifixion.

**3. James, son of Zebedee:** James was the first apostle to be martyred. He was executed by Herod Agrippa I, who had him beheaded.

**4. John:** Tradition holds that John lived to a very old age and was not martyred. He was exiled to the island of Patmos, where he wrote the book of Revelation.

**5. Andrew:** Andrew was crucified in Greece, in the city of Patras, according to tradition.

**6. James, son of Alphaeus:** Little is known about the death of Santiago, son of Alfeo. According to some traditions, he was martyred in Persia or Palestine.

**7. Thomas:** According to tradition, Thomas was martyred in India, where he preached the gospel. They would have pierced him with a spear.

**These are just some traditional information about the death of the apostles. It is important to note that not all details are confirmed by historical records, but these traditions have been passed down through the centuries as part of Christian history.**

## **John and the Apocalypse**

The apostle John was exiled to the island of Patmos, where he received a series of revelations that were recorded in the book of Revelation.


















The Apocalypse is a prophetic work that covers past, present and future events. In it, John describes detailed visions covering different aspects, such as the messages addressed to the seven churches of Asia Minor, the seals that are opened to reveal the contents of the book, the trumpets that announce significant events, and the bowls of God's wrath. that bring judgment to the world.

The book of Revelation presents a complex and symbolic narrative, full of images and visions that represent spiritual events and realities.

It conveys messages of encouragement, warning, hope and definitive victory over evil. Despite its varied interpretations, the Apocalypse is valued as a powerful testimony of the divine plan for the redemption of humanity and the triumph of good over evil.

The apocalypse begins with letters to the seven churches of Asia and ends with the return of Jesus (Revelation 2, 3 and 19 to 22).

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-  **Presentation**
-  **The 7 churches**
-  **Throne vision**
-  **The 7 seals**
-  **The redeemed in heaven**
-  **The 7 Trumpets**
-  **The booklet**
-  **The 2 witnesses**
-  **The Woman and the Dragon**
-  **The 2 beasts: sea and land**
-  **The Harvest of the Saved**
-  **The 7 bowls of wrath**
-  **Babylon the Great**
-  **Wedding of the Lamb**
-  **Millennium and Last Judgment**
-  **New heavens and new earth**
-  **Conclusion**

1st Vision

2nd Vision

Interval

3rd Vision

Interval

4th Vision

Interval

Finalization

**Signs of the End**

**Beginning of Birth Pains**

**Great Tribulation**

**Return of Jesus**

**Final Judgment**

# Revelation

The Book of Revelation, the last in the Bible, is considered by many Christians to be the most difficult to interpret, due to its predominantly symbolic language. The title “Apocalypse” comes from the Greek Apokalypsis, meaning “revelation” or “unveiling”, indicating that its purpose is to reveal, not to hide.

The author identifies himself as John, traditionally recognized as the Apostle John. However, some scholars suggest that it could be another John, based on stylistic differences between the Apocalypse and the Gospel of John.



The date of composition is debated: some believe it was written before 70 AD, during the rule of Nero, while most accept that it was written between 81 and 96 AD, under the rule of Domitian. Regardless of the date, the book was written during a period of intense persecution of Christians.

Revelation was addressed to the seven churches of Asia Minor: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. At that time, Christians were facing persecution and heresies, such as Gnosticism, as well as the imposition of the cult of the Roman emperor.



## There are four main methods of interpreting the Book of Revelation:

- **Preterist:** considers that most of the prophecies have already been fulfilled, especially the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of the Roman Empire.
- **Historicist:** sees the revelations as events that are fulfilled throughout the history of the church until the second coming of Christ.
- **Idealist:** interprets the revelations as spiritual principles applicable to the whole of church history.
- **Futurist:** believes that most of the prophecies will still be fulfilled in a final period before Christ's return.



