

Followers of IESO (FOI)

Patrick Damonse :: Notes for 1st MoUse (Genesis)

1ST MOUSE (GENESIS)

“The Seed Plot of the Scriptures”

WRITER: MoUse

NAME: 1st MoUse (Genesis)

The name Genesis is taken from the Septuagint. The Septuagint (LXX) is a Greek translation made of THE Scriptures (Old Testament) in Alexandria at the order of Ptolemy Philadelphus about 285-247 B.C. Josephus tells us that this translation was made by 72 priests (hence its name) in 72 days. Six priests were from each of the 12 tribes. The Anointed One and Paulo quoted from this translation of the Scriptures (Old Testament). It is older than any of the Hebrew texts extant today.

Genesis is the book of beginnings and the families — the beginning of creation, man, woman, sabbath, marriage, family, work, sin, murder, sacrifice, races, languages, culture, civilization, and redemption.

Genesis means “origin,” “source,” “birth.” The meaning closest to that of the original is “birth.” It is derived from the Greek verb gennao, which means “to beget” or “give birth to.” Genesis is the book of beginnings and sources, but more particularly it is the book of births — this is often overlooked. It is the book of generations. According to this understanding of Genesis, it falls into two natural divisions:

Genesis 2:4 — The Book of the Birth of Heaven and the Earth (from Septuagint)

Genesis 5:1 — The Book of the Birth of Men

Simply stated, the Book of Genesis is the record of the “family tree” of the Jews. It is the genealogy of heaven, earth, and man. Even the new birth is suggested in Genesis 3:15, where is the first mention of a Redeemer.

OUTLINE (according to genealogies):

Genesis 1:1—2:6

Book of generations of heavens and earth — divine poem of creation — Aleim's creative work

Genesis 2:7—6:8

Book of generations of Adam (men, anthropoi) — Adam was created, but children born to him

Genesis 6:9—9:29 Generations of Noe

Genesis 10:1—11:9 Generations of sons of Noe.

Genesis 11:10-26 Generations of sons of Sem (non Jews)

Genesis 11:27—25:11 Generations of Terha

Genesis 25:12-18 Generations of Ismael

Genesis 25:19—35:29 Generations of Isaak (why Abrhaam left out, "In Isaak shall thy seed be called"
cf. Genesis 21:12; Hebrews 11:8, 9; Romans 9:7)

Genesis 36:1—37:1 Generations of Esau

Genesis 37:2—50:26 Generations of Iakob (genealogy of rejected line given first, chosen line last, cf. 1
Corinthians 15:46 for principle in giving genealogies)

KEY: Generations

PURPOSE: To give us the families — Genesis 12:3; 22:18; 28:13, 14; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:6, 9, 16.

The first 11 chapters cover a minimum of 2000 years. It could easily be a thousand times longer. From chapter 12 to chapter 50, the time is 350 years. This should arrest our attention.

11 chapters cover 2000 years, plus.

39 chapters cover only 350 years.

Certainly the record slows down at chapter 12. Better stated, the first 11 chapters constitute an introduction to the remainder of the book and the Scriptures. This chart may prove helpful.

Chart of creation to IESO The Anointed One.

COMMENTS:

Abrhaam is more important to Aleim than the universe. It is being only fair to an author to place the emphasis where He places it.

In the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament), Aleim indicates emphasis in the same way. The four Glad Tidings record the main events in the life of IESO The Anointed One.

Examine the following facts:

There are 89 chapters in the 4 Glad Tidings:

4 chapters cover the first 30 years of His life,

85 chapters cover the last 3 years of His life,

27 chapters cover the last 8 days of His life.

Which is more important to the writers, judging from the space given to each — the first 30 years or the last 8 days? Four chapters cover the first 30 years and 27 chapters cover the last 8 days. When you turn to the Epistles, you discover why the emphasis is on the death, burial, and resurrection of the Master IESO The Anointed One (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). These facts constitute the Glad Tidings; your salvation rests upon them. Do you believe that IESO The Anointed One died for your sins, and that He was raised for your justification? This is essential.

One of the harshest and most frequently heard criticisms of the Scriptures concerns the creation account. It is pointed out that other nations of antiquity had such a story. This is true, but a comparison of the Genesis record with one of the best of a secular nation, the Babylonian tablets of creation, will show the superiority of the Genesis record. Here all is contrast:

Babylonian	Bible
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Tablets begin with chaos,	Bible begins with cosmos, perfection
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Heavenly bodies are gods	Heavenly bodies are matter
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Polytheistic theology (many gods)	Monotheistic truth (one Aleim)
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Work of a craftsman	Aleim spoke
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Characterized by puerility and grotesqueness	Grand and solemn realities of the Creator Aleim who is holy and a Saviour.
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Out of harmony with science.	In accord with science (many scientists are believers).
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Patrick Damonse :: Outline for 1st MoUse (Genesis).

OUTLINE:

I. Entrance of sin on earth, Chapters 1-11

A. CREATION, Chapters 1, 2

1. Heaven and Earth, Genesis 1:1

“Create” (bara) occurs only 3 times, vv. 1, 21, 27.

2. Earth became waste and void, Genesis 1:2.

3. Re-creation, Genesis 1:3-2:25.

a. First Day — light, Genesis 1:3-5.

b. Second Day — air spaces (firmament), Genesis 1:6-8.

c. Third Day — dry land appears and plant life, Genesis 1:9-13.

d. Fourth Day — sun, moon, stars appear, Genesis 1:14-19.

e. Fifth Day — animal life (biology), Genesis 1:20-23.

f. Sixth Day — fertility of creation and creation of man, Genesis 1:24-31.

g. Seventh Day — sabbath, Genesis 2:1-3.

h. Recapitulation of the creation of man, Genesis 2:4-25.

(Law of recurrence).

B. FALL, Chapters 3, 4.

1. Root of sin — doubting and disobeying Aleim.

2. Fruit of sin — “Out of the heart proceed...murders...” (Matthio 15:19).

C. FLOOD, Chapters 5-9.

1. Book of generations of Adam — through Seth — beginning of man’s history — obituary notices, Genesis 5.

2. Antediluvian Civilization — cause of flood and construction of ark, Genesis 6.

3. Judgment of flood, Genesis 7.

4. Postdiluvian civilization — after the flood, Genesis 8.

5. Postdiluvian life — new beginning, Genesis 9.

D. TOWER of BABEL and confusion of tongues, Chapters 10, 11.

1. Ethnology — sons of Noe, Genesis 10.

2. Tower of Babel, Genesis 11.

(Contrast to Day of Pentecost).

II. Preparation for the coming of the Redeemer of all mankind, Chapters 12-50.

A. ABRHAAM (faith), Chapters 12-23

(Development of faith by 7 appearances of Aleim).

1. Aleim's call and promise to Abrham — his response by lapse of faith, Genesis 12.

2. Abrham returns to land from Egypt — separates from Lot — Aleim then appears the third time to Abrham, Genesis 13.

3. First war — Abrham delivers Lot; first priest — Abrham blessed by Melchizedek, Genesis 14

4. Aleim reveals Himself more completely to Abrham — reaffirms His promises, Genesis 15.

5. Unbelief of Sarhai and Abrham — birth of Ismael, Genesis 16.

6. Aleim makes covenant with Abrhaam (Abrham becomes Abrhaam) — confirms promise to Abrhaam about a son, Genesis 17.

7. Aleim reveals coming destruction of Sodom to Abrhaam — Abrhaam intercedes on behalf of inhabitants, Genesis 18.

8. Angels warn Lot — Lot leaves Sodom — Aleim destroys cities of the plain, Genesis 19.

9. Abrhaam repeats sin at Gerar about relationship of Sarha, Genesis 20.

10. Birth of Isaak — Agarh and Ismael cast out — Abrhaam at Beer-sheba, Genesis 21.

11. Aleim commands Abrhaam to offer Isaak — restrains him — reconfirms covenant with Abrhaam, Genesis 22.

12. Death of Sarha — Abrhaam purchases Machpelah cave for burial place, Genesis 23.

B. ISAAK (the beloved son), Chapters 24-26.

(Choosing of a bride compares with Christ and the Ekklesia).

