

Glossary of Terms

Ancient Near East: a term referring to the historical period of about 3000-400 BC in the ancient regions of Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Egypt

Apocrypha: a collection of Jewish writings from the Intertestamental period (400-5 BC) which are helpful in understanding the history of the Jews prior to the coming of Jesus in the 1st century AD

Assyria: an ancient empire along the Tigris River infamous for its brutality which dominated Mesopotamia and took Northern Israel into captivity in 722 BC

Babylon: an ancient empire along the Euphrates River which dominated Mesopotamia and under Nebuchadnezzar destroyed ancient Israel's temple in Jerusalem as well as the entire city and took Southern Israel into captivity in 586 BC

Bible Translation: the translating of the Bible from Greek and Hebrew into other languages either word for word or phrase for phrase

Canon: the collection and list of inspired books of the Bible which serve as the Church's standard of faith and practice (the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments)

Canonization: the process of recognizing those written texts which are uniquely inspired by God or are the written revelation of God

Covenant: an ancient type of relationship with a non-relative which involves obligations and is established through an oath to God or a god

Covenant Lawsuit: a complaint of God with his people Israel issued by a prophet that Israel had broken the covenant God made with them at Mt. Sinai which would declare judgment

Dead Sea Scrolls: works of a Jewish sect found in 1947 by the Dead Sea (Qumran) dating to around 200 BC which includes copies of Old Testament books, commentaries on OT books, and other documents relating to the community whose library they were

Egypt: an ancient civilization in northeast Africa on the Nile River famous for its pharaohs, pyramids, and advanced mathematics which also held the ancient nation Israel in slavery which needed to be delivered by God through Moses around 1400 BC

Evangelical: those Christians in the Protestant tradition who believe in the inspiration, inerrancy, and sole authority of the Bible

Genre: a type or style of writing (example: poetry, letter, historical narrative)

Greek: the original language in which the New Testament was written in

Hebrew: the original language in which the Old Testament was written in

Holy Week (Passion Week): the last full week before Jesus was crucified

Intertestamental Period: time between the writings of the Testaments (400-4 BC)

Josephus (37-100 AD): a well-educated Jew who lived in Palestine until the Jewish War of 66-70 AD and is easily our most important source of information about the times of Jesus since he wrote various books, most notably a history of the Jewish War, and then also a history of the Jewish people, the Antiquities.

Mesopotamia: a term which refers to the ancient region of modern day Syria, Iraq, and Iran which occupies the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and where ancient civilizations like the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and Persians conquered

Mosaic Covenant: the Suzerain-Vassal covenant that God established with Israel at Mt. Sinai after he delivered them from Egypt around 1400 BC

New Covenant: a covenant ratified by the death of Jesus which has its roots in Genesis 3:15 and 12:1-3 and was promised to Israel (in spite of their breaking of the Mosaic Covenant) that God would forgive their sins and write His law on their heart

Persia: an ancient empire located in modern day Iran which was the largest of the ancient world and supported the rebuilding and repopulation of Jerusalem and it's temple with Jews in captivity from 538-445 BC

Rome: an ancient empire coming from modern day Italy which dominated Europe and the greater region around the Mediterranean Sea (including Turkey, Israel, and Northern Africa) and sponsored the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple as well as the crucifixion of Jesus around 30 AD

Septuagint (LXX): a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures which began around the 3rd century BC and contained what we know as the Old Testament (it was the Bible of Jesus and the apostles)

Second Temple Period (Judaism): the period of Jewish history from the time of the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem in 516 BC to the destruction of Herod's temple in 70 AD

Suzerain-Vassal Covenant: a covenant between a larger ruler (suzerain) and protected nation (vassal) sometimes issued when the larger ruler/nation steps in to help the other in a military campaign and is the type of covenant God established with Israel through Moses at Mt. Sinai around 1400 BC

Textual Criticism: the study of ancient copies of the Old and New Testaments with the purpose of finding the original wording of the texts since there is not 100% agreement in all of the copies

Most Important Dates to Remember

- 2000 BC – Time of Abraham
- 1500-1400 BC – Time of Moses and the Exodus
- 1000 BC – Time of David's Rule
- 950 BC – Solomon's Temple Built
- 931 BC – Kingdom of Israel divided
- 722 BC – Fall of northern kingdom Israel
- 586 BC – Fall of southern kingdom Judah & destruction of the Temple
- 538 BC – First return of exiles to Jerusalem
- 516 BC – Second Temple completed
- 445 BC – Walls are rebuilt in Jerusalem
- 166 BC – Maccabean revolt against Antiochus IV
- 5 BC – Birth of Jesus
- 28-29 AD – Ministry of John the Baptist
- 30/33 AD – Death and Resurrection of Jesus
- 70 AD – Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem
- 95 AD – Last writings of New Testament completed