

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

APPENDIX C THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Who Wrote the Bible?

Ultimately, above the human authors, the Bible was written by God. Second Timothy 3:16 tells us that the Bible was “breathed out” by God. God superintended the human authors of the Bible so that, while using their own writing styles and personalities, they still recorded exactly what God intended. The Bible was not dictated by God, but it was perfectly guided and entirely inspired by Him.

Humanly speaking, the Bible was written by approximately 40 men of diverse backgrounds over the course of 1500 years. Isaiah was a prophet, Ezra was a priest, Matthew was a tax collector, John was a fisherman, Paul was a tent maker, Moses was a shepherd, Luke was a physician. Despite being penned by different authors over 15 centuries, the Bible does not contradict itself and does not contain any errors. The authors all present different perspectives, but they all proclaim the same one true God, and the same one way of salvation—Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). Few of the books of the Bible specifically name their author.

The Old Testament

The Five Books of Moses / The Law / The Pentateuch / The Torah

1. Genesis

Author: Moses

Date written: 1445-1405 BC

Description: Beginnings: Creation, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the flood, Abraham and Isaac, Sodom and Gomorrah, Jacob (birth of the 12 tribes of Israel), Joseph



2. **Exodus**

Author: Moses

Date written: 1445-1405 BC

Description: Rescue and Redemption: Introduction to Moses, deliverance from Egypt, the plagues, parting of the Red Sea, manna and quail from heaven, journey into the Promised Land.

3. **Leviticus**

Author: Moses

Date written: 1445-1405 BC

Description: Holiness: How to live, what to do, and what not to do as God's people; guidelines and instructions for worship and sacrifices for forgiveness of sins; these laws and regulations were given to the Israelites by God to protect them and keep them healthy and safe.

4. **Numbers**

Author: Moses

Date written: 1405 BC

Description: Desert Wanderings: A mixture of a kind of census of the people of Israel and some famous stories, such as Moses' temper tantrum with the rock which prevented him from entering the Promised Land and the story of Balak and Balaam where God speaks through Balaam's donkey.

5. **Deuteronomy**

Author: Moses

Date written: 1405 BC

Description: Covenant Renewal: The Ten Commandments (chapter 5); God's instructions for holy living including descriptions of specific ceremonies, festivals, and celebrations; driving out the evil inhabitants of the Promised Land

History Books

6. **Joshua**

Author: Joshua

Date written: 1350 BC

Description: Conquering Canaan: Taking possession of the Promised Land: walls of Jericho, sin of Achan, the sun standing still, division of the land, blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience



7. **Judges**

Author: Samuel/Nathan/Gad

Date written: 1050-1000 BC

Description: Rebellion and Rescue: Before Israel had a king, God raised up judges (Gideon, Deborah, Samson) who were anointed and empowered by God's Spirit to lead and deliver God's people from various enemies.

8. **Ruth**

Author: Samuel/Nathan/Gad

Date written: 1000-900 BC

Description: Selfless Loyalty and Redeeming Love: Written to Jews at the time with a strong theme of kindness and loyalty, this book introduces us to the idea of our need for a "Kinsmen Redeemer." Ruth is the faithful, loyal daughter-in-law to Naomi.

9. **1 Samuel**

Author: Samuel/Nathan/Gad

Date written: 1000-900 BC

Description: Establishing the Kingship under God: Samuel is introduced: prophet to Israel; anoints and appoints Israel's first king, Saul; Saul's sad story; David vs. Goliath; the anointing and prophetic appointing of one of the Bible's most famous characters, King David; David's struggle to become king

10. **2 Samuel**

Author: Samuel/Nathan/Gad

Date written: 1000-900 BC

Description: David's Reign: King David's reign as king over Judah and Israel, the return of the Ark of the Covenant, David's wars as king, David and Bathsheba, the prophet Nathan

11. **1 Kings**

Author: Prophet Jeremiah

Date written: 560-550 BC

Description: Kings of Israel and Judah: King David's successor is introduced and appointed; King Solomon (wealthiest, most wise and powerful king in history), construction of the Temple, introduction of the prophet Elijah, amazing miracles performed by Elijah, rise and fall of various kings



12. **2 Kings**

Author: Prophet Jeremiah

Date written: 560–550 BC

Description: Kings of Israel and Judah: Elijah recruits Elisha, Elijah taken to heaven in a whirlwind (without dying), Elisha becomes the appointed prophet, healing of Naaman's leprosy, rise and fall of various kings, fall of Jerusalem

13. **1 Chronicles**

Author: Ezra

Date written: 450–420 BC

Description: Israel's History as God's Covenant People: Genealogy of the 12 tribes of Israel (Jacob); Saul and his son, Jonathan, die; more stories of King David, his appointment and service as king; description of God's plans for the Temple passed to Solomon from his father, King David; Solomon appointed as king; David's death

14. **2 Chronicles**

Author: Ezra

Date written: 450–420 BC

Description: True Worship, Revival, and Reform: Solomon's famous request for wisdom, building of the Temple, rise and fall of kings

15. **Ezra**

Author: Ezra

Date written: 450–420 BC

Description: Starting Over: The promise from God to restore His people from captivity is fulfilled through Ezra and Nehemiah.