## The book can be outlined in seven sections:

- **Chapters 1 to 3: Prologue and letters to the seven churches.**
- **Chapters 4 to 7: The seven seals.**
- **Chapters 8 to 11: The seven trumpets.**
- **Chapters 12 to 14: The birth of Christ and the persecuting dragon.**
- **Chapters 15 to 16: The seven bowls.**
- **Chapters 17 to 19: The fall of Babylon and the punishment of the beasts.**
- **Chapters 20 to 22: The kingdom of the saints, the final judgment and the new creation.**

- The book of Revelation was written in a context where Domitian was the emperor of Rome and the persecutions and deaths of Christians had intensified, and the purpose of the book is certainly linked to a future and triumphant vision of the persecuted church.
- Roman persecution came in many forms, from social discrimination to physical violence and death. Roman emperors, such as Nero and Domitian, began campaigns of widespread persecution against Christians, culminating in martyrdom and mass executions.
- However, despite the persecution, the church continued to grow and strengthen. Christians supported each other, persevering in faith even in the face of adversity. Many martyrs became examples of courage and faithfulness, and inspired others to remain steadfast in their faith.
- The Roman persecution, although a period of suffering and challenges for the church, also witnessed the growth of Christianity as a global movement. The Christian faith spread beyond the borders of Rome, reaching different regions and cultures, as Jesus' disciples continued to proclaim the gospel, even in the midst of persecution.

***" And I tell you that you are Peter,[b] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades[c] will not overcome it. "***

***Mt 16:18***

Between 68 and 306 there were dozens of Roman emperors, during this period there were several persecutions of Christians by the Roman emperors.



The persecution of Christians was a constant reality and varied in intensity over the years. Some emperors were particularly known for their hostility toward Christianity, such as Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Decius, and Diocletian.

During these periods, Christians were imprisoned, tortured, and even executed for their faith.

However, despite persecution, Christianity continued to spread and grow, becoming a significant influence on Roman society.

The persecution also strengthened the faith of Christians and led to the emergence of martyrs who became examples of courage and devotion.

The conversion of Emperor Constantine and the Edict of Milan in 313 marked a turning point in history, guaranteeing religious freedom to Christians and establishing Christianity as a legal religion in the Roman Empire.

**Nero (54-68): He was one of the first emperors to persecute and execute Christians, blaming them for the Great Fire of Rome.**

**Constantine (306-337): He was the first emperor to legalize Christianity and promoted religious tolerance with the Edict of Milan. He also convened the Council of Nicaea in 325, which defined the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ.**

**Theodosius I (379-395): He was responsible for making Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire and suppressed other religions considered pagan.**

These are just a few examples of the many emperors and leaders who have influenced church history in different times and contexts. Each played a unique role in relation to Christianity, whether through policies of tolerance, persecution, or promotion of the Christian faith.



## **From a poor and persecuted church, now become elite and chaser.**

After Emperor Theodosius declared Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire at the end of the 4th century, the church began to organize and structure itself under the patronage and influence of the State.

Christianity became a powerful and influential institution, with the construction of great cathedrals and the strengthening of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. However, over the centuries, theological and practical issues also arose that generated divisions and conflicts within the church.



In the medieval period, the church played a central role in society: the papacy assumed considerable political power and the clergy exercised control over religious and secular affairs.

However, there were also criticisms and reformist movements, such as the monastic movement and the search for a more authentic spirituality.



The Protestant Reformation, led by Martin Luther in the 16th century, marked an important turning point in church history. The Protestant reformers challenged papal authority, rejected certain doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic church, and sought a more faithful understanding of the gospel. **This resulted in the division of the Western church into different Protestant denominations.**

Since then, church history has been marked by a diversity of Christian movements and expressions, including the rise of denominations, missionary expansion, religious revival, and ecumenical dialogue between different Christian traditions. The church continues to adapt and face the challenges of each era, seeking to transmit the message of the gospel and fulfill its mission of love, service and witness in the world.



**One thing is certain, God is in control of everything, He is sovereign and the history of humanity is before Him.**

The church has always been persecuted, but always triumphant, because He is with us every day until the end of time.

**Lord God, I thank you for each person who has reached the end of this study. May their chronological understanding of your Word bring clarity, depth and a growing desire to know you.**

**May each teaching they absorb be transformed into practical wisdom, and may each story inspire faith and obedience.**

**Guide them on their journey, give them the insight to apply the lessons in their daily lives and allow them to be light in the midst of darkness.**

**In Jesus' name, amen.**