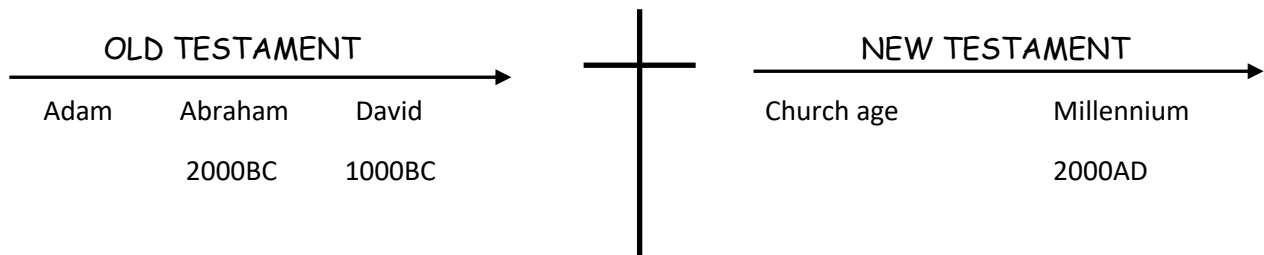




An Introduction

The Bible is an amazing book. Although it is made up of _____ books, with many different human writers, there is one central theme woven throughout by the Chief Author, the Holy Spirit. That theme is God’s plan to establish his eternal Kingdom through the Lord Jesus Christ.



The Old Testament is made up of _____ books. It covers the time in history from _____ until the time before the coming of Jesus Christ. Everything in the Old Testament is pointing towards the coming of Jesus. We see this in the stories of many great men of God who are ‘types’ of the Lord Jesus, we see it in the sacrifices, the Tabernacle and the Priesthood, in the worship of the people of Israel, and in the many prophecies that foretold of His coming.

The New Testament is made up of _____ books. The first four are called ‘The Gospels’. These include Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The word ‘gospel’ means _____. These books are telling us the good news that Jesus has come to die for our sin so that we can enter the Kingdom of God.

Following the Gospels is the book of _____. This tells of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the continuing work of Jesus through the disciples.

After that there are 21 books that were written by the Apostle Paul, James, Peter and John, to the early Christians. These are often called _____, and give teaching about doctrine and practical Christian living that is relevant for the Church in all ages.

The last book of the New Testament is called _____, as it is a revelation of God’s future plan for mankind and his eternal Kingdom.

THE GOSPELS

If you have read through the Gospels you will have noticed that many parts are similar, particularly in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Why has God chosen to give us four Gospels?

The number ‘four’ stands for _____ in the Word of God. For example, there are four corners of the earth: north, south, east and west. The four Gospels give us a complete or full picture of who Jesus is.

Matthew shows Jesus as _____

Mark shows Jesus as _____

Luke shows Jesus as _____

John shows Jesus as _____

The Prophet Ezekiel and the Apostle John both had similar visions of four living creatures before the throne of God in Heaven. Ezekiel 1:10 and Revelation 4:7. These four different faces are like the four Gospels.

Lion, known as King of the Beasts - shows Jesus as King. Gospel of _____

Ox, a domestic animal that serves man - shows Jesus as servant. Gospel of _____

Man - shows Jesus as the son of man. Gospel of _____

Eagle, a bird that soars in the sky - shows Jesus as Son of God. Gospel of _____

Together these four books show us who Jesus really is and what He came to do. We are going to study the Book of Matthew.

Purpose of Matthew

This book was probably written around _____ AD. It was written particularly to the _____ people to show them that Jesus was the Messiah and the King they had been waiting for. The author does this by showing how Jesus' life and death fulfilled the many Old Testament prophecies. In His wisdom the Holy Spirit placed this book immediately after the Old Testament. All that the Old Testament had been pointing to is now seen in Jesus.

Although this book was written to the Jewish people in particular, it was written in the _____ language. About 300 years before the time of Christ the Greeks ruled the world. The Greek language became the international language and continued to be so, even during the time of Jesus and the early Church, when the Romans ruled the world.

This means that the New Testament could be understood, not only by the Jews, but by every race. The Good News was for everyone! Surely our God who is above human history had planned to use this for his purposes.

Author of Matthew

The name of the author is never mentioned in the book. However from earliest times Matthew has been known as the author. (Note that Matthew is also called Levi.)



Who was Matthew? What can we learn about him from the following verses?

Matthew 9:9-13

Mark 2:14

Luke 5:27-28

What lessons can we learn from Matthew's life? Share your thoughts.