

BI2001– Basics of Biblical Content
New Testament
Spring 2013
Instructor: Susan R. Garrett
Friday 8:30–9:50; Schlegel 121

Description

This course is intended for students who wish to expand and deepen their knowledge of the content of the New Testament—knowledge that constitutes an indispensable foundation for critical and imaginative interpretation of the Scriptures. Some may choose to take the course because they entered Louisville Seminary with less Bible knowledge than those who have read the Bible devotionally, attended Bible studies in church, or taken Bible courses in college. Some may be Presbyterian students who need more help preparing for the Bible Content Ordination Exam. Some may be of the opinion that one can never know the Bible too well. All are welcome.

Intended Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Name in correct order (and spell correctly) all the books of the New Testament.
2. Briefly describe the contents of each of the books of the New Testament.
3. Differentiate thematically among similar books, such as the Synoptic Gospels or Pauline epistles.
4. Identify correctly the New Testament book in which representative or theologically/historically/culturally significant passages are found.

These outcomes prepare students for achievement of MDiv and MAR Student Learning Objective #1, that students be able interpret Scripture critically and imaginatively.

Textbook

The text book is a critical study Bible of your choice. The study Bibles by Oxford University Press, Abingdon (*New Interpreters*), and HarperCollins are all excellent. The NRSV translation is recommended but not required. Websites and handouts will also be assigned.

Assessment

The course will meet once per week for 80 minutes (skipping certain weeks as noted on the syllabus). The instructional method will be lecture and discussion. Assessment will be based on the following:

1. Consistent attendance (see attendance policy below).
2. A diagnostic test given at the beginning of the semester. The score will not be counted but you must complete the test in order to take the final exam.
3. Objective quizzes given each week, 8 in total (worth 10% apiece, for 80% of grade). *Note: There will be **one and only one make-up day for quizzes** (if missed for Instructor-approved reasons).*
4. A final exam on the last day of class (for 20% of grade).

Grading will be pass/fail. Your composite average for all quizzes and the final exam must be at least 70% to pass the course.

Schedule

Unit 1: The Gospels and Acts

February 8

- Introduction to the course
- The Synoptic Gospels: The two-source theory
- The Gospel of Mark
- Refer to website: http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Synoptic_Outlines.htm (and note other links at bottom). *This is from the website of Felix Just, S. J.*

February 15

- Turn in diagnostic test (*distributed on first day of class: the grade itself will not be counted, but you must complete the test in order to take the final exam*)
- Quiz #1, on Mark
- The Gospel of Matthew
- The Gospel of Luke
- Refer to website: http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Synoptic_Outlines.htm (and note other links at bottom). *This is from the website of Felix Just, S. J.*

February 22

- Quiz #2, on Matthew and Luke
- The Acts of the Apostles
- Refer to website: <http://catholic-resources.org/Bible/Acts.htm>. *This is from the website of Felix Just, S. J.*

March 1

- Quiz #3, on the Acts of the Apostles. Prepare a 200-word (max) summary of the book; this will be handed in and will count for 20% of the quiz grade.
- The Gospel of John
- Refer to websites: <http://catholic-resources.org/John/Outlines-Gospel.htm>; and <http://catholic-resources.org/John/Synoptic-Differences.htm>. *These are from the website of Felix Just, S. J.*

March 8 – NO CLASS

Unit 2: The Pauline Epistles

March 15

- Quiz #4, on John
- Introduction to the Pauline epistles
- 1–2 Thessalonians
- 1–2 Corinthians
- See Appendices 1–2

March 22 and 29 – NO CLASS

April 5: Galatians, Romans, Philippians, Philemon

- Quiz #5, on 1–2 Thessalonians and 1–2 Corinthians. Prepare 100-word (max) summaries of each of the four letters; these will be handed in and will count for 40% of the quiz grade.
- See Appendix 3

April 12: Ephesians, Colossians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus

- Quiz #6, on Galatians, Romans, Philippians, Philemon. Prepare 100-word (max) summaries of each of the four letters; these will be handed in and will count for 40% of the quiz grade.
- See Appendix 4

Unit 3: The Other Books of the New Testament

April 19: Hebrews and James

- Quiz #7, on Ephesians, Colossians, 1-2 Timothy, and Titus. Prepare 100-word (max) summaries of each of the five letters; these will be handed in and will count for 40% of the quiz grade.
- See Appendix 5

April 26 – NO CLASS

May 3: 1–2 Peter, Jude, 1–2–3 John, Revelation

- Quiz #8, on Hebrews and James. Prepare 100-word (max) summaries of each of the books; these will be handed in and will count for 40% of the quiz grade.
- See Appendix 6

May 10: Final Exam

- The final exam will cover the entire New Testament, with extra emphasis on 1–2 Peter, Jude, 1–2–3 John, and Revelation, for each of which you should prepare 100-word (max) summaries, which will be handed in and will count for 20% of the exam grade. Listing the books of the New Testament in order and with correct spelling will count for an additional 20% of the exam grade. The remainder of the final exam will consist of Bible IDs similar to those on the Diagnostic Test given at the beginning of the semester.