1. Abrhaam sends servant for bride for Isaak — Rhebeka returns with him — becomes Isaak's bride, Genesis 24.

2. Death of Abrhaam — birth of Esau and Iakob (twins) to Isaak and Rhebeka — Esau sells birthright to Iakob, Genesis 25.

3. Aleim confirms covenant to Isaak — Isaak misrepresents relationship with Rhebeka — Isaak digs well in Gerar, Genesis 26.

C. IAKOB ("Whom the Master loveth He chasteneth"), Chapters 27-36.

1. Iakob and Rhebeka connive to get blessing intended for Esau, Genesis 27.

2. Iakob leaves home — at Bethel. Aleim appears to him — confirms Abrhaamic covenant, Genesis 28.

3. Iakob arrives in Haran — meets Rhachel and Uncle Laban — serves for Rhachel — deceived into marrying Lea, Genesis 29.

4. Birth of sons of Iakob — Iakob prepares to leave Laban — Iakob's bargain pays off, Genesis 30.

5. Iakob flees from Haran — Laban overtakes him — Iakob and Laban make Mizpah covenant, Genesis 31.

6. Crisis in life of Iakob: at Peniel a Man wrestles with him — Iakob's name changed to Isrhael, Genesis 32.

7. Iakob meets Esau — Iakob journeys to Shalem, Genesis 33.

8. Scandal in Iakob's family: Dina defiled — brothers avenge by slaying men of Hamor, Genesis 34.

9. Iakob returns to Bethel — Rhachel dies at Bethlehem — Isaak dies at Hebron, Genesis 35.

10. Family of Esau which becomes nation of Edom, Genesis 36.

D. IOSEPH (suffering and glory), Chapters 37-50.

1. Iakob dwells in Canaan — Ioseph sold into slavery, Genesis 37.

2. Sin and shame of Iouda (Judah), Genesis 38.

3. Humiliation in Egypt, Genesis 39, 40.

a. Overseer in house of Potipharh — tempted then framed by wife of Potipharh — imprisoned, Genesis 39.

b. Ioseph in prison interprets dreams of baker and butler, Genesis 40.

4. Exaltation in Egypt, Genesis 41-48.

a. Ioseph interprets dreams of Pharaoh — made overseer of Egypt — marries Asenath — birth of Manasse and Ephraim, Genesis 41

b. Iakob sends 10 sons to Egypt for corn — audience with Ioseph — leave Simeon as hostage — return home with corn and refunded money, Genesis 42.

c. Iakob sends sons (Benjamin included) again to Egypt — entertained in Ioseph's home (does not reveal his identity), Genesis 43.

d. Ioseph sends brothers home — arrested by steward — cup found in Benjamin's sack, — Iouda (Judah) pleads for Benjamin, Genesis 44.

e. Ioseph reveals identity — tender reunion with brothers — invites Iakob and all family to Egypt, Genesis 45.

f. Iakob with family (70) move to Egypt — Iakob and Ioseph reunited, Genesis 46.

g. Iakob and brothers dwell in Goshen — presented to Pharaoh — famine forces Egyptians to sell land to Ioseph for Pharaoh — Ioseph swears he will bury Iakob in Canaan, Genesis 47.

h. Iakob on deathbed blesses Ioseph's sons, Genesis 48.

5. Death and burial of Iakob and Ioseph, Genesis 49, 50.

a. Iakob gives deathbed blessing and prophecy for 12 sons, Genesis 49.

b. Death and burial of Iakob in Canaan — death and burial of Ioseph in Egypt, Genesis 50.

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Peter Damonse :: Scriptural Introductions - 1st MoUse (Genesis).

Scriptural Introductions – 1st MoUse (Genesis).

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Title

The English title, Genesis, comes from the Greek translation (Septuagint, LXX)¹ meaning “origins”; whereas, the Hebrew title is derived from the Scripture’s very first word, translated “in the beginning.” Genesis serves to introduce the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Scriptures (Old Testament)) and the entire Scriptures. The influence of Genesis in Scripture is demonstrated by its being quoted over 35 times in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) and hundreds of allusions appearing in both Testaments. The story line of salvation which begins in Genesis 3 is not completed until Revelation 21, 22 where the eternal kingdom of redeemed believers is gloriously pictured.

Author and Date

While 1) the author does not identify himself in Genesis and 2) Genesis ends almost 3 centuries before MoUse was born, both the Scriptures (Old Testament) (2nd MoUse (Exodus) 17:14; 4th MoUse (Numbers) 33:2; Isou 8:31; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 13:1; Daniel 9:11, 13; Malachi 4:4) and the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) (Matthew 8:4; Mark 12:26; Luke 16:29; 24:27, 44; John 5:46; 7:22; Acts 15:1; Romans 10:19; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 2 Corinthians 3:15) ascribe this composition to MoUse who is the fitting author in light of his educational background (cf. Acts 7:22). No compelling reasons have been forthcoming to challenge Mosaic authorship. Genesis was written after the Exodus (ca. 1445 B.C.), but before MoUse's death (ca. 1405 B.C.). For a brief biographical sketch of MoUse read Exodus 1–6.

Background and Setting

The initial setting for Genesis is eternity past. Aleim then, by willful act and divine Word, spoke all creation into existence, furnished it, and finally breathed life into a lump of dirt which He fashioned in His image to become Adam. Aleim made mankind the crowning point of His creation, i.e., His companions who would enjoy fellowship with Him and bring glory to His name. The historical background for the early events in Genesis is clearly Mesopotamian. While it is difficult to pinpoint precisely the historical moment for which this book was written, Israhel first heard Genesis sometime prior to crossing the Jordan River and entering the Promised Land (ca. 1405 B.C.). Genesis has 3 distinct, sequential geographical settings: 1) Mesopotamia (Chapters. 1–11); 2) the Promised Land (chapters. 12–36); and 3) Egypt (chapters. 37–50). The time frames of these 3 segments are: 1) Creation to ca. 2090 B.C.; 2) 2090–1897 B.C.; and 3) 1897–1804 B.C. Genesis covers more time than the remaining books of the Scriptures combined.

Historical and Theological Themes.

In this book of beginnings, Aleim revealed Himself and a worldview to Israhel which contrasted, at times sharply, with the worldview of Israhel's neighbours. The author made no attempt to defend the existence of Aleim or to present a systematic discussion of His person and works. Rather, Israel's Aleim distinguished Himself clearly from the alleged gods of her neighbours. Theological foundations are revealed which include Aleim the Father, Master the Son, man, sin, redemption, covenant, promise, Satan and angels, kingdom, revelation, Israhel, judgment, and blessing.

Genesis 1–11 (primeval history) reveals the origins of the universe, i.e., the beginnings of time and space and many of the firsts in human experience, such as marriage, family, the Fall, sin, redemption, judgment, and nations. Genesis 12–50 (patriarchal history) explained to Israel how they came into existence as a family whose ancestry could be traced to Eber (hence the "Hebrews"; Genesis 10:24, 25) and even more remotely to Sem, the son of Noe (hence the "Semites"; Genesis 10:21). Aleim's people came to understand not only their ancestry and family history, but also the origins of their institutions, customs, languages, and different cultures, especially basic human experiences such as sin and death.

Because they were preparing to enter Canaan and dispossess the Canaanite inhabitants of their homes and properties, Aleim revealed their enemies' background. In addition, they needed to understand the actual basis of the war they were about to declare in light of the immorality of killing, consistent with the other 4 books that MoUse was writing (2nd MoUse (Exodus), 3rd MoUse (Leviticus), 4th MoUse (Numbers), and 5th MoUse (Deuteronomy)). Ultimately, the Jewish nation would understand a selected portion of preceding world history and the inaugural background of Israel as a basis by which they would live in their new beginnings under Iesou's leadership in the land which had previously been promised to their original patriarchal forefather, Abrhaam.

Genesis 12:1–3 established a primary focus on Aleim's promises to Abrhaam. This narrowed their view from the entire world of peoples in Genesis 1–11 to one small nation, Israhel, through whom Aleim would progressively accomplish His redemptive plan. This underscored Israhel's mission to be "a light to the Nations" (Isaia 42:6). Aleim promised land, descendants (seed), and blessing. This 3-fold promise became, in turn, the basis of the covenant with Abrhaam (Genesis 15:1–20). The rest of Scripture bears out the fulfillment of these promises.

