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## Bible Pairs

by David Sielaff, July 2019

Then read the "[July 2019 Newsletter](#)"



**“Bible pairs” are two or more books of Scripture with interlocking relationships that inform each other. Some books of the Bible are obviously paired together, while other pairs need explanation. Usually these pairings are dual, but sometimes they involve more than two, such as the Synoptic Gospels. There are other kinds of biblical pairs. Bible pairs can also refer to people who across time and space inform and intensify each other’s written words. All Bible pairs are designed to intensify the messages God wants communicated to His people.**

### *The Bible Itself Is a Pairing of Two Concepts*

The Old Testament (or Old Covenant) is paired with the New Testament (or Covenant). If you consider the first five books of the New Testament (the four Gospels and Acts), Christ is the center of all creation, the center of the eons, and the center of God’s plan for mankind formed **“before the foundation of the world”** (John 17:24; Ephesians 1:4; and 1 Peter 1:20).

There are 22 books in the Old Testament, 27 in the New Testament. Look at the diagram on the next page. On a computer it can be viewed larger at <http://www.askelm.com/restoring/res000a.gif>. If you isolate the “New Testament Pentateuch” of the four gospels and Acts from the rest of the New Testament books, then you have 22 on one side (the Old Testament), the four Gospels and Acts, and 22 remaining New Testament books on the other side. These books are about Christ’s life, death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven to form the core message of all the Scriptures. The Old Testament leads up to Christ’s coming in the flesh. This includes the *ekklesia* of believers who are the body of Christ.

The work of Jesus after He is begotten of God (told in the Gospels) and after His resurrection through the *ekklesia* (told in Acts) is the *crisis* of God’s creation, planned from before the foundation of the earth. I use the term *crisis* in a literary sense of events in a story arc, the decisive turning points of a play, a novel, a movie, of every piece of fiction, and much non-fiction. In my November 2017 Commentary, “[Transmitting Thoughts Through Writing](#),” I show that thoughts travel through time and space through writing.<sup>1</sup> God communicates

<sup>1</sup> In that Commentary, I link to a funny four-minute YouTube video, “[Kurt Vonnegut on the Shapes of Stories](#)” where the famous author explains basic story elements to a group of young people. Bible pairs are links connecting elements of the larger narrative of God to us. Most are known to scholars, but our learning about several biblical pairs may help find interesting patterns in the mosaic of messages that is the Bible.

Volume One The Old Testament

Volume Two The New Testament

New Testament				
PENTATEUCH				
1	2	3	4	5
MATT	MARK	LUKE	JOHN	ACTS
Jewish	Jewish-Gentile	Gentile	Universal	Universal
Jews—	PETER	PAUL	JOHN	(-to Rome)
<b>3</b>	<b>4. GOSPELS &amp; ACTS</b> (5 Books)			
<b>The Law</b>	<b>1. ON EARTH</b>			<b>2. IN HEAVEN</b>
<b>GOD</b> (5 Books)	<b>Gospels</b> (Christ on earth)			<b>Acts</b> (Christ in heaven)
<b>1. LAW</b>	1. Genesis			2. I Peter
1. Genesis	2. Exodus			3. II Peter
2. Exodus	3. Leviticus			4. I John
3. Leviticus	4. Numbers			5. II John
4. Numbers	5. Deuteronomy			6. III John
5. Deuteronomy	[The Old Testament Pentateuch is the beginning division of the Holy Scripture. The following two divisions of the O.T. are subsidiary to the Law. The Prophets' division is superior in rank to the Psalms' (for Royal) division because the prophets were direct emissaries of God and were responsible for instructing and admonishing rulers and kings. The positioning shows authority of rank and teaching.]			7. Jude
<b>1. LAW</b>	<b>2. FORMER</b>			[These seven epistles were primarily intended for the Jewish people. Their theme is non-doctrinal and introductory to Paul's doctrinal epistles. They are placed in first position to fulfil the principle "to the Jew first" (Romans 2:10). They are directed to Jewish Christians in general and not to specific churches. They were written by the "pillar" apostles with top rank over Paul.]
1. Joshua - Judges	2. Book of the Kings			
2. Book of the Kings	<b>3. LATTER</b>			
3. Leviticus	3. Isaiah			
4. Numbers	4. Jeremiah } MAJOR			
5. Deuteronomy	5. Ezekiel } MAJOR			
[The Old Testament Pentateuch is the beginning division of the Holy Scripture. The following two divisions of the O.T. are subsidiary to the Law. The Prophets' division is superior in rank to the Psalms' (for Royal) division because the prophets were direct emissaries of God and were responsible for instructing and admonishing rulers and kings. The positioning shows authority of rank and teaching.]	6. The Twelve			
1. Genesis	1. Hosea			
2. Exodus	2. Joel			
3. Leviticus	3. Amos			
4. Numbers	4. Obadiah			
5. Deuteronomy	5. Jonah			
6. The Twelve	6. Micah			
1. Hosea	7. Nahum			
2. Joel	8. Habakkuk			
3. Amos	9. Zephaniah			
4. Obadiah	10. Haggai			
5. Jonah	11. Zechariah			
6. Micah	12. Malachi			
7. Nahum	[This third division is the Royal (state or government) section and was inferior in rank to the prophets of division two.]			
8. Habakkuk	<b>7. RESTORATION</b>			
9. Zephaniah	9. Daniel			
10. Haggai	10. Ezra-Nehemiah			
11. Zechariah	11. Chronicles			
12. Malachi	[This third division is the Royal (state or government) section and was inferior in rank to the prophets of division two.]			
<b>5 Books +</b>	<b>6 Books = 11 Books</b>			<b>5</b>
<b>Basic Law</b>	<b>Priests &amp; Prophets</b>			<b>New Testament Books</b>
<b>5 Books +</b>	<b>6 Books = 11 Books</b>			<b>"THE FOUNDATION" (I Cor. 3:11)</b>
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to us, His children, through the words of Scripture beginning at Genesis 1:1, John 1:1, Hebrews 1:1–3 and other foundational Scriptures that give us insight into the beginnings of God’s plan of creation. The books of Scripture that have a relationship with each other I call “Bible Pairs” for want of a better name.

