**What You Should Know from NT6-General Epistles & Revelation**

Lakeside Institute of Theology

1. What is meant by the “General Epistles” of the New Testament?
   1. The New Testament epistles (“letters” intended to be publically read) that were not written by Paul.
2. What books are included in the list of General Epistles?
   1. Hebrews
   2. James
   3. 1 & 2 Peter
   4. 1, 2 & 3 John
   5. Jude
3. Other than not being written by Paul, in what specific way do the General Epistles differ from Pauline Epistles?
   1. Paul’s letters are named for their recipients, while the General Epistles are named for their authors (with the exception of Hebrews, which has sometimes not been considered a General Epistle).
4. Why is it that the Book of Hebrews was for a long time NOT considered one of the General Epistles?
   1. Because it was considered to have been written by Paul, but there is not almost universal scholarly agreement that Paul did not write the Book of Hebrews.
5. Why are the General Epistles also known as “Catholic”
   1. “Catholic” mean “universal.” Whereas Paul’s letter are all written to specific churches or individuals, almost all the General Epistles were written either to the entire Church or to a large part of the Church.
6. What is believed to be the first New Testament book written?
   1. Most likely the Epistle of James; *or* Paul’s Letter to the Galatians. Both would have been written late in the AD 40s.
7. What is the general purpose behind the writing of most of the General Epistles?
   1. They are short books written to address certain specific concerns, controversies and heresies within the Church.
8. What are some of the themes addressed throughout the General Epistles?
   1. Encouraging continued faithfulness to Jesus
   2. Promoting love within the Christian community
   3. Promoting hospitality to strangers
   4. Encouraging godly behavior
   5. Cautions against false teaching – especially Gnosticism (one of

the most common themes)

* 1. The practical side of the Christian faith – the power of prayer, how to hold your tongue, dealing with false teachers, being patient, being persistent, overcoming fear, etc.

1. What prompts us to consider the eight General Epistles as a unit?
   1. Written by five different authors on a variety of topics, the General Epistles form a unity more because of their distinctiveness from the Pauline Epistles than because of any internal cohesion.
2. About when were the General Epistles written?
   1. Traditionally, all the General Epistles were written before the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70, except for 1, 2 & 3 John, which are believed to have been written between AD 85 and 90.
3. What is the general theme of the Book of Hebrews?
   1. Hebrews presents Christ as High Priest, to encourage Jewish Christians believers to stay true to the faith and not return to Judaism.
   2. Hebrews details how Christ (as Messiah and High Priest) is superior over all – over the Prophets of the Old Testament; angels; Moses and Joshua; Aaron, the first High Priest; the tabernacle and the Law.
4. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of Hebrews?
   1. Unknown; the book does not name its author. At one time thought to be Paul (so credited in the *KJV*), but Pauline authorship is now almost universally rejected. Possible authors include Luke, Barnabas, Apollo, Clement of Rome or Priscilla.