16. **Nehemiah**

Author: Ezra and Nehemiah

Date written: 430–420 BC

Description: Rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem: how to combat and defeat spiritual opposition when doing God's work

17. **Esther**

Author: Mordecai

Date written: 460–400 BC

Description: God's Sovereign Care and a Bold Queen's Destiny: the only book of the Bible that doesn't mention God, story of an unlikely Jew who was chosen by God to save His people



Poetry Books

18. **Job**

Author: Unknown. Many scholars suggest Moses

Date written: Unknown. Many scholars suggest 1400 BC

Description: Why do the righteous suffer? Story of a righteous man who loses everything as a test from Satan himself, a conversation between Job and three friends who try to help him but actually give bad input and rhetorical questions God poses to Job about Himself

19. **Psalms**

Author: Several different authors, mostly David

Date written: 1000–400 BC

Description: Prayers and Praises: Songs, poems, and laments from King David and several other psalmists, includes longest chapter of the Bible (Psalm 119). The Psalms often give us the words we need to express ourselves when we don't know how.

20. **Proverbs**

Author: Solomon

Date written: 970–700 BC

Description: Wisdom for Right Living: Contains the greatest principles to be found, personification of wisdom, fear of the Lord

21. **Ecclesiastes**

Author: King Solomon

Date written: 935 BC

Description: Life is meaningless apart from God: Written by King Solomon during a time when he was struggling in his walk with God. He had everything and had tried everything (even a number of ungodly wives) but still felt empty in the end. His honesty about life in general is brutal. In the end, you see and hear his “returning to the Lord.”

22. **Song of Solomon**

Author: King Solomon

Date written: 960 BC

Description: The gift and beauty of wedded love: A love story, poetic literature, expresses the beauty of the marriage relationship God designed. Some interpreters identify a metaphor of Christ and the Church. Others state that this is strictly meant to be a picture of God's design for marriage.



Major Prophets

23. **Isaiah**

Author: Isaiah

Date written: 700 BC

Description: Judgment and Salvation: He confronts the sin of the nation of Israel, he prophesied a future hope of deliverance, and he prophesied of a future Messiah. Chapter 53: written approximately 750 years before fulfillment!

24. **Jeremiah**

Author: Jeremiah

Date written: 585–580 BC

Description: God's inescapable judgment for unrepentant Judah: He prophesies about God's judgment to come for a people who have not repented, the message is validated by a godly messenger, known for the potter and clay metaphor

25. **Lamentations**

Author: Jeremiah

Date written: 586–585 BC

Description: Present sorrow and future hope: expresses his sorrow and emotional pain over the destruction of Jerusalem, these tragedies were a result of Judah's rebellion against Him.

26. **Ezekiel**

Author: Ezekiel

Date written: 590–570 BC

Description: God's judgment and Glory: he delivers the message of God's judgment to a rebellious and faithless people in Judah and Jerusalem and other nations, to encourage the faithful followers that God would restore one day.

27. **Daniel**

Author: Daniel

Date written: 536–530 BC

Description: God's sovereignty in History: he wanted to assure God's people that their present situation was not their final destination, to be able to pass on the stories of God's sovereignty, the lions' den and fiery furnace are two famous stories, prophecies regarding end times.



Minor Prophets

28. **Hosea**

Author: Hosea

Date written: 715–710 BC

Description: Unfaithfulness, judgment and God's redeeming love: calling Israel back to their devotion to the true God, no matter what has been done God still loves His children, if disobedience continues then consequences will follow.

29. **Joel**

Author: Joel

Date written: 835–830 BC

Description: The awesome Day of the Lord: talks about two natural disasters that occur and the threat of a foreign military invasion of Judah, repentance with fasting and prayer for God's mercy.

30. **Amos**

Author: Amos

Date written: 760–755 BC

Description: Justice, righteousness and God's punishment for sin: repentance was called for as a result of pride and corruption, and idolatry.

31. **Obadiah**

Author: Obadiah

Date written: 840 BC

Description: Judgment on Edom: judgment was coming because of their prideful rejoicing over the suffering of Judah.

32. **Jonah**

Author: Jonah

Date written: 760 BC

Description: The magnitude of God's saving mercy: Israel's fall from their purpose of being a light to a lost world, God's mercy goes to great depths.

33. **Micah**

Author: Micah

Date written: 740–710 BC

Description: Justice and judgment/Mercy and salvation: expose the offenses that made God angry.