Seminary Policies

Inclusive Language. In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for further assistance: http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp.

Special Accommodations. Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to

arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Attendance Policy. According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Three or more absences may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

APPENDIX 1: Introduction to the Apostle Paul

I. Diaspora church prior to Paul

- A flourishing Hellenistic church prior to P's conversion. Jewish law already an issue
- Gal. 1:11ff.: P. mentions his persecution of church
- Many community traditions available to P. by the time he wrote.

II. Paul's early life

- Sources: Gal 1, Phil 3, Acts 21:39; 22:33
- Acts 21:39: A Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia ("no mean city"); Acts 22:3: born in Tarsus, brought up in Jerusalem, studied with Gamaliel; Roman citizenship: See 22:25-29
- Pharisaism: Importance cannot be overestimated.

III. "Conversion" or "call" of Paul

- Situation: Two bodies of evidence (Acts 9, 22, 26; P's letters), not conflicting but differing significantly in emphasis. How to correlate/compare?

IV. How to Read Paul's Letters

A. Introduction to Paul's letters.

- 13 bear name of Paul. On ancient pseudepigraphy. "Contested" v. "uncontested."
 - 7 uncontested authorship: Romans; 1, 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Philippians; 1 Thessalonians, Philemon.
 - contested authorship: 2 Thessalonians, Col., Eph., 1, 2 Tim; Titus, [Hebrews]
 - Criteria used in determining authenticity (from Luke T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament*): **Style** (vocabulary, sentence length & structure, epistolary form, modes of argumentation); **Theological consistency** (or lack thereof): e.g., w/r/t law, eschatology, Christology, view of the church [its structure & governance, and its relationship to the world], ethics [is epistle "defined by radical freedom tempered by service or by the fulfilling of household responsibilities?"]; **Fit within Paul's ministry**. "Is there a place for the composition of this letter within the narrative of Acts or Paul's other letters?"
- Paul's activity in the eastern Mediterranean, when undisputed letters written
- We have only a partial record, none that churches wrote him. Acts silent on letters.

B. Major characteristics of Paul's letters

- Occasional character.
- Genuine letters, vs. "literary" or non-private letters for publication.
- Incomplete and unsystematic. Cf. Epictetus.
- Instead of new instruction, letters work out implications of prior teachings

C. Ancient epistolography. Paul's day: much instruction in letter writing. Convention dictated *layout, content, style*

- Ps.-Demetrius: "The friendly type, then, is one that seems to be written by a friend to a friend. Sometimes people will write this style even though they don't know the person to whom they are writing, because the writers think that by using this style they will make the recipients unable to refuse them their requests. As follows: Even though I have been separated from you

for a long time, I suffer this in body only. For I can never forget you or the impeccable way we were reared together from childhood up. . .”

- Recognizing that P. was using particular styles can help us to interpret the letters more accurately.

APPENDIX 2:

CHAPTER OUTLINES: 1–2 THESSALONIANS & 1–2 CORINTHIANS

1 Thessalonians

- chap. 1: Paul greets the Thessalonians and remembers their faith, love, and hope
- chap. 2: Paul remembers his brief time with them and recalls his demeanor among them
- chap. 3: Paul rejoices over Timothy's report on their steadfastness
- chap. 4: On sexual morality, brother/sisterly love, and the coming of the Lord (4:13-18!)
- chap. 5: How to behave while we wait for Jesus; closing exhortations

2 Thessalonians

- chap. 1: Paul promises relief for afflicted, vengeance on afflictors
- chap. 2: The "Man of Lawlessness" and the restrainer who holds him back
- chap. 3: Against the idle: "Anyone unwilling to work should not eat" (v. 10)

