# **NT6 General Epistles (Emphasis on Hebrews)**

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**Author**: Although not stated, the best argument seems to be Paul. One can understand why he would not use his name, given the hostility between him and the Hellenists (Acts 9:29). A Pauline authorship also makes sense of Peter’s comments about Paul (2 Peter 3:15). Peter is writing to believing Jews (cf. 2 Peter 3:1 with 1 Peter 1:1). But the identity of the author remains unknown.

**Date of writing:** Dates range from 64 – 69 A.D.



**Purpose**: to encourage Jewish believers to not withdraw from the struggling Christian church.

**Idea**: Become a partaker with Christ; do not withdraw unto judgment.

**Development:**

1. Introductory theme: **Jesus** says it all, 1:1-4.
2. He is God’s exalted king, 1:5-4:16.
	1. He rules all creation, including angels, 1:5-14.
		1. WARNING**:** hold fast or be judged, 2:1-4.
	2. He, as king, is our perfected leader, 2:5-18.
		1. WARNING: hold fast or be judged, 3:1-19.
		2. WARNING: enter His rest or be judged, 4:1-16.
3. He is God’s appointed high priest, 5:1-10:39.
	1. He is appointed as priest by God, 5:1-11.
		1. WARNING: grow and God will reward; don’t grow and God will judge, 5:12-6:20.
	2. Christ, as high priest, is superior to all others, 7:1-10:39.
		1. Christ’s priesthood annuls the Mosaic Law, 7:1-28.
		2. The New Covenant is better than the Old Covenant, 8:1-13.
		3. The new place of sacrifice is better than the old, 9:1-14.
		4. The new sacrifice is better than the old, 9:15-10:18.
		5. WARNING: draw near, hold fast, and consider, or be judged, 10:19-39.
4. Believe God and be obedient, 11:1-12:29.
	1. Faith is foundational to knowing God, 11:1-40.
	2. Everyone who knows God is disciplined, 12:1-11.
		1. WARNING: don’t be discouraged and withdraw or God will destroy you, 12:12-29.
5. Words on Christian living, 13:1-25.

**James**

**Author**: James, the half-brother of Jesus and the head of the church in Jerusalem.

**Date of writing:** 45-48 A.D.

**Purpose**: to explain to Jewish believers how to handle trials and not be hurt by them.

**Idea**: When going through trials, be swift to hear the Word, slow to speak, and slow to wrath.

**Development:**

1. Recognize the value of trials, James 1:1-18.
	1. Trials strengthen our faith, 1:1-8.
	2. Trials change our values, 1:9-11.
	3. Trials reveal our true commitments, 1:12-18.
2. Respond biblically to trials, James 1:19-4:17.
	1. Welcome the Word and save the life, 1:19-2:26.
		1. Overview of the book, 1:19-20.
		2. Welcome the Word, 1:21-27.
		3. Partiality is not “welcoming” the Word, 2:1-13.
			1. The church should not show partiality, 2:1.
			2. Wealth is a temptation for the church, 2:2-4.
			3. Each situation in life has advantages and disadvantages, 2:5-7.
			4. Treat others the way you wish to be treated, 2:8.
			5. Evil judges show partiality, 2:4, 9-11.
		4. Jesus will judge believers who do not “welcome the Word,” 2:12-26
			1. We will be judged by our acts of kindness, 2:12-13.
			2. Only faith coupled with works will deliver from judgment, 2:14-20.
			3. Abraham demonstrated his faith, 2:21-23.
			4. There are two justifications in the Bible, 2:24.
			5. Rehab demonstrated her faith, 2:25.
			6. Working faith is how we welcome the Word, 2:26.
	2. We must control our tongue to avoid being hurt by trials, 3:1-18.
		1. If we control the tongue we control the man, 3:2-4.
		2. If we don’t control the tongue we destroy the man, 3:5-12.
		3. Godly teachers must control the tongue, 3:1, 13-18.
	3. We must be slow to wrath to avoid being hurt by trials, 4:1-16.
		1. Conflicts come from our worldliness, 4:1-6a.
		2. Humility is the cure for conflicts, 4:6b-16.
			1. Humility toward God, 4:6b-10.
			2. Humility toward the Brethren, 4:22-12.
			3. Humility toward ourselves, 4:13-16.
	4. Do every good thing, 4:17.
3. During trials, rest in the return of Christ, James 5:1-11.
	1. Judgment upon oppressors is certain, 5:1-6.
		1. Give it away before it spoils, 5:2-3.
		2. Treat the ones we owe with fairness, 5:4.
		3. Reduce our pleasure seeking, 5:5.
		4. Help those needier than ourselves, 5:6.
	2. Christ’s soon return gives us endurance, 5:7-11.
		1. Wait for the Lord, 5:7-8.
		2. Don’t grumble, 5:9.
		3. Remember the Prophets, 5:10.
		4. Remember Job, 5:11.
4. Remember James’s specific exhortations, James 5:12-20.
	1. Don’t swear, 5:12.
	2. Pray, 5:13a.
	3. Sing, 5:13b.
	4. Call, 5:14-15.
	5. Confess, 5:16-18.
	6. Convert, 5:19-20.