34. **Nahum**

Author: Nahum

Date written: 630–620 BC

Description: Nineveh's approaching destruction: warned against impending destruction but also provided a message of hope to God's people.

35. **Habakkuk**

Author: Habakkuk

Date written: 606 BC

Description: Living by faith and Trusting God's judgment: God provides assurance to those who remained faithful to Him, the righteous shall live by faith.

36. **Zephaniah**

Author: Zephaniah

Date written: 630 BC

Description: The Day of the Lord and destruction and salvation: warning Judah and the people of Jerusalem about the approaching judgment coming from God, the phrase "day of the Lord" is used extensively.

37. **Haggai**

Author: Haggai

Date written: 520 BC

Description: Rebuilding the temple: when one obeys God the result will be with the strength of His spirit, a call to the people to rearrange their lives so their spiritual concerns will have proper place

38. **Zehariah**

Author: Zechariah

Date written: 520–470 BC

Description: The completion of the temple and the coming of the King: encouragement to start building the Temple, hanging on to the hope that the Messiah will come.

39. **Malachi**

Author: Malachi

Date written: 430–420 BC

Description: The Lord's Love, Discipline, and Coming: warning against a worship that is routine, a faith that is weakened, turn from sins and religious hypocrisy, remove obstacles of doubt and disobedience that block God's flow of favor and blessing



Approximately 400–450 years pass between the writing of Malachi and the birth of Jesus. If you would like to glean information about this time period that leads up to the birth of Christ, here are three recommended resources for you.

1. Josephus Carta's Illustrated the Jewish War by William Whiston (translator), R. Steven Notley (Introduction) ISBN: 978-9652208774
2. 1 Book of Maccabees in the Apocrypha: This work sheds historical light during this time period.
3. A concise History of Ancient Israel by Bernd U. Schipper ISBN: 978-1575067322. This work covers the historical period from the children of Israel into the Promised Land up to the Greek period just before the Roman's takeover.
4. It would be good to read in your *FireBible* the historical chart "From Malachi to Christ."

The New Testament

The Gospels

40. Matthew

Author: Matthew

Date written: AD 60

Description: Matthew emphasizes that Jesus fulfills the Jewish Scriptures, and argues from those Scriptures the way a trained scribe would. He portrays Jesus as the crux of the hope of Israel to his Jewish audience, but also emphasizes the missions to the Gentiles.

41. Mark

Author: Mark

Date written: AD 55–65

Description: Mark emphasizes a messianic secret in as much as Jesus hides his messianic identity as much as he can from the people. He also addresses the failure of the disciples. The main focus of Jesus is on the sick, the poor, the morally and socially marginalized, and others rather than catering to the powerful elite.



42. **Luke**

Author: Luke

Date written: AD 60-63

Description: Luke places an emphasis on Jesus' ministry to the outcasts, the religiously unfit, the poor and the women. This writing takes place between Galilee and Jerusalem.

43. **John**

Author: John

Date written: AD 80-95

Description: John places emphasis on Jesus being the Word and He is therefore the appointed messenger of God. The Spirit is another point of emphasis in this Gospel. Jesus is in confrontation with "the Jews" which he seems to identify as the Judean authorities in Jerusalem. John utilizes the many common images in his culture to communicate with the people.

History

44. **Acts**

Author: Luke

Date written: AD 63

Description: Luke emphasizes prayer, signs and wonders, and the Spirit. He takes this book to identify the spread of the Gospel in world evangelism. His emphasis is that the Spirit is needed to carry out this task.

Paul's Letters to Churches

45. **Romans**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 57

Description: Paul emphasizes that God can save both the Jew and the Gentile. The Christians from Rome needed to learn cultural sensitivity in Christ. It is spiritual, not ethnic descent from Abraham that mattered. Paul wants both Jew and Gentile to accept each other and glorify God together.



46. **1 Corinthians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 55–56

Description: Paul combats the ideology of the day where social status determines a person's role. The people had their own social interests and the people were not getting along, so Paul addressed it. Paul addresses the erroneous views taken by both the people with higher status and those who were manual laborers because of the ideologies they brought into their theology.

47. **2 Corinthians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 55–56

Description: Paul wants to refresh the trust and deep friendship that his converts had with him. He utilizes a style of writing that is full of reproof, comfort, and friendship.

48. **Galatians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 49

Description: Paul combats the Judean Christians in Galatia to correct the teachings from some who were trying to impose Mosaic laws onto the Gentiles. They especially believed that following the law of circumcision, which was a major cultural symbol, was needed in order to prove their fidelity to Judaism. The Judean Jews were arguing that in order to become a full Jesus-follower then Gentiles had to make circumcision a requirement.