1 Corinthians

- chap. 1: Against divisions & overestimating wisdom; we preach Christ crucified (stumbling block? foolishness? Or the power and wisdom of God?)
- chap. 2: We have God's countercultural wisdom, to be discerned by the spiritual
- chap. 3: Against divisions and boasting of human leaders; Paul & Apollos work cooperatively!
- chap. 4: On the ministry of the apostles and how they are viewed as last of all
- chap. 5: Sexual immorality in the Corinthian congregation: a man living with his stepmother
- chap. 6: Against taking brothers/sisters to court, and visiting prostitutes
- chap. 7: Defining appropriate sexual relationships within marriage
- chaps. 8, 10: On food offered to idols: okay, but not if it harms a brother or sister who is weak
- chap. 9: Paul describes how he foregoes his apostolic rights rather than impede the Gospel (illustrates accommodation of the weak, advocated in chaps. 8 & 10)
- chap. 11: head-coverings, and abuses at the Lord's supper
- chap. 12: one body with many members
- chap. 13: Ode to love
- chap. 14: On the spiritual gifts, esp. speaking in tongues
- chap. 15: On the resurrection of Christ and the Day of the Lord yet to come
- chap. 16: The collection for the saints; Paul's travel plans; final greetings

2 Corinthians

- chap. 1: Paul praises the God of consolation, speaks of his own affliction
- chap. 2: Paul's changing itinerary; the letter of tears; Christ leads us in triumphal procession
- chap. 3: Paul's boldness of speech as minister of the new covenant (compared to Mosaic covenant)
- chap. 4: Treasure in clay jars; momentary affliction prepares us for eternal glory
- chap. 5: Earthly tent vs. heavenly dwelling; the ministry of reconciliation ("God was in Christ, reconciling the world...")
- chap. 6: Appeal to the Corinthians to be reconciled to Paul; do not be mismatched with unbelievers
- chap. 7: Continuation of Paul's appeal for reconciliation; "godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret" (v. 10)
- chaps. 8–9: The collection for the saints
- chap. 10: Paul defends himself to those who would compare him with the Super-apostles; prepares for ironic boasting of chap. 11

chap. 11: Paul “boasts” of his sufferings as an apostle

chap. 12: Paul’s visions and revelations, and his “thorn in the flesh”

chap. 13: Admonition to self-testing, and a veiled threat that Paul will use his authority when he comes

APPENDIX 3

CHAPTER OUTLINES: GALATIANS, ROMANS, PHILIPPIANS, PHILEMON

Galatians:

- chap. 1: No other gospel besides Paul's, which was taught by God; Paul's early history in the faith
- chap. 2: Paul's agreement with Jerusalem leaders; Cephas' hypocrisy; "It is no longer I who live"
- chap. 3: Abraham believed God & it was reckoned to him as righteousness; all who believe are Abraham's descendants; Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law; neither Jew nor Greek etc.
- chap. 4: Believers as adopted heirs of God; Galatians' turning back to enslavement; allegory of Mount Sinai; Jerusalem.
- chap. 5: Those who want to be justified by law relinquish freedom in Christ; only faith working through love counts; works of flesh vs. fruit of spirit
- chap. 6: Admonitions and closing

Romans:

- chap. 1: Intro; thesis statement (vv. 16-17); indictment (of Gentiles) for idolatry; failure to honor God
- chap. 2: Re those who judge others but do the same; God's impartiality; Jews also in need of God's grace
- chap. 3: All have sinned and stand in need of the Gospel; God has acted through faith of Jesus to bring about salvation for all
- chap. 4: The faith of Abraham
- chap. 5: Peace with God; Adam's sin and Christ's obedience
- chap. 6: How baptism makes a change in our existence
- chap. 7: The problem with the law; the dilemma of weakness of will
- chap. 8: The Spirit helps us walk in newness of life; nothing can separate us from God's love
- chap. 9: Oath: Paul's willingness to be cut off for sake of Jews; History of Jews shows that God has always exercised a principle of election
- chap. 10: Jews' zeal unenlightened (did not see that Christ is *telos* of law); Torah intended Christ from the beginning (quoting Torah)
- chap. 11: God has not rejected Israel: hardening to be ended by imminent fullness of the Gentile faith.
- chap. 12: Present your bodies as a living sacrifice; a call for a transformation of mind; one body many members
- chap. 13: "Obey authorities" (Behavior vis-à-vis the state and one another)
- chap. 14: Achieving communal harmony in the face of differences
- chap. 15: Please others, not yourselves; Gospel for Jews & Gentiles alike; why Paul writes so boldly; plan to visit Rome
- chap. 16: Greetings; final instruction; doxology

Philippians

- chap. 1: Paul's prayer for the Philippians and his present circumstances
- chap. 2: "Have this mind among yourselves which is in Christ Jesus"; shining as lights in the world; Timothy and Epaphroditus
- chap. 3: Breaking with the past; pressing toward the goal;
- chap. 4: Exhortations; thanks for the gift; final greetings and benediction

Philemon

Salutations; Philemon's love and faith; Paul's plea for Onesimus; final greetings and benedictions