On a larger scale, Genesis 1–11 set forth a singular message about the character and works of Aleim. In the sequence of accounts which make up these chapters of Scripture, a pattern emerges which reveals Aleim's abundant grace as He responded to the willful disobedience of mankind. Without exception, in each account Aleim increased the manifestation of His grace. But also without exception, man responded in greater sinful rebellion. In Scriptural words, the more sin abounded the more did Aleim's grace abound (cf. Romans 5:20).

One final theme of both theological and historical significance sets Genesis apart from other books of Scripture, in that the first book of Scripture corresponds closely with the final book. In the book of Revelation, the paradise which was lost in Genesis will be regained. The apostle Ioanne clearly presented the events recorded in his book as future resolutions to the problems which began as a result of the curse in Genesis 3. His focus is upon the effects of the Fall in the undoing of creation and the manner in which Aleim rids His creation of the curse effect. In Ioanne's own words, "And there shall be no more curse" (Revelation 22:3). Not surprisingly, in the final chapter of Aleim's Word, believers will find themselves back in the Garden of Eden, the eternal paradise of Aleim, eating from the tree of life (Revelation 22:1–14). At that time, they will partake, wearing robes washed in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 22:14).

Interpretive Challenges

Grasping the individual messages of Genesis which make up the larger plan and purpose of the book presents no small challenge since both the individual accounts and the book's overall message offer important lessons to faith and works. Genesis presents creation by divine fiat, *ex nihilo*, i.e., "out of nothing." Three traumatic events of epic proportions, namely the Fall, the universal Flood, and the

Dispersion of nations are presented as historical backdrop in order to understand world history. From Abrahah on, the pattern is to focus on Aleim's redemption and blessing. The customs of Genesis often differ considerably from those of our modern day. They must be explained against their ancient Near Eastern background. Each custom must be treated according to the immediate context of the passage before any attempt is made to explain it based on customs recorded in extrabiblical sources or even elsewhere in Scripture.

Outline

Genesis by content is comprised of two basic sections: 1) Primitive history (Genesis 1–11) and 2) Patriarchal history (Genesis 12–50). Primitive history records 4 major events: 1) Creation (Genesis 1, 2); 2) the Fall (Genesis 3–5); 3) the Flood (Genesis 6–9); and 4) the Dispersion (Genesis 10, 11). Patriarchal history spotlights 4 great men: 1) Abrahah (Genesis 12:1–25:8); 2) Isaak (Genesis 21:1–35:29); 3) Iakob (Genesis 25:21–50:14); and 4) Ioseph (Genesis 30:22–50:26).

The literary structure of Genesis is built on the frequently recurring phrase “the history/genealogy of” and is the basis for the following outline:

The Creation of Heaven and Earth (1:1–2:3)

The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth (2:4–4:26)

Adam and Euen in Eden (2:4–25)

The Fall and Its Outcomes (chapter 3)

Murder of a Brother (4:1–24)

Hope in the Descendants of Seth (4:25, 26)

The Generations of Adam (5:1–6:8)

Genealogy—Seth to Noe (chapter 5)

Rampant Sin Prior to the Flood (6:1–8)

The Generations of Noe (6:9–9:29)

Preparation for the Flood (6:9–7:9)

The Flood and Deliverance (7:10–8:19)

Aleim's Noeic Covenant (8:20–9:17)

The History of Noe's Descendants (9:18–29)

The Generations of Sem, Ham, and Iapheth (10:1–11:9)

The Nations (chapter 10)

Dispersion of the Nations (11:1–9)

The Generations of Sem: Genealogy of Sem to Terha (11:10–26)

The Generations of Terha (11:27–25:11)

Genealogy (11:27–32)

The Abrahamic Covenant: His Land and People (12:1–22:19)

Journey to the Promised Land (12:1–9)

Redemption from Egypt (12:10–20)

Division of the land (chapter 13)

Victory over the kings (chapter 14)

The covenant ratified (chapter 15)

Rejection of Agarh and Ismael (chapter 16)

The covenant confirmed (chapter 17)

Birth of Isaac foretold (18:1–15)

Sodom and Gomorrah (18:16–19:38)

Philistine encounter (chapter 20)

Isaac's birth (chapter 21)

Abraham's act of faith with Isaac (22:1–19)

Abraham's Promised Seed (22:20–25:11)

Rebecca's background (22:20–24)

Death of Sarah (Chapter 23)

Isaac's marriage to Rebecca (chapter 24)

Isaac the only heir (25:1–6)

Death of Abraham (25:7–11)

The Generations of Ismael (25:12–18)

The Generations of Isaac (25:19–35:29)

Competition Between Esau and Jacob (25:19–34)

Covenant Blessings to Isaac (chapter 26)

Iakob's Deception for the Blessing (27:1–40)
Blessing on Iakob in a Foreign Land (27:41–32:32)
Iakob sent to Laban (27:41–28:9)
Angel at Bethel (28:10–22)
Disagreements with Laban (29:1–30)
Promised seed (29:31–30:24)
Departure from Arham (30:25–31:55)
Angels at Mahanaim and Penuel (chapter 32)
Esau's Reunion and Reconciliation with Iakob (33:1–17)
Events and Deaths from Shechem to Mamre (33:18–35:29)
The Generations of Esau (36:1–37:1)
The Generations of Iakob (37:2–50:26)
Ioseph's Dreams (37:2–11)
Family Tragedy (37:12–38:30)
Vice Regency over Egypt (chapters 39–41)
Reunion with Family (chapters . 42–45)
Transition to Exodus (chapters 46–50)
Journey to Egypt (46:1–27)
Occupation in Goshen (46:28–47:31)
Blessings on the twelve tribes (48:1–49:28)
Death and burial of Iakob in Canaan (49:29–50:14)
Death of Ioseph in Egypt (50:15–26)
Footnotes

1. LXX Septuagint: an ancient translation of the Scriptures (Old Testament) into Greek.

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1st MoUse (Genesis)

As its name implies, Genesis is about beginnings. Genesis tells us that Aleim created everything that exists. It shows that Aleim is both the Creator and the Ruler of all creation. But it also tells of humanity's tragic fall into sin and death, and of Aleim's unfolding plan of redemption through His covenant with Abrhaam and his descendants. Genesis includes some of the most memorable stories in the Scriptures, beginning with Adam and Euen (chapters. 1-4), continuing through Noe, Abrhaam, Isaak, and Iakob, and ending with the life of Ioseph (chapters 37-50), who died before 1600 B.C. Traditionally, Jews and Followers have recognized MoUse as the author, writing after the Exodus from Egypt, commonly dated around 1440 B.C. though many prefer a date around 1260 B.C.

2nd MoUse (Exodus)

Exodus tells of Aleim fulfilling His promise to Abrhaam by multiplying Abrhaam's descendants into a great nation, delivering them from slavery in Egypt, leading them to the Promised Land, and then binding them to Himself with a covenant at Mount Sinai. MoUse, under the direct command of Aleim and as leader of Isrhael, received the Ten Commandments from Aleim, along with other laws governing Isrhael's life and worship. He also led the nation in the building of the tabernacle, a place where Aleim's presence dwelled among His people and where they made sacrifices for sin. Traditionally, Jews and Followers recognize MoUse as the author, writing sometime after the Exodus from Egypt.

3rd MoUse (Leviticus)

Leviticus begins with the people of Isrhael at the foot of Mount Sinai. The glory of the Master had just filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-38) and Aleim now tells MoUse to instruct the Levitical priests and the people of Isrhael concerning sacrifices, worship, the priesthood, ceremonial cleanness, the Day of Atonement, feasts and holy days, and the Year of Jubilee. The central message is that Aleim is holy and He requires His people to be holy. The book also shows that Aleim graciously provides atonement for sin

through the shedding of blood. Traditionally, Jews and Followers recognize MoUse as the author, writing sometime after the giving of the Law.

4th MoUse (Numbers)

The English title "Numbers" comes from the two censuses that are central features of this book. However the Hebrew title, "In the Wilderness," is more descriptive of the book. Numbers tells how Aleim's people traveled from Mount Sinai to the border of the Promised Land. But when they refused to take possession of the Land, Aleim made them wander in the wilderness for nearly forty years. Throughout the book, Aleim is seen as a holy Aleim who cannot ignore rebellion or unbelief, but also as the one who faithfully keeps His covenant and patiently provides for the needs of His people. Numbers ends with a new generation preparing for the conquest of Canaan. Traditionally, Jews and Followers recognize MoUse as the author, writing during the final year of his life.