49. **Ephesians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 62

Description: Paul was arrested because he had brought a Gentile into the temple and ethnic and cultural division between Jew and Gentiles was a major issue in the church of Ephesus. Paul addresses the need for the church to be a good witness in the society. He also combats the struggles some of these believers have with their occult practices attempting to help them to be overcomers.



50. **Philippians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 62-63

Description: Paul states that he writes to thank this church. He also wanted to provide insight to some uses they would face like the further persecution of the church. In light of this persecution, the church at Phillpi is encouraged to work together. In the time of Paul, encouragement to work in unity was common which is a reason Paul may have used the words “joy” or “rejoice” 16 times to describe what their attitude should be during persecution.

51. **Colossians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 62

Description: Paul addresses the different mystical and gnostic cultural influences that permeated both the Gentile and Jewish thought. Paul writes the most profound presentation of Christology anywhere in the New Testament which contains a mini ethics course; he stresses Christlike character and ethics in the home, family, and work, in all parts of life.

52. **1 Thessalonians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 51

Description: Paul writes to a very young church at Thessalonica who continued to experience persecution after Paul had left. He encourages them with the promise of a future hope.

53. **2 Thessalonians**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 51-52

Description: Paul writes to clear up any misunderstandings about end-time events. The Thessalonians thought it was “any day now” and had become lazy and unproductive. Some believers had thought that the Day of the Lord had already come.

Paul’s Letters to Friends

54. **1 Timothy**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 65

Description: Paul addresses the false teaching that was taking place. His solution was to appoint qualified church leaders who could address the heresies that were spreading into the church.



55. **2 Timothy**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 67

Description: Paul perhaps was discouraged because he will not live to see the fruit of his ministry. Paul discusses the persecution both from within and without the church. He admonishes Timothy to remain faithful to God to the end, just like he has been, by remaining focused on Scriptures and the sound teaching he can find in them.

56. **Titus**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 65-66

Description: Paul admonishes Titus to deliver sound teaching and to do good works. He challenged Titus to continue to stand against those who were trying to demand Christians be circumcised. He encouraged Christians to do good in order to be a good witness to unbelievers.

57. **Philemon**

Author: Paul

Date written: AD 62

Description: Paul fights for reconciliation and doing what is right. Roman law required Paul to return Onesimus to his master, with serious penalties if he failed to do so. Paul used his relationship as a spiritual father to Philemon to plead for the release of Onesimus.

General Letters

58. **Hebrews**

Author: unknown, mostly likely either Paul, Luke, Barnabas, or Apollos

Date written: AD 67-69

Description: The writer tries to pen an argument by the ancient, complex argumentation method of comparison. He writes contrasting Jesus with major themes from the Old Testament. This book contains repeated warnings against apostasy.



59. **James**

Author: James

Date written: AD 45-49

Description: James seeks to offer the solution to combating the rich. He talks about the pride of the rich, the persecution by the rich, and pay withheld by the rich. James takes time to discuss the Christians who are tempted to retaliate with violent acts or words. His call is for Christians to respond to wisdom, faith, and patient endurance.

60. **1 Peter**

Author: Peter

Date Written: AD 60-63

Description: Peter writes to help Christians with the persecution taking place at the hands of the Romans. Rome is looking for a scapegoat and rather than fight with the Jews which were a larger religion, they opted to take it out on the small group of Christians.

61. **2 Peter**

Author: Peter

Date written: AD 66-67

Description: Peter challenges the first-century gnosticism of knowledge. He mentions these seven times in his letter. Since gnostics believed that bodily sins do not matter, Peter wanted to encourage believers to press on in the faith.

62. **1 John**

Author: John

Date written: AD 85-95

Description: John wanted to encourage the Christians to understand the true love of God. He warned against antichrists and lawlessness. John was afraid these believers might be tempted with the heresy of compromise advocated by false prophets while they maintained love for each other.

63. **2 John**

Author: John

Date written: AD 85-95

Description: John wanted to give sound teaching against the teaching of the secessionists who believed Jesus was a great prophet but not the supreme Lord in the flesh.



64. **3 John**

Author: John

Date written: AD 85–95

Description: John writes a letter of recommendation for his traveling missionary friend who needs to be welcomed by the local church while he is teaching in the area. John wants to continue to wage war against opposing influence to the Gospel message.

65. **Jude**

Author: Jude

Date written: AD 70–80

Description: Jude writes to oppose the false teachers whose sexual lifestyles are immoral and who are filled with arrogance. He is contending and fighting for the faith.

Prophecy

66. **Revelation**

Author: John

Date written: AD 90–96

Description: John writes to describe the ultimate revelation and victory of Jesus Christ and the culmination of history. His writing is dominated by three series of judgments with snapshots of worship in heaven. It's a revelation both *from Him* and *about Him*. Principally a revelation of Jesus as the coming warrior and King. In essence, this book says, "Jesus is going to win." John writes in logical rather than chronological sequence.