APPENDIX 4

CHAPTER OUTLINES: EPHESIANS, COLOSSIANS, 1–2 TIMOTHY, TITUS

Ephesians:

- chap. 1: Praise of God for our spiritual blessings (holiness, adoption, redemption, inheritance, mystery); prayer that readers receive enlightenment (revelation) re God's power as manifested in raising of Christ
- chap. 2: Contrast between old life (dead in trespasses) and new; Gentiles (once far off) brought near, and dividing wall broken down; all are now members of the household of God
- chap. 3: Mystery of revelation to Paul: Gentiles as fellow heirs with Jews, and ministry of Paul the former persecutor to them; prayer for readers to be strengthened in inner being with power through Spirit & know Christ's surpassing love
- chap. 4: Unity in the body of Christ (one body, Spirit, Lord, faith, baptism, God); gifts given equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ; grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ; live no longer as Gentiles, but clothe yourselves with the new self
- chap. 5: Renounce pagan ways; the Christian household ("be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ"); wives should be subject to husbands and husbands should love wives
- chap. 6: children and parents; slaves and masters; the whole armor of God ("For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness. . .")

Colossians

- chap. 1: praise for the Colossians, and for how the Gospel is bearing fruit among them; prayer for their strengthening; high Christological proclamation (He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him..."); how Christ has made peace by the blood of his cross and brought the Gentiles near.
- chap. 2: Christ as God's mystery, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"; God erased the record that stood against us with its legal demands, nailing it to the cross; warning against heresy pertaining to "matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths, self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking"
- chap. 3: In this Pauline epistle, the author exhorts readers to "set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God." Followed by exhortation to avoid pagan vices and "clothe yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator"
- chap. 4: Exhortations and greetings

1 Timothy

- chap. 1: warning against false teachings and teachers: do not occupy yourself with "myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the divine training that is known by faith"; Paul as great sinner and recipient of mercy
- chap. 2: Women should dress modestly, be silent in churches, and trust that they will be saved through childbearing.

- chap. 3: Qualifications of bishops and deacons; on the mystery of the faith (“He was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.”)
- chap. 4: Avoid false asceticism; train yourself in godliness; exhortations to Timothy (“let no one despise your youth”)
- chap. 5: This Pauline epistle/chapter includes exhortations re widows: which to put on lists as “real widows”
- chap. 6: On false teachings, and the danger of loving money; on Christ, who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see”

2 Timothy

- chap. 1: salutation; remembrance of faith of Lois and Eunice; “Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus”
- chap. 2: Chain of tradition: “What you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well”; exhortation to upright behavior and avoidance of empty chatter and controversies
- chap. 3: Prediction of distressing times and heretics to come; some will make their way into households and captivate silly women; hold fast to tradition (“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness”)
- chap 4: exhortation to be persistent and patient in teaching; time of heretics and heresy coming, when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but “having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths”; “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”

Titus

- chap. 1: Instructions re elders and bishops, and exhortation to avoid those who contradict sound doctrine or who are rebellious. On the need to rebuke Cretans, who are lazy liars.
- chap. 2: Behavioral standards consistent with sound doctrine, directed to various members of the household. On living self-controlled and upright lives, and on waiting for Jesus’ glorious appearing
- chap. 3: How we were changed and saved by God our Savior, and admonition to avoid stupid controversies and genealogies

APPENDIX 5

CHAPTER OUTLINES: HEBREWS AND JAMES

HEBREWS

Chapters 1–2: Christ superior to the angels, and tested as we are.

Chapter 3: Christ superior to Moses; exhortation not to harden hearts as Israel did when tested in the wilderness

Chapter 4: How Israel failed to “enter its rest.” More on Christ as tested as we are: a high priest able to sympathize with our weaknesses

Chapter 5: Superiority of Jesus’ high priesthood to that of earthly priests. “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.” (Heb 5:6)

Chapter 6: Exhortation to continue on to perfection.

Chapter 7: More on Jesus as high priest according to the order of Melchizedek

Chapters 8–9: Superiority of heavenly sanctuary/high priesthood to earthly shadows or reflections

Chapter 10: Superiority of heavenly sacrifice to earthly. Exhortation to continue on in patient endurance

Chapter 11: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval” (Heb 11:1-2). Litany of OT faithful.

Chapter 12: “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us” (Heb 12:1). Suffering as *paideia* (education/ discipline)

Chapter 13: Final exhortations for Christian living, including remarks on love and hospitality.