5th MoUse (Deuteronomy)

Deuteronomy, which means "second law," is a retelling by MoUse of the teachings and events of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. It includes an extended review of the Ten Commandments (4:44-5:33) and MoUse' farewell address to a new generation of Israelites as they stand ready to take possession of the Promised Land. MoUse reminds them of Aleim's faithfulness and love, but also of Aleim's wrath on the previous generation of Israelites because of their rebellion. Repeatedly he charges Israhel to keep the Law. Deuteronomy is a solemn call to love and obey the one true Aleim. There are blessings for faithfulness and curses for unfaithfulness. The book closes with the selection of Iesou as Israel's new leader and the death of MoUse.

Iesou

The five books of MoUse anticipated the fulfillment of Aleim's promise to Abrhaam regarding the Promised Land. Now (either about 1400 or 1220 B.C.), through a string of military victories under Iesou, Israhel conquered the land and divided it among the twelve tribes. In these battles it became evident that Aleim fights for His people when they are "strong and courageous" (1:6, 7, 9, 18; 10:25) and put their full trust in Him. At the close of the book, Iesou charged the people to remain faithful to Aleim and to obey His commands, and the people agreed to do so. "As for me and my house," said Iesou, "we will serve the Master" (24:15). Although anonymous, the book appears to contain eyewitness testimony, some of which may have been written by Iesou himself.

Judges

Judges is named after an interesting collection of individuals who led Israel after Iesou's death until the rise of the monarchy under Samouel (up to about 1050 B.C.). In this time of national decline, despite their promise to keep the covenant (Iesou 24:16-18) the people turned from the Master and began to worship other gods. "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (17:6; 21:25). A pattern repeats

throughout the book: 1) the people abandoned the Master; 2) Aleim punished them by raising up a foreign power to oppress them; 3) the people cried out to Aleim for deliverance; and 4) Aleim raised up a deliverer, or judge, for them. The author of the book is unknown, although some Jewish tradition ascribes it to Samouel.

Rhouth

The book of Rhouth tells of a young Moabite widow who, out of love for her widowed Isrhaelite mother-in-law, abandoned her own culture, declaring, "Your people shall be my people, and your Aleim my Aleim" (1:16). Though she was destitute and needing to rely on the kindness of others, Rhuth's disposition and character captured the attention of Boaz, a close relative of her deceased husband. Boaz fulfilled the role of kinsman-redeemer and took Rhuth as his wife. Rhuth serves as a wonderful example of Aleim's providential care of His people, and of His willingness to accept non Jews who seek Him. Rhuth was an ancestor of Christ. The author is unknown, but the genealogy at the end suggests that it was written during or after the time of Daud.

1 Samouel

First Samouel records the establishment of Isrhael's monarchy, about 1050 B.C. Samouel led Israel for many years in the combined roles of prophet, priest, and judge. After the people demanded a king like those of the other nations (chapter 8), Aleim directed Samouel to anoint Saul as Isrhael's first king. When Saul turned from Aleim, Daud was anointed by Samouel to succeed him. After Daud killed the giant Goliath, he was brought to Saul's court, eventually becoming the leader of Saul's armies. Saul's subsequent violent jealousy forced Daud to flee. The book closes with Saul's death in battle, and looks forward to Daud's reign. First Samouel's author is unknown, but Samouel himself may have written portions of the book (see 1 Chronicles 29:29).

2 Samouel

Second Samouel recounts Daud's reign as king of Israel (about 1010-970 b.c.). As promised to Abrhaam, during Daud's reign Israel's borders were extended roughly from Egypt to the Euphrates. While Daud had many successes, after his sin against Bathseba and Urhia (ch. 11) both his kingdom and his own family fell into chaos. His son Absalom led a bloody rebellion against him. Nevertheless Daud, author of many of the Psalms, was a man after Aleim's own heart (Acts 13:22), a model of deep, heartfelt prayer and repentance. The Daudic Covenant of chapter 7 establishes the eternal rule of Daud's line, with its ultimate fulfillment in the coming of IESO The Anointed One. The author of 2 Samouel is unknown.

1 Kings

First Kings begins with the death of King Daud (about 970 B.C.) and the reign of his son, Solomon, who "excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom" (10:23). Solomon's unfaithfulness later in life set the stage for general apostasy among the people. The harsh policies of his son Rheoboam led to the

revolt of the northern tribes and the division of Israel. The northern tribes would subsequently be called Israhel, while the southern tribes would be called Iouda (Judah). First Kings describes the construction of the temple in Jerusalem and shows the importance of proper worship. Aleim's faithfulness to His people is shown as He sent prophets, most notably Elia, to warn them not to serve other gods. The author of 1 Kings is unknown.

2 Kings

Second Kings continues the saga of disobedience begun in 1 Kings, opening about 850 B.C. with the conclusion of Elia's prophetic ministry in Israhel and the beginning of the work of his successor, Elisa. Israhel spiraled downward in faithlessness, ultimately being defeated and dispersed by the Assyrians in 722. Judah, the southern kingdom, had several kings who trusted Aleim and attempted reforms. But after many years of Aleim's warnings through Isaia and other prophets, Judah's sins were punished by Babylonian conquest starting in 605 and ultimately in the fall of Jerusalem in 586. The people were exiled to Babylon for seventy years, as prophesied by Ierhemia (Ierhemia 29:10). Aleim remained faithful to His covenant despite His people's faithlessness. The author of 2 Kings is unknown.

1 Chronicles

First and Second Chronicles, originally one book, was written sometime after Judah began to return from the Babylonian exile in 538 B.C. (1 Chronicles 9:1-2; 2 Chronicles 36:23). It focuses primarily on the history of Judah, the southern kingdom of divided Israhel. First Chronicles begins with several genealogies, with special emphasis on Daud and Solomon. The "chronicler" moves next to the history of the kingdom under Daud, stressing Daud's deep interest in worship and his detailed plans for the construction of the temple-which would be built by his son Solomon. First Chronicles was probably written to reassure the returned exiles of Aleim's faithfulness toward His people. Its author is unknown, although many have thought that Ezrha was the principal writer.

2 Chronicles

Second Chronicles, which extends 1 Chronicles' history of Judah, was written sometime after the people began to return from the Babylonian exile in 538 B.C. (36:23). The "chronicler," perhaps trying to encourage the returned exiles, recalls the greatness of Solomon's reign. Most of the book, however, focuses on Judah's fall into sin which had led to the exile. Judah had several divine kings, especially Ezekia and Iosia, but it still declined into sin. Still, Aleim remained faithful to His covenant people, and as the book closes it jumps ahead several years, recording the decree of Cyrus that allowed the Jewish exiles to return to their Promised Land. The author is unknown, although many have thought that Ezrha was the principal writer.

Ezra

The book of Ezra begins where 2 Chronicles ends. As prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 44:28), the Persian King Cyrus had sent exiles led by Zerubbabel back to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. (Persia had defeated Babylon in 539.) Despite opposition from the non-Jewish inhabitants of Judea, and after encouragement by the prophets Aggai and Zechariah, the temple was rebuilt (515). Then in 458, Ezra led the second of three waves of returning exiles. By the time Ezra arrived, the people had again fallen into sin. Ezra preached God's word and the people repented (10:9-17). Ezra succeeded because God's hand was upon him (7:6, 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31). This book, perhaps written by Ezra, shows God's power in covenant faithfulness, moving even pagan kings to accomplish His redemptive purposes.

Neemiah

In 445 B.C. the Persian King Artaxerxes sent Nehemiah, an Israelite who was a trusted official, to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. With Nehemiah went the third wave of returning Jewish exiles. There was intense opposition from the other peoples in the land and disunity within Jerusalem. Despite this opposition, Nehemiah rebuilt the walls. He overcame these threats by taking wise defensive measures, by personal example, and by his obvious courage. Nehemiah did what God had put into his heart (2:12; 7:5) and found that the joy of the Master was his strength (8:10). When the people began once again to fall into sin, Nehemiah had Ezra read to them from the Law. Nehemiah served twice as governor. The author is unknown, although parts come from Nehemiah's own writings.