**1 Peter**

**Author**: Peter, the apostle of Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 1:1.

**Date of writing:** 64 A.D.



**Purpose**: to help Jewish Christians survive in a hostile land.

**Idea**: Suffering should lead us to deference in all relationships when we consider Christ’s example and our future glory

**Development:**

1. Greetings to believers encountering unfair circumstances, 1:1-2.
2. Our future glory encourages us during unfair circumstances, 1:3-2:10.
	1. Our trials have value to God, 1:3-7.
	2. Our salvation is worth waiting for, 1:8-12.
	3. Our hope can make us holy, 1:13-16.
	4. Reverent fear should characterize our lives, 1:17-21.
	5. We are to long for the Word, 1:22-25.
	6. The believer’s behavior should be righteous to avoid shame 2:1-10.
3. Suffering believers should behave with deference in all relationships, 2:11-5:11.
	1. Honorable conduct proves the truthfulness of Christianity, 2:11-12.
	2. Submit to rulers, 2:13-17.
	3. Servants, submit like the Servant, 2:18-25.
	4. Defer in domestic relations, 3:1-7.
	5. Defer in all relationships, 3:8-12.
	6. Defer when encountering unfair treatment in civil spheres, 3:13-4:19.
4. Final words for believes encountering unfair circumstances, 5:12-14.

**2 Peter**

**Author**: Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 1:2.

**Date of writing:** 67-68 A.D.



**Purpose**: to warn Jewish believers about false teachers who will deny the Lord and His return.

**Idea**: Use biblical knowledge to identify and defeat false teachers.

**Development:**

1. The challenge of spiritual maturity is built on the sure foundation of Scripture, 1:1-21.
	1. The apostolic faith is complete, 1:1-4.
	2. It is sufficient for a fruitful believer to have an abundant entrance into the kingdom, 1:5-11.
	3. An established faith rests in God’s glorious Son and His trustworthy Word, 1:12-21.
2. A ringing polemic against false teachers who mislead God’s people, 2:1-22.
	1. False teacher basics, 2:1-3.
	2. God will judge the wicked and deliver the righteous, 2:4-9.
	3. False teachers are rebels, 2:10-12.
	4. False teachers are professional philanderers and unholy hustlers, 2:12-17.
	5. False teachers truly want you in their bondage, 2:18-22.
3. How we should live in light of false teacher’s denial of Christ’s return, 3:1-18.
	1. In spite of the scoffers, we can count on Christ’s promise to return, 3:1-9.
	2. Be ready for the return of Christ, 3:10-13.
	3. Four commands and a comment, 3:14-18.

**1 John**

**Author**: John the Apostle.

**Date of writing:** The date cannot be determined with certainty.

**Purpose**: While several themes are found in 1 John, the book is written to provide assurance of salvation to the end that close fellowship with Christ will protect against false doctrine and carnal living.

**Idea**: Your relationship to Jesus can be as close as the Apostles.

**Development:**

1. The Apostles’ fellowship with God is available to us, 1:1-4.
2. The sin problem must be resolved, 1:5-2:2.
	1. God is sinless, 1:5.
	2. Sins we don’t know about are resolved, 1:6-7.
	3. Sins we do know about are resolved, 1:8-10.
	4. We have an Advocate who satisfies the Father for everyone, 2:1-2.
3. Love is essential, 2:3-11.
4. We can always become closer to Jesus, 2:12-14.
5. Fellowship includes warfare, 2:15-27.
	1. Warfare against the world, 2:15-17.
	2. Warfare against the Antichrist, 2:18-27.
6. Make the apostle’s message your own, 2:28-5:5.
	1. By abiding in Christ, 2:28.
	2. By abiding in purity, love, and doctrine, 2:29-5:5.
		1. We must be pure, 2:29-3:9.
		2. We must love one another, 3:10-23.
		3. We must maintain sound doctrine, 3:24-4:6.
		4. Doctrine should lead to love, 4:7-11.
		5. Doctrine that leads to love should lead to purity, 4:12-5:5.
7. Security makes abiding possible, 5:6-21.

**2 John**

**Author**: John the Apostle.

**Date of writing:** The date cannot be determined with certainty.

**Purpose**: to provide instructions to churches regarding traveling cultists.

**Idea**: Don’t help the cultist!

**Development:**

1. Christianity is all about truth, 1-3.
2. Love requires obedience to the Bible, 4-6.
3. Deceivers damage believers, 7-11.
	1. They deny essential doctrines, 7.
	2. Believers are damaged by their doctrines, 8.
	3. Fellowship with God requires sound doctrine, 9.
	4. Fellowship with the church requires sound doctrine, 10-11.
4. Some issues can’t wait! 12-13.

**3 John**

**Author**: John the Apostle.

**Date of writing:** The date cannot be determined with certainty.

**Purpose**: How to handle a good church with a bad leader.

**Idea**: Do not let evil leaders stop the missionary work.

**Development:**

1. Obedience brings joy, 1-4.
2. Help the Missionaries, 5-8.
3. Bad church leaders are recognizable, 9-12.
	1. They are the center of the church, 9.
	2. They talk evil about others, 10a.
	3. They misuse their office, 10b.
4. Welcome those with a good testimony, 12-14.

**Jude**

**Author**: Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, and the brother of James, Jude 1.

**Date of writing:** The date is uncertain, but thought to be between 70 and 80 A.D.

**Purpose**: to encourage believers to fight for the faith.

**Idea**: Believers are to contend for the faith by fighting against false teachers.

**Development:**

1. Believers are the ones addressed, 1-2.
2. False teachers are always a problem, 3-4.
3. False teachers have recognizable characteristics, 5-16.
	1. Apostasy is part of history, 5-10.
	2. False teachers have always been ungodly, 11-16.
4. Don’t be swayed, but stay in the faith, 17-26.
	1. Don’t be swayed because we knew of their coming, 17-19.
	2. Develop your own faith: prayer, love, prophecy, and evangelism, 20-23.
	3. God can keep us from their fate, 24-25.