

New Testament Life Lesson 1
Introduction to the New Testament

Introduction

God always keeps his promises. From the very beginning He promised to send a Messiah, a Savior. From the time Adam and Eve sinned, He told His people that He would send One to pay for those sins. All through the years the Hebrew people looked for the Messiah. Many expected the Messiah to be one who saved them from the wicked people who kept them captive, but a few understood and were watching for the One who would come to set them free from their sin.

The Old Testament tells over and over that Jesus will come. It tells in every book what the Messiah will be like and what He will do.

Now we are to the part of the Bible where we see those wonderful promises come true. The New Testament tells about Jesus and about the things that happened after He came to the earth. Remember – the Old Testament is *before* Jesus. The New Testament is *after* Jesus.

Let's take a look at the New Testament section of the Bible library.

The Story

The first four books of the New Testament are the Gospels. They tell about the life of Jesus and the wonderful things He did while here on earth. Those books are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Next comes the book of Acts, which is a history book. It's written by Luke, who also wrote down the Gospel of Luke. It tells of what happened to the disciples after

Jesus died and rose again and it tells about how the first churches were started. Lots of exciting things happened in those days!

After Acts, we have a long series of letters. You see them in the Bible as “The Epistle to the Romans,” for example. “Epistle” just means letter – the kind of letter you get in the mail. They didn’t have email back then, so Paul and the other early leaders would write their messages down and send them around to the new churches to encourage and teach them.

The first ones are the letters Paul wrote to the churches. They are Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians. Then there are the letters Paul wrote to individual people. They are I and II Timothy, Titus and Philemon. He also wrote the book of Hebrews, which is a letter to the Jewish people.

Can you guess who wrote the book of James? Yes, James wrote that letter. And Peter wrote I and II Peter. I, II, and III John were written by John the disciple. He’s the one who wrote down the Gospel of John. Jude is the last letter, written by Jude.

The last book of the Bible is called Revelation. It is a book of prophecy. It tells the things that will happen at the end of the world.

Who would you guess wrote most of the New Testament? Most people guess Paul, and he did write the most books. Luke actually wrote the most words, though. The two books he wrote are longer than all of Paul’s put together.

There are 27 books in the New Testament – and they are all wonderful! The whole Bible – all 66 books – tell about Jesus, but in the New Testament we see Him plainly.

When we left the Old Testament, the Jewish people were in exile in other lands where they had been carried away captive. Some of them had come back and rebuilt the walls and the temple, but the Persian people ruled them. We skip over about 400 years before the New Testament starts. During that time the Roman people took over and conquered most of the known world. The Roman people were in control and ruling over the Jews when the New Testament starts.

The Romans were a cruel and powerful people. The Jews suffered under their rule. They wanted to be free and to be a strong nation again. They thought the Messiah would set them free from the Romans when he came. They waited for Him eagerly, because they thought He would make them rich and powerful. They certainly weren't looking for the kind of Savior God planned to send!

To God, wealth isn't important, because He owns everything. He has all power, so it doesn't impress Him for people to have power on earth and to rule over other people. To God, the things that happen on the inside of a person are far more important than what happens on the outside.

The Savior He would send would do a far better thing than just defeat the Romans. He would come to defeat the enemy, Satan, and set His people free from the power of sin. He would provide a way for them to be forgiven so they could spend forever with God in Heaven.

The Life Lesson

Most of the Jews weren't interested in Jesus, because they didn't care about what He came to offer. They just wanted things to eat and an easier life. Many people are like

that today. They want a god who will give them whatever they ask for. They think being happy and blessed is having lots of money and lots of stuff.

I hope you won't be like that! I hope you will be like the people who were truly looking for Jesus. They wanted Him because they saw that He is God. What He offers is so much better than just things. He gives us true peace and joy – and the right to be called God's child. We don't care if we have lots of money and things, if we have the truly wonderful things Jesus gives us!

Review Questions

How many books are in the New Testament?

27

The Old Testament is about things that happened _____ Jesus came.

Before

The New Testament is about things that happened _____ Jesus came.

After

What are the first four books of the New Testament called?

The Gospels

What do the Gospels tell about?

They tell the story of Jesus life on earth.

What is the book of Acts about?

The early church.

Who wrote down the book of Acts?

Luke

What does “epistle” mean?

Letter.

The books from I Corinthians through Jude are what kind of books?

Letters

Who wrote the letters?

Paul, James, Peter, John, and Jude.

What is the last book of the Bible?

Revelations.

What kind of book is Revelations?

Prophecy