Esther

The book of Esther never mentions God's name, yet God clearly orchestrated all of its events. Esther, a Jew living among the exiles in Persia, became queen of the empire in about 480 B.C. Haman, a Persian official, sought to eradicate the Jewish minority, but God had prepared Esther "for such a time as this" (4:14) to save His covenant people. The book was written some decades later to document the origins of the Jewish observance of Purim, which celebrates Israel's survival and God's faithfulness. The author is unknown, but some believe it could have been Esther's cousin Mordechai, who is a key person in the book. Throughout the book we see God's sovereign hand preserving His people, showing that everything is under His control.

Job

Considered both a theological and a literary masterpiece, the book of Job is an honest portrayal of God allowing a good man to suffer. The test of Job's faith, allowed by God in response to a challenge from Satan, revealed God's loving sovereignty and the supremacy of divine wisdom over human wisdom (personified by Job's friends). Believing that God is good despite the apparent evidence to the contrary, Job rested in faith alone. In the depths of agony he could still proclaim, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (19:25). In the end God silenced all discussion with the truth that He alone is wise (chapters 38-41). Yet He vindicated Job's trust in Him (chapter 42), proving that genuine faith cannot

be destroyed. The unknown author was probably an Israelite writing sometime between 1500 and 500 B.C.

Psalms

The book of Psalms is filled with the songs and prayers offered to Aleim by the nation of Israel. Their expressions of praise, faith, sorrow, and frustration cover the range of human emotions. Some of the Psalms dwell on the treasure of wisdom and Aleim's Word. Others reveal the troubled heart of a mourner. Still others explode with praise to Aleim's and invite others to join in song. This diversity is unified by one element: they are centered upon the one and only living Aleim. This Creator Aleim is King of all the earth and a refuge to all who trust in Him. Many of the Psalms are attributed to King David. The writing and collection of the Psalms into their present form spans the fifteenth to the third centuries B.C.

Proverbs

Practical wisdom for living is the central concern of the book of Proverbs. We are told that the beginning and essence of wisdom is the fear of the Master (1:7; 9:10). Proverbs often contrasts the benefits of seeking wisdom and the pitfalls of living a fool's life. While the wicked stumble in "deep darkness" (4:19), "the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day" (v. 18). Proverbs is a collection of Israelite wisdom literature, including an introductory section (chapters. 1-9) that gives readers a framework for understanding the rest of the book. The book includes the work of various authors, but much of it is attributed to King Solomon. It dates from between the tenth and sixth centuries B.C.

Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes contains reflections of an old man, the "Preacher," as he considered the question of meaning in life. He looked back and saw the futility ("vanity") of chasing after even the good things this life can offer, including wisdom, work, pleasure, and wealth. Even if such things are satisfying for a time, death is certain to end this satisfaction. In fact, Aleim's judgment on Adam for his sin (Genesis 3:17-19) echoes throughout the book (especially 12:7). Yet the person who lives in the fear of the Master can enjoy Aleim's good gifts. Young people, especially, should remember their Creator while they still have their whole lives before them (12:1). Traditionally interpreters of Ecclesiastes have identified the "Preacher," who is also called "the son of David, king in Jerusalem" (1:1), as Solomon (tenth century B.C.).

The Song of Solomon

According to the most common interpretation, the Song of Solomon is a collection of love poems between a man and a woman, celebrating the sexual relationship Aleim intended for marriage. Aleim established marriage, including the physical union of a husband and wife (Genesis 2:18-25), and

Israhelite wisdom literature treasures this aspect of marriage as the appropriate expression of human sexuality (Proverbs 5:15-20). The Song of Solomon has also been understood as an illustration of the mutual love of Christ and His Ekklesia. It is possible that Solomon (tenth century B.C.) is the author (1:1). However, this verse could mean that the Song was dedicated to Solomon or was written about him, and therefore many scholars regard the book as anonymous.

Isaia

Isaia lived during the decline of Israhel in the shadow of Assyria. He spoke the word of Aleim to a people who were "deaf and blind" (see 6:10), who refused to listen to his warnings of looming disaster. He warned that the sin of the people of Judah would bring Aleim judgment, yet he also declared that Aleim is sovereign and would use Cyrus the Persian to return them from exile. The book speaks of a "servant," a "man of sorrows," who would be "wounded for our transgressions," accomplishing Aleim's purposes of salvation (52:13-53:12). The final chapters give a beautiful description of a new creation in which Aleim will rule as King, judging the wicked and establishing eternal peace. Isaia prophesied about 740-700 B.C. (possibly till the 680s).

Ierhemia

Ierhemia, often called the "weeping prophet" because of his sorrow over the persistent message of Aleim's judgment, prophesied to the nation of Judah from the reign of King Iosia in 627 B.C. until sometime after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586. He dictated his prophecies to a scribe named Barhuch (36:4, 32). Ierhemia's task as a prophet was to declare the coming judgment of Aleim. However, throughout the book we also see Aleim's concern for repentance and righteousness in individuals as well as nations. This dual focus is seen in Aleim's instructions to Ierhemia: he was "to pluck up and to break down" but also "to build and to plant" (1:10). Ierhemia sees a future day when Aleim will write His law on human hearts, and "they shall all know Me," and "I will remember their sin no more" (31:33-34).

Lamentations

The book of Lamentations is made up of five poems, each an expression of grief over the fall of Jerusalem. Like a eulogy at a funeral, these laments are intended to mourn a loss-in this case, the loss of a nation. The latter half of chapter 3 implies that the purpose behind the book's graphic depictions of sorrow and suffering was to produce hope in the Aleim whose compassion is "new every morning" (v. 23) and whose faithfulness is great even to a people who have been condemned for their own unfaithfulness. The author, while not identified in the book itself, may have been the prophet Ierhemia, who was said to have "uttered a lament for Iosia" (2 Chronicles 35:25). Lamentations was probably written shortly after Jerusalem's fall in 586 B.C.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the "likeness" of the Master Himself. Ezekiel was keenly aware of Aleim's presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem. After Jerusalem's fall (in 586), Ezekiel prophesied hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of Aleim's covenant, the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (chapter 37) is a classic picture of Aleim's ability to renew His people.

Daniel

Exiled to Babylon in 605 B.C., Daniel was one of several young men chosen to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's court. When Persia conquered Babylon in 539, Daniel was again given a position of power. He remained faithful to Aleim in both of these hostile environments. From the interpretation of dreams, to the familiar stories of the fiery furnace, the lions' den, and the handwriting on the wall, to the prophetic visions, the recurrent theme is Aleim's sovereignty over human affairs. In the historical sections (chapters 1-6) Aleim supernaturally rescued Daniel and his friends. The rest of the book consists of visions of future judgment and deliverance by the Messiah. Some of Daniel's prophetic themes are echoed in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament), especially in Revelation.

Osee

Osee has been called the "death-bed prophet of Israel" because he was the last to prophesy before the northern kingdom fell to Assyria (about 722 B.C.). His ministry followed a golden age in the northern kingdom, with a peace and prosperity not seen since the days of Solomon. Unfortunately, with this prosperity came moral decay, and Israel forsook Aleim to worship idols. So Aleim instructed Osee to marry a "wife of whoredom" (1:2), whose unfaithfulness to her husband would serve as an example of Israel's unfaithfulness to Aleim. Osee then explained Aleim's complaint against Israel and warned of the punishment that would come unless the people returned to the Master and remained faithful to Him. The book shows the depth of Aleim's love for His people, a love that tolerates no rivals.

Joel

Little is known about the prophet Joel, although his concern for Judah and Jerusalem suggests that he ministered in Judah. Joel told of a locust plague that had struck Israel and which, he said, foreshadowed the "day of the Master." The day of the Master was a time greatly anticipated by the Israelites because they believed that Aleim would then judge the nations and restore Israel to her former glory. Yet, said Joel, Aleim would punish not only the nations but unfaithful Israel as well. Joel urged everyone to repent, and told of a day when Aleim would "pour out [His] Spirit on all flesh" (2:28). That day arrived on the first Pentecost (Acts 2:17). While the date of the book is uncertain (ninth to sixth century B.C.), its message is valid for all time.