### ***Biblical Books That Go Together***

Dr. Ernest Martin wrote his informative and entertaining book *Restoring the Original Bible: The Design and Development of the Holy Scriptures*<sup>2</sup> to show the process of how the books of the Bible were included into a collection (often called a “canon,” meaning a group of authoritative documents). In this way God used human agencies to provide needed information for later generations.

The collection varied and today, since the time of the apostles, that collection, that “canon” was completed by the apostle John and a group of witnesses at the end of the first century AD. They are the source documents we call the Scriptures. The apostle Paul described the purpose of the Scripture writings using the example of the Exodus experiences of the Israelites and the 40 years wandering in the desert: **“Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [eons] are come”** (1 Corinthians 10:11). Note also what Paul wrote in the Book of Romans:

**“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, [Why?] that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”**

• **Romans 15:4**

Jesus Himself put an authoritative stamp on the books of the Old Testament (Luke 24:44) and the audience Jesus spoke to fully understood which books He meant.

The concept of Bible pairs refers to significant portions of books that relate to other books that should be read and studied together because they inform each other even though they were written at different times and places. This is different from the concept ordinarily called “intertextuality.”<sup>3</sup>

### ***Bible Pairs in the Old Testament***

**The Book of Genesis.** This book is extremely formulaic and it has formulaic statements that are repeated so the reader/listener can follow along and easily remember the information. Moses was the writer but he selected the histories of the ancestors of the Israelites that comprised Genesis. He compiled, edited, and sometimes commented on the information for the understanding of the reader. He also updated geographical information from the original documents to the names of significant cities, and geographical clarifications. He continued to do this occasionally in the other books of Moses, although perhaps a later editor, such as the prophet Samuel made the changes during the time of King David. For example, look at a geographical “update” for the readers and listeners of Genesis:

**“Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto YHWH.”**

• **Genesis 13:18**

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Martin’s book will teach you more about the Bible and its development than you ever thought you could know. (Few believe me until after they have read *Restoring*.) Dr. Martin shows the criteria, processes, and authority of the Old and New Testament books over thousands of years. The processes are described in Scripture itself and in history. See Chapter 12: “The Old Testament Periods of Canonization.” Theological and political councils did not decide what is “Holy Scripture” and what is not. In fact, the decisions were made by those with authority to do so. Dr. Martin provides evidence of who chose what books, why they did so, and what authority they had to do so. The evidence is in the Bible itself as to how writings inspired by God were understood to be God’s Word. History confirms that process without the decisions of religious councils.

<sup>3</sup> George W. Buchanan describes what “intertextuality” means in his short book, *Introduction to Intertextuality* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1994), 4:

**“Jeremiah used Hosea, Deuteronomy, Leviticus, and Numbers; Ezekiel used not only the Pentateuch, but also Hosea and Jeremiah; Second Isaiah used the Pentateuch and Jeremiah. Zechariah is loaded with earlier texts.”**

We do not know when the update was made to the authoritative text, but whoever made the change felt the audience needed to have clarification about this place, “**the plain of Mamre.**” Such geographical name updates are found in Genesis 14:2–3, 6–7, 15, 17, 35:6, 19, 27 and in the other four books of Moses.

**Genesis and Chronicles.** The beginning of the Bible and the end of the Old Testament in the Hebrew order of books give us another example of a Bible Pair. Genesis starts with the words, “**In the beginning ...**” The first word of First Chronicles is “Adam,” the first human being whose name is later used as the term in Hebrew for “human.” The first nine chapters of First Chronicles give many of the genealogies of the Hebrews down to King Saul when a narrative history begins. The history of the people of Israel continues to the Persian king Cyrus allowing the Israelite people to return from exile to God’s Promised Land. Remember, in the chart on page 2 both First and Second Chronicles were considered one “book.” They were on a single scroll.