1. What is the traditional date and location for the writing of the Book of Hebrews, and who were the intended recipients?
   1. Around AD 65. Given the emphasis in Hebrews of the inadequacy of the Temple sacrificial system, it is almost certain the author would have mentioned the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 if this had already occurred at the time of writing.
   2. Perhaps written in Jerusalem, but this is not certain. Most likely it was written to Jewish Christians in Jerusalem who, under persecution, were considering reverting to Judaism.
2. What is of note about the Greek language used in the Book of Hebrews?
   1. The Book of Hebrews has the most polished and eloquent Greek of any NT book. It is widely considered a “masterpiece” of the Greek language.
3. Why did the Book of Hebrews have some difficulty in gaining acceptance to the New Testament Canon?
   1. Because the author is unknown.
4. What is the general theme of the Book of James?
   1. Practical instruction on living the Christian life, especially how true faith gives evidence through righteousness living.
   2. While not contradicting Paul’s emphasis on salvation by faith, James may have been written to balance Paul’s theology (or vice versa).
5. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of James?
   1. James the Just, the half-brother of Jesus and head of the Jerusalem Council.
6. What is the traditional date and location for the writing of the Book of James, and who were the intended recipients?
   1. Around AD 45-49 (certainly before AD 50) – making it probably the first New Testament book written.
   2. Written from Jerusalem.
   3. Written to Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Near East.
7. What is the general theme of the Book of 1 Peter?
   1. To give teaching on various aspects of Christian life and duties, especially encouragement and comfort from the Apostle Peter to persecuted and suffering Christians.
8. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of 1 Peter?
   1. The Apostle Peter.
9. What is the traditional date for the writing of the Book of 1 Peter?
   1. Around AD 62-65.
10. What is the general theme of the Book of 2 Peter?
    1. Warning from the Apostle Peter against false teachers and encouragement to watchfulness for the return of the Lord.
11. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of 2 Peter?
    1. The Apostle Peter.
12. What is the traditional date for the writing of the Book of 2 Peter?
    1. Around AD 64-66.
13. What is the general theme of the Book of 1 John?
    1. John’s reminder of our fellowship with God and with each other in and through Jesus; an admonition to practice of righteous living and love; and a warning against Gnostic heresies common in the Early Church.
14. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of 1 John?
    1. The Apostle John.
15. What is the traditional date and location for the writing of the Book of 1 John?
    1. Around AD 85-90.
    2. Written from the city of Ephesus.
16. What is the general theme of the Book of 2 John?
    1. John’s letter of encouragement to “the elect Lady” and her children.
    2. Encouraging discernment in receiving teachers, as false teachers were misleading the faithful.
    3. To oppose Gnostic heresies common in the Early Church.
17. What is the usual understanding of the meaning of the “elect lady” and her children?
    1. John is referring to a church and its members.
18. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of 2 John, and who were the intended recipients?
    1. The Apostle John.
19. What is the traditional date and location for the writing of the Book of 2 John?
    1. Around AD 85-90.
    2. Written from the city of Ephesus.
20. What is the general theme of the Book of 3 John?
    1. John’s personal note of praise and appreciation to Gaius, as well as caution about the dangers of an errant church leader named Diotrephes.
21. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of 3 John?
    1. The Apostle John.
22. What is the traditional date and location for the writing of the Book of 3 John, and who were the intended recipients?
    1. Around AD 85-90.
    2. Written from the city of Ephesus.
23. What is the general theme of the Book of Jude?
    1. A strong warning and condemnation against false teachers and libertines, making it clear that salvation did not give license to sin, and encouragement for the faithful to stand strong.
24. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of Jude?
    1. Jude (or Judas), the brother of James the Just (author of the Book of James), and a half-bother of Jesus.
25. What is the traditional date for the writing of the Book of Jude?
    1. Around AD 60-65.
26. What is the general theme and message of the Book of Revelation?
    1. It is an encouraging prophecy about the final days, the Second Coming of Christ, the end of time, God’s ultimate triumph, and the beginning of our eternity with him in heaven.
    2. To assure recipients (many of who were suffering persecution) of the ultimate triumph of Christ against all who oppose Him and His saints. This was a special concern as the Roman emperors had increased persecution of Christians, trying to enforce emperor worship.
27. Who has been traditionally accepted as the author of the Book of Revelation?
    1. The Apostle John.
28. What is the traditional date and location for the writing of the Book of Revelation, and who were the intended recipients?
    1. Around AD 90-96.
    2. In the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, where John was exiled for a period of time.
    3. Written to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor.
29. What is the meaning of “apocalypse?”
    1. A revelation; a disclosure of knowledge; the lifting of a veil.
30. What are the four interpretive approaches that can be applied to the Book of Revelation?
    1. Historicist – sees a broad view of history in Revelation.
    2. Preterist – sees Revelation as referring mostly to events in the past: apostolic era up to fall of Roman Empire.
    3. Futurist – believes Revelation describes future events.
    4. Idealist, or Symbolic – holds that Revelation does not refer to actual people or events, but is an allegory of the spiritual path & ongoing struggle between good and evil.