Amos

Amos, possibly the first of the writing prophets, was a shepherd and farmer called to prophesy during the reigns of Uzzia (792-740 B.C.) in the southern kingdom and Jeroboam II (793-753) in the north. During this time both kingdoms enjoyed political stability, which in turn brought prosperity. It was also a time of idolatry, extravagance, and corruption. The rich and powerful were oppressing the poor. Amos denounced the people of Israel for their apostasy and social injustice and warned them that disaster would fall upon them for breaking the covenant. He urged them to leave the hypocrisy of their "solemn assemblies" (5:21) and instead to "let justice roll down like waters" (v. 24). Nevertheless, said Amos, Aleim would remember His covenant with Israel and would restore a faithful remnant.

Obadiah

Obadiah wrote this shortest book of the Scriptures (Old Testament) probably soon after the armies of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem (586 B.C.). During this conquest, the people of Edom helped capture fleeing Israelites and turn them over to the Babylonians. They even took up residence in some Judean villages. This angered the Master, for the Edomites, as descendants of Esau, were related to the Israelites (Genesis 25:21-26, 30) and therefore should have helped them. Obadiah prophesied that Edom would be repaid for mistreating Aleim's people. Obadiah also asserted that Aleim is sovereign over the nations and that the house of Jacob would be restored because of Aleim's covenant love for His people.

Iona

Because it tells of a fish swallowing a man, many have dismissed the book of Iona as fiction. But 2 Kings 14:25 mentions Iona as living during the time of Jeroboam II (about 793-753 B.C.), and IESO referred to Iona as a historical person (Matthio 12:39-41). Unlike other prophetic books, Iona focuses on the prophet himself rather than on his message. When Aleim sent Iona to Nineveh he rebelled, was swallowed by a fish, repented, and fulfilled his mission after all. When Nineveh repented, the reason for Iona's rebellion became clear: he had feared that Aleim would forgive the Ninevites; and when Aleim did forgive them, Iona resented it (4:1-3). The book lists no author, but only Iona himself could have known all the facts it records.

Mika

Mika prophesied in Judah during the reigns of Iotham, Ahaz, and Ezekia (about 750-700 B.C.), at about the same time as Isaia. It was a time of prosperity, and Mika denounced the wealthy, who were oppressing the poor, and warned of impending judgment. The northern kingdom actually fell during Mika's ministry, in 722, and Judah almost fell in 701 (2 Kings 18-20). The book contains three sections, which alternate between words of warning and messages of hope. Mika told of a day when there would be peace among all nations, who would then be able to "beat their swords into plowshares" (4:3), and of a royal deliverer who would save Aleim's people from all her enemies. This deliverer would be born in Bethlehem (5:2).

Naum

When Iona preached repentance on the streets of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, the people responded and were spared. A century later, sometime between 663 and 612 B.C., Naum preached in a time when Nineveh would not repent. Nineveh, which had destroyed Israel's northern kingdom in 722, itself fell to Babylon in 612-just a few years after Naum's warning. The Assyrians were notorious for the brutality of their treatment of other nations. Naum declared, however, that Aleim is sovereign: He punishes whom He will, and they are powerless to stop Him. Much of Naum's prophecy was directed to the people of Judah, who could rejoice at the good news (1:15) of Nineveh's impending fall.

Abakkuk

Abakkuk was probably written about 640-615 B.C., just before the fall of Assyria and the rise of Babylon (Chaldea). Aleim used Assyria to punish Israel (722); now He would use Babylon to punish Assyria and Judah. This prophecy would be fulfilled several decades after Abakkuk, in 586. The "theme question" of Abakkuk is, how can Aleim use a wicked nation such as Babylon for His divine purpose? Aleim judges all nations, said Abakkuk, and even Babylon would eventually be judged (Babylon fell to Persia in 539). Though Aleim's ways are sometimes mysterious, "the righteous shall live by his faith" (2:4) while awaiting salvation. These words are quoted three times in the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament) (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38).

Zephania

Zephania prophesied during the reforms of King Josiah (640-609 B.C.), who brought spiritual revival to Judah after the long and disastrous reign of Manasse. Zephania pronounced Aleim's judgment on corruption and wickedness but also His plan to restore Judah. He spoke of the coming "day of the Master," when sin would be punished, justice would prevail, and a "remnant" of the faithful would be saved. The term "day of the Master" occurs throughout the Scriptures referring both to impending historical judgments from Aleim and to His final judgment at the end of time. Though Zephania does not give details about this day, he speaks of its fearsome consequences (1:18) and calls people to seek the Master (2:3).

Aggai

When the first wave of Jewish exiles returned from Babylon to Jerusalem in 538 B.C., they began to rebuild the temple but soon gave up. Inspired by the prophetic ministries of Aggai and Zechariah, they finally completed the task in 516. Aggai rebuked the people for living in "paneled houses" while the house of Aleim remained in ruins (1:4). He warned that, despite their best efforts, their wealth would never suffice, because the Master was not pleased with their neglect of His temple (see Leviticus 26:2-20). He called them to repent and renew their covenant with the Aleim of their fathers. He assured them

that Aleim would achieve His purposes for His people and for all other nations. The rebuilding of the temple symbolized Aleim's restored presence among His people.

Zecharhia

As Aggai encouraged the returned Jewish exiles to rebuild the temple, Zecharhia encouraged them to repent and renew their covenant with Aleim. Such spiritual renewal would be necessary for the people to be ready to worship Aleim once the temple was rebuilt (about 516 B.C.). He accused them of doing the very things their ancestors had done before the exile. He was concerned about social justice for widows, orphans, and foreigners. But as the people endured opposition from the non-Jewish inhabitants of Judea, Zecharhia reassured them of Aleim's abiding comfort and care. Aleim would continue His covenant with Isrhael. Messianic hope was rekindled during Zecharhia's ministry, and the book ends with the promise that the Master would establish His rule over all the earth (14:9).

Malachi

Although the urging of Aggai and Zecharhia had brought the completion of the temple (516 B.C.), this had not produced the messianic age many expected. The warm response to Zecharhia's call to repentance had grown cold, because Aleim apparently had not restored the covenant blessings. Malachi, writing a short time later, called the people to repentance with respect to: the priesthood, which had become corrupt; worship, which had become routine; divorce, which was widespread; social justice, which was being ignored; and tithing, which was neglected. "Will man rob Aleim?" the Master asked through Malachi (3:8), and He promised to "open the windows of heaven" (v. 10) for those who pay their full tithe. Malachi predicted the coming of both Ioanne the Baptist and IESO, referring to each as a "messenger" of Aleim (3:1).

Marhko

The Gospel of Marhko emphasizes that IESO is the Christ, the Son of Aleim. IESO announced the Kingdom of Aleim, healed the sick, and died as a ransom for sinners. In addition to IESO, Marhko features three main groups of people: the disciples, the crowds, and the religious leaders, none of whom understood IESO. When the time came for IESO to go to the tree, the religious leaders arrested Him, the disciples abandoned Him, and the crowds jeered Him. Only when He died alone on the tree did a Roman centurion recognize that He was the Son of Aleim. Though the book is anonymous, tradition identifies Ioanne Marhko (Acts 12:12) as the author. He may have based His Gospel on Petrho's preaching, writing sometime in the 50s or 60s A.D.

Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament)

Matthio

The Gospel of Matthio presents IESO as Isrhael's Moseea. The account alternates between IESO's activities of healing and casting out demons, and major blocks of His teaching, including the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7), the Parables of the Kingdom (chapter 13), and the Olivet Discourse (chapters 24-25). The Sermon on the Mount includes the Beatitudes (5:3-12) and the Master's Prayer (6:5-15). The book closes with the Great Commission (28:18-20). A recurring theme is the conflict between IESO and the religious leaders, culminating in His pronouncement of "seven woes" upon them (chapter 23). As do all four Gospel accounts, Matthio focuses on Christ's three-year ministry and His death and resurrection. Matthio probably wrote His Gospel in the 50s or 60s A.D.