JAMES

FRIENDS OF GOD VERSUS FRIENDS OF THE WORLD

Chapter 1: Overview of epistle’s major themes: exhortation to endure testing and seek divine wisdom; warning against double-mindedness; counsel to avoid careless speech; admonition of the wealthy; statement on fulfilling God’s perfect law.

Chapter 2: Single-minded fulfillment of law. Anecdote of church showing favoritism to rich person in the assembly. Law summed up in the command to love one’s neighbor as oneself.

Chapter 3: A lengthy warning about the dangers of speech. Difficulty of controlling tongue.: curses and blessing from the same mouth. Contrast between gentle divine wisdom and envy and selfish ambition of those informed by the world.

Chapter 4: The consequences of envy and ambition are murder and war. Friends of the world should submit to God and repent of their double-mindedness.

Chapter 5: Condemns the rich for exploiting the poor. Faithful counseled to endure trials, live in harmony, anoint the sick, save the wandering.

APPENDIX 6

CHAPTER OUTLINES: 1–2 PETER; 1–2–3 JOHN; JUDE; REVELATION

1 PETER

Chapter 1: to twelve tribes of dispersion; joy in suffering; call to holiness through Christ who ransomed you

Chapter 2: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (2:9-10). To everyone: obey higher governing authorities; to slaves: obey masters.

Chapter 3: To wives: obey husbands. To husbands: show consideration for wives. Repay evil with blessing. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you (v. 15).

Chapter 4: Exhortations to discipline and love. Rejoice in sharing Christ's sufferings.

Chapter 5: To elders: exhortations to tend the flock; to younger: exhortations to obey elders; to everyone: exhortations to be humble and watch out for the prowling devil.

2 PETER

Chapter 1: “Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature” (v. 4) Keep on being faithful!

Chapter 2: Expect false prophets to arise. Be confident that “the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment”. Lengthy description of the sins of the ungodly. Dog turns back to its own vomit.

Chapter 3: In the last days scoffers will come. “Where is the promise of his coming?” “But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day” (3:8). Lord's slowness gives time for repentance. Be without spot or blemish while you wait.

1 JOHN

Chapter 1: God is light and not darkness; if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, but if we confess, God will forgive and cleanse us

Chapter 2: Jesus as our advocate with the Father; obey the Father and abide in him; love one another and do not hate another believer; many antichrists have come

Chapter 3: Sin is lawlessness and those who sin are of the devil. Love one another. Don't be like Cain. “Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action (3:18)

Chapter 4: On testing the spirits: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God (4:2-3).Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. Perfect love casts out fear.

Chapter 5: Children of God: Love God and obey his commandments. Whole world under power of Evil One. Keep from idols.

2 JOHN

Chapter 1: To elect lady and her children. Walk acc. to God's commandments. "Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist!" (1:7)

3 JOHN

Chapter 1: The elder to the beloved Gaius. Show hospitality to traveling workers who are good. Don't be like Diotrephes, who refuses to show hospitality and rejects the elder's authority.

JUDE

Chapter 1: Contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. (1:3). Examples of how God previously punished wrongdoers. On the bad behavior of the enemies: These are blemishes on your love-feasts, while they feast with you without fear, feeding themselves. They are waterless clouds carried along by the winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the deepest darkness has been reserved forever" (1:12-13). Such scoffers were predicted long ago. "Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen" (1:24-25).

REVELATION

Chapter 1: John's self-introduction and the glorious Son of Man

Chapters 2-3: The letters to the seven churches

Chapter 4: Heavenly scene: God on the throne, and four living creatures; Lamb "standing as though it had been slaughtered."

Chapters 5-6: Seven seals unsealed by the lamb: 4 horsemen; 144,000 + a countless throng before the throne

Chapters 8-11: The blowing of the seven trumpets. (chapter 11: the two witnesses in Jerusalem)

Chapter 12: Woman clothed with the sun gives birth; Michael battles the dragon and knocks him out of the sky

Chapter 13: Beast from the and beast from the earth; the number of the beast is 666

Chapter 14: 144,000, and the Son of Man comes on a cloud

Chapters 15-16: Pouring out of seven bowls, with additional plagues

Chapter 17: Whore of Babylon, sitting on a beast with seven heads and ten horns

Chapter 18: Taunt songs and ironic laments for Babylon

Chapter 19: Heavenly multitude praising God. White horse carrying awesome warrior enters, followed by God's armies. Beast and kings of earth assembled; thrown into lake of fire. (ARMAGEDDON NEVER DEPICTED).

Chapter 20: Angel binds the devil. First resurrection; 1000-year-reign; devil unbound, cast into lake of fire with false prophet; final judgment

Chapters 21 and 22: New creation and descent of heavenly Jerusalem; conclusion