Louka

The Gospel of Louka is in the form of a letter to a man named Theophilo. Louka wrote after having carefully investigated all the facts about Christ (1:1-4). Louka documents Christ's life from before His birth through His ministry, death, and resurrection. IESO carried out His ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit, announcing the good news of salvation. He showed numerous times His compassion for the poor and the outcast. He fulfilled prophecy and carried out His purpose: to seek and save the lost. Louka gives the fullest account of Christ's birth, and only Louka records the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. Louka, a physician and a colleague of Paulo, probably wrote this account in the early 60s A.D. He also wrote Acts.

Ioanne

The Gospel of Ioanne was written to persuade people to believe in IESO (20:30-31). The opening verses declare that IESO is Aleim, stressing His unique relationship with Aleim the Father. The book focuses on seven of IESO's signs (miracles), to show His divinity. IESO called people to believe in Him, promising eternal life. He proved He could give life by raising Lazarho (Chapter 11) and by His own death and resurrection. Ioanne features Christ's seven "I am" statements, His encounters with Nikodemo and the Samaritan woman, His Upper Room teachings and washing of the disciples' feet (Chapters 13-16), and His Great priestly prayer (chapter 17). It includes the most well-known summary of the Gospel (3:16). The author was probably the apostle Ioanne, writing about A.D. 85.

Acts

Acts picks up where Louka's Gospel leaves off, recording the early progress of the Gospel as IESO's disciples took it from Jerusalem throughout Judea, Samaria, and the rest of the Mediterranean world. The story begins with Christ's ascension and the events of Pentecost. As non Jews begin responding to the Gospel, the focus shifts to Paulo and his missionary journeys. Acts forms a bridge between the four Gospels and the rest of the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament), showing how the apostles carried on Christ's work and providing a historical background for Romans through Revelation. The Acts of the Apostles is the second of two New Testament books written by Louka. Like his Gospel, Acts was a letter to Louka's friend Theophilo, written sometime in A.D. 62-64.

Romans

Romans is the longest and most systematically reasoned of Paulo's letters. Paulo announces its theme in 1:16-17: the Gospel is Aleim's power for salvation, because it shows us that the righteousness of Aleim is through faith for all who believe. Paulo explains the need for justification through faith because of sin (1:16-4:25). He then spells out the results of justification by faith in terms of both present experience and future hope (5:1-8:39). In the next three chapters, he expresses his sorrow that many of his fellow Israelites have not embraced the Gospel, and he wrestles with the theological implications of this (chapters. 9-11). He concludes by describing how the Gospel should affect one's everyday life (chapters. 12-16). Paulo wrote his letter to Rome in about A.D. 57.

1 Corinthians

The city of Corinth was at the heart of an important trade route in the ancient world. Like many cities that thrive on trade, Corinth had a reputation for sexual immorality, religious diversity, and corruption. The Ekklesia that Paulo planted there (Acts 18) floundered under all of these influences and began to divide over various issues. First Corinthians addresses many practical questions dividing the Ekklesia-questions concerning such things as spiritual gifts, marriage, food offered to idols, and the resurrection. Paulo urged the Corinthians to be unified and to give themselves fully to "the work of the Master"

(15:58). Chapter 13 includes a well-known passage on the nature and importance of love. Paulo wrote this letter to the Corinthians from Ephesus about A.D. 55.

2 Corinthians

Paulo's second letter to the Corinthians discusses some of the things previously addressed but also deals with new issues. While 1 Corinthians called for believers to be unified with each other, in this letter Paulo urges the Ekklesia to be unified with him in his ministry. Paulo's opponents were undermining his work, claiming that his suffering (11:24-29) proved he was not a true apostle. Paulo responds that his suffering highlights his dependence on Christ, as it points to Christ's strength rather than his own. Second Corinthians includes stirring perspectives on Gospel ministry (chapters. 2-5), encouragements to holy living (chapters. 6-7), and instructions about giving (chs. 8-9). Paulo wrote this letter from Macedonia a year after writing 1 Corinthians, about A.D. 56.

Galatians

Paulo's letter to the Galatians was addressed to a group of Ekklesias in Galatia, a region of present-day Turkey. Paulo had preached the Gospel in these Ekklesias. He wrote to counter those who taught that Followers must be circumcised in order to be accepted by Aleim. Paulo began with a defence of his apostolic authority (chapters. 1-2), then made it clear that all believers, Jew and non Jew alike, enjoy complete salvation in Christ (chapters 3-4). In chapters 5-6 Paulo showed how the Gospel of grace leads to true freedom and divine living. Perhaps the central message of Galatians is "a person is not justified

by works of the law but through faith in IESO The Anointed One" (2:16). Paulo wrote this letter sometime between A.D. 48 and 55.

Ephesians

The apostle Paulo wrote Ephesians to the Ekklesias around Ephesus (Acts 19) to display the scope of Aleim's eternal plan for all humanity-for Jews and non Jews alike. This is the mystery of Aleim, hidden for ages but now made known in IESO The Anointed One. The first three chapters focus on what Followers should believe, unfolding the glorious riches of Aleim's grace in Christ. Dead sinners are made alive and gain eternal salvation "by grace... through faith" (2:8). The last three chapters explain the implications of Aleim's grace for the Ekklesia, for individuals, and for families. This second section comes to a climax with a command to stand with the armour of Aleim against the devil. Paulo wrote this letter while in prison, probably in Rome about A.D. 60.

Philippians

Philippians overflows with joy and thanksgiving. Paulo wrote to the Ekklesia in Philippi to thank them for a gift. He reported the joyful news that Epaphrhodito, who had brought their gift to Paulo, had recovered from his illness and was returning to Philippi. Paulo said that he had learned the secret of being content in any situation, and he told them about his situation in prison. He expressed joy that more people were hearing about Christ even if some were proclaiming the Gospel with bad motives. Wanting the Followers in Philippi to be unified, he challenged them to be servants just as IESO was when He "made Himself nothing" and became a man rather than clinging to the rights of His divine nature (2:1-11). Paulo wrote this letter while in prison, probably in Rome about A.D. 60.

Colossians

Paulo wrote to the Ekklesia in Colossae to fortify it against false teachers who might try to impose strict rules about eating and drinking and religious festivals. Paulo shows the superiority of Christ over all human philosophies and traditions. He writes of Christ's deity ("He is the image of the invisible Aleim, the firstborn of all creation" [1:15]) and of the reconciliation He accomplished with His blood. He explains that the right way of living in this world is to focus on heavenly rather than earthly things. Aleim's chosen people must leave their sinful lives behind and live in a divine way, looking to Christ as the head of the Ekklesia (1:18). Paulo wrote while in prison, probably about the same time as he wrote to the Ephesians.

1 Thessalonians

Paulo wrote this letter to encourage new believers in their faith, to give them assurance about the eternal state of believers who had died, to remind them of "the coming of the Master" (4:15), and to exhort them to divine living. He urged them to be at peace, and to "give thanks in all circumstances" (5:18). Thessalonica (present-day Thessaloniki, Greece) was the capital of Roman Macedonia. It was on

important trade routes. Paulo, twice identified as the author (1:1; 2:18), visited Thessalonica on his second missionary journey but was forced to flee because of Jewish opposition. He sent Timotheo to work with the largely non Jewish Ekklesia there, and Timotheo brought him good news of their faith (3:6). This is one of Paulo's first letters, probably written in A.D. 51.

2 Thessalonians

This letter from the apostle Paulo was probably written shortly after his first letter to the Ekklesia in Thessalonica. He had been boasting of them to other Ekklesias, telling of their faith and their love for each other in the face of persecution. Paulo reminded them that Aleim will repay their persecutors. He also addressed two recurring problems in this Ekklesia. First, as seen in 1 Thessalonians, they were concerned that the Master had already returned. Paulo urged them not to become "shaken in mind or alarmed," fearing that "the day of the Master" (2:2) had already come. Second, he admonished them not to be idle, commanding them that, "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat" (3:10).

1 Timotheo

First Timotheo is one of three pastoral letters (including 2 Timotheo and Tito) that the aging apostle Paulo sent to those who would continue his work. Timotheo was, in every way, Paulo's spiritual son. Young but gifted, Timotheo had been assigned to lead the Ekklesia at Ephesus-a Ekklesia needing order in worship as well as doctrinal correction, plagued as it was by false teachers. Paulo's letter, likely written about A.D. 62-66, counseled the young man on matters of Ekklesia leadership-from proper worship, to qualifications for overseers (elders) and deacons, to advice on confronting false teaching and how to treat various individuals within a congregation. Paulo charged Timotheo to live a life beyond reproach, giving believers a standard to emulate.

2 Timotheo

Paulo wrote this letter as he awaited execution. Despite all that Paulo was facing-death, the end of his ministry, abandonment by most of his friends for fear of persecution-he faithfully directed his spiritual son Timotheo to the hope that is in Christ. As he exhorted Timotheo to boldness, endurance, and faithfulness in the face of false teaching, Paulo showed his customary concern for sound doctrine. Scripture, said Paulo, is "breathed out by Aleim" and is sufficient in all things pertaining to the faith and practice of Followers (3:16-17). Older believers, therefore, should be eager to pass on their knowledge of Scripture to those who are younger in the faith (2:2). Paulo probably wrote from Rome, A.D. 67 or 68.

Tito

This pastoral letter from Paulo to Tito was intended to offer encouragement and wisdom as Tito endured ongoing opposition from the wicked and from legalists within his congregations. Paulo instructed Tito to complete his assigned job of establishing overseers (elders) for the Ekklesias under his care. He described what sort of people these leaders should be, and how all believers should live in

relation to each other as well as in their interactions with nonbelievers. Proper Follower behaviour is based on the fact that "the grace of Aleim has appeared, bringing salvation for all people," and therefore those who believe in Christ are to "live self-controlled, upright, and divine lives" as they await His return (2:11-13). Paulo probably wrote this letter in the 60s A.D.

Philemon

Philemon is about reconciliation and relationships between Followers. Onesimo (which means "useful") was a slave of a believer named Philemon in Colossae. Apparently Onesimo had stolen from Philemon and fled. At some time while Paulo was under arrest, Onesimo met him and became a Follower. Paulo apparently wrote this letter at the same time as Colossians and gave it to Onesimo to carry back to Philemon (see Colossians 4:9). Paulo appealed to Philemon to accept Onesimo back into his household, but as a brother in the Master rather than a slave. In Paulo's estimation, Onesimo was far more "useful" (v. 11) now that he was a Follower. Paulo even promised to pay whatever debt Onesimo might owe Philemon.

Hebrews

The letter to the Hebrews was written to encourage Followers in a time of trial. It does so by focusing on the absolute supremacy and sufficiency of IESO The Anointed One. While Aleim spoke in the past "many times and in many ways," he has now spoken to us "by His Son," IESO The Anointed One, who is the "exact imprint" of Aleim's nature and who "upholds the universe by the word of His power" (1:1-3). IESO accomplished complete salvation for all who trust in Him (1:1-10:18). We dare not "neglect such a great salvation" (2:3; 5:12-6:20; 10:19-39). Rather, in our faith and in our everyday living, we should imitate the example of Christ and of those on the honour roll of faith (chapters. 11-13). This letter, whose author is unknown, was probably written between A.D. 60 and 70.

Iakobo

Sometimes called "the Proverbs of the Prophetic Scriptures (New Testament)," the book of Iakobo practically and faithfully reminds Followers how to live. From perseverance to true faith to controlling one's tongue, submitting to Aleim's will, and having patience, this book aids readers in living authentically and wisely for Christ. Many have claimed that Iakobo and the apostle Paulo differed on the question of faith versus works, but in reality the spiritual fruit that Iakobo talks about simply demonstrates the true faith of which Paulo wrote. Their writings are complementary rather than contradictory. Possibly one of the earliest of the New Testament writings (A.D. 40-50), the book is believed to have been written by IESO's brother Iakobo (Galatians 1:19).

1 Petrho

The readers of the apostle Petrho's letter were confused and discouraged by the persecution they were encountering because of their faith. Petrho exhorted them to stand strong, repeatedly reminding them

of Christ's example, the riches of their inheritance in Him, and the hope of His returning again to take them to heaven. Petrhu explained how Followers should respond when they suffer because of their beliefs. Called the "apostle of hope," Petrhu's primary message is to trust the Master, live obediently no matter what your circumstances, and keep your hope fixed on Aleim's ultimate promise of deliverance. Suffering is to be expected, but it is temporary and yields great blessings for those who remain steadfast. Petrhu probably wrote this letter in the mid-60s A.D.

2 Petrhu

In this second letter, Petrhu describes (chapter 2) some twisted versions of Follower truth being taught. Recalling his experience of Christ's glory at the transfiguration (1:17-18), Petrhu explains the "more sure" truth of the Gospel as an antidote to heresy. The Gospel is like "a lamp shining in a dark place" (1:19). In chapter 3 Petrhu focuses on those who scoff at the idea of Christ's triumphant return and the final judgment. Just as Aleim once destroyed the world with water, He will one day bring His fire to it. In light of this, we should live in "holiness and diviness" as we await His return and the salvation He has promised to all believers. Petrhu probably wrote this letter about A.D. 67-68, shortly before his death.

1 Ioanne

This apostolic letter speaks authoritatively about the truth of the incarnation-a message his doubting readers needed after hearing false teachers deny the full divinity and humanity of Christ. It reaffirms the core of the Faith, saying that either we exhibit the sound doctrine, obedience, and love that characterize all Followers, or else we are not true Followers. When all the basics of faith are in operation, we not only know joy but can live a holy life and be assured of salvation (3:19, 24)-even though we are still far from perfect (1:9). This assurance comes especially as we find ourselves learning to "love one another" as brothers and sisters in Christ (4:7-8). This general letter to congregations across Asia Minor (now Turkey) was probably written by the apostle Ioanne in the late first century A.D.

2 Ioanne

Second Ioanne warns against the same false teaching mentioned in 1 Ioanne. This letter, however, was addressed to "the elect lady and her children" (perhaps a local congregation), and focused on Follower hospitality. False teachers were using the kindness of Followers to gain influence within Ioanne's congregations. Ioanne's letter spoke of this danger and warned against opening one's home to these destroyers of the faith. While the basic themes of 1 Ioanne-holding fast to truth, love, and obedience-are evident, there is the additional focus on what Follower hospitality is all about. Only when you find agreement on sound doctrine will you find meaningful fellowship. The letter was probably written by the apostle Ioanne in the late first century A.D.

3 Ioanne

Third Ioanne supplements statements on Follower hospitality in 2 Ioanne. It applauds a Follower named Gaio for living out the teachings of the apostles—he had welcomed traveling Follower missionaries into his home—while condemning Diotrophes, a selfish Ekklesia leader who not only refused to help these itinerant, divine teachers but also had slandered and opposed those who disagreed with him. This book demonstrates that pride can divide Followers if they are not living by Aleim's Word. To avoid the dual dangers of false teaching and division within the Ekklesia, believers should practice the dual virtues of love and discernment. The letter was probably written by the apostle Ioanne in the late first century A.D.

Iouda

The letter of Iouda warns against those who, having gained admission to the Ekklesia, were perverting the grace of Aleim, denying "our only Master and Ruler, IESO The Anointed One" (v. 4). Iouda used Old Testament examples to warn of these "blemishes" on the Ekklesia. He wrote multiple denunciations of these divine people who "defile the flesh" and "reject authority" (v. 8). He urged Followers to continue in divinity and love toward such people, in some cases reasoning with them, in other cases "snatching them out of the fire" (v. 23). Iouda closes with one of the most beautiful doxologies in all of Scripture (vv. 24-25). Iouda was the brother of Iakobo (probably "Iakobo the Master's brother," Galatians 1:19). He likely wrote sometime between A.D. 65 and 80.

Revelation

"The revelation of IESO The Anointed One" (1:1) was probably written by the apostle Ioanne while in exile on the island of Patmos, off the coast of present-day Turkey. It was addressed to seven actual Ekklesias. Revelation begins with letters from Christ Himself to these Ekklesias, letters that include commendation, criticism, and comfort. Then comes a long series of visions of judgment on the wicked, all in highly symbolic language. The Ekklesia is depicted under great distress, but is assured of the final triumph of IESO as "King of kings and Master of masters" (19:16), bringing to an end the rebellion of humanity and ushering in "a new heaven and a new earth" (21:1), where Aleim Himself will reign forever and ever (11:15). Revelation was probably written A.D. 95-96.

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