Genesis chapter 2 says YHWH created Adam, placed him where he could dwell in YHWH’s presence, then He instructed Adam about various things. Second Chronicles ends by quoting a letter by Cyrus, King of Persia, to the people of Israel. It said that YHWH’s people could return to Judah and Jerusalem, and build God’s house again for them to be near to YHWH’s presence. Here is the last verse of Second Chronicles:

**“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘All the kingdoms of the earth has YHWH God of heaven given me; and he has charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? YHWH his God be with him, and let him go up.’”**

• **2 Chronicles 36:23**

What is meant by “**Let him go up**”? Going “up” to Jerusalem and Judea was to fulfill God’s prophecy of Jeremiah that the people would return to the land, but also to rebuild the Temple. YHWH would be with them on the journey (says Cyrus) and God’s presence would be with them again at the place God chose for them to worship Him — just like in Genesis. The people of Israel returned with the understanding of the entire history from Adam to the proclamation of Cyrus behind them. Genesis begins with man in God’s presence. The book of Second Chronicles ends with a call for God’s people to return to His presence, and they did “**go up.**”

God’s people returned to Judah and rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem to prepare for the coming of Messiah (Immanuel, “**God with us,**” Isaiah 7:14, 8:8; Matthew 1:23). Jesus, who was Immanuel (Philippians 2:5–11), the only-begotten Son of God (1 John 4:9; Hebrews 1:1–3), was born to signal God’s presence among His people hundreds of years after the return to Judea and Jerusalem. Jesus; Jesus was to “reveal” God the Father to Israel and through them reveal Him to the world:

**“All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.”**

• **Luke 10:22**

**Deuteronomy Compared with Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers.** Deuteronomy is a summary and restatement of all the events that took place in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Made just before Moses died, this review of the history of God’s people Israel took place just before they were about to enter the land YHWH promised their fathers and mothers 40 years before. Moses was not allowed to enter (Deuteronomy 32:48–52 and chapter 34). Moses also restated the conditions of Israel’s covenant with YHWH as they entered the new situation in their new lands. Their society would transition from a nomadic herding culture to a settled pastoral and agrarian life on a rich land with boundaries. Towns and cities would develop the beginnings of an urban culture. The Book of Deuteronomy explained the “new rules” Israel had to follow in order to survive and prosper through obedience to the Laws of YHWH.

**Deuteronomy and Joshua-Judges.** The Book of Joshua-Judges is the first book of the Prophets division of the Old Testament immediately after the death of Moses. God speaks personally to Joshua, confirming his role as successor to Moses. Joshua-Judges is a narrative of (1) the conquest of the land, (2) the implementation of updated laws of YHWH given in Deuteronomy, (3) the failure of the people to keep those laws during

times of prosperity, and (4) the beginning of God’s judgments and punishments for violations of their covenant with YHWH under the laws given in Deuteronomy. As the people discovered:

**“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”**

• **Judges 17:6** (repeated in Judges 21:25)

Obedience brought God’s blessing and prosperity; disobedience brought God’s curse and poverty. Of course, the Old Covenant was designed to fail. Humanity, individually and corporately, cannot live apart from their Creator. A Savior was needed to reconcile God to man and bring righteousness to Israel and all mankind.

**Samuel/Kings and Chronicles.** The narrative Books of First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings together cover the same period (and much of the same information) as the retrospective review of the same history in First and Second Chronicles. Samuel-Kings are one “book” or one scroll in Hebrew bibles, in the “Prophets” section of books (again, see the diagram on page 2 above).

Likewise, First and Second Chronicles are thought of as one book or scroll in Hebrew tradition. It is not only the last book of the “Writings” or Psalms section, but it also the last book of the Old Testament.

To learn how these two books of Samuel-Kings and Chronicles interact with each other, often providing unique material not found in the other, read my extensive series of articles found on the “[Israel and Judah History Series](#)” ASK webpage. I begin with King David becoming King of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi and his struggle to become King of all the 12 tribes of Israel, uniting a kingdom and his challenges. Then comes his son Solomon and his rule, and after his death the 12 tribes divided into the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah. There are 34 episodes as of July 2019. The series will continue to the destruction of the kingdom of Judah and its people exile to Babylon.

The series presents a very full story with Samuel-Kings and Chronicles each giving unique insight into the events and even the thoughts of participants. Both accounts were compiled from prior documents written in narrative form unique to each. Samuel-Kings were largely compiled by Isaiah (until his death) and accounts in Chronicles were likely compiled by Ezra the priest after his return from exile to Jerusalem. Ezra’s personal story is to be found in the book of Ezra-Nehemiah, also one book in the Hebrew canon.

**Jeremiah and Lamentations.** Lamentations was a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem written by Jeremiah. It was written by Jeremiah decades before the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah, but he watched it happen before his eyes just as God predicted. It was written during the reign of righteous King Josiah of Judah years before his death. It was thought Josiah would live a long life (like David and Hezekiah) because he honored YHWH, put away the pagan idols and altars in the kingdom of Judea, and he killed or drove out pagan priests. He genuinely tried to fulfill the Laws of YHWH as best he could. However, Josiah disobeyed. The Book of Jeremiah presents prophetic and historic background to Lamentations, and then it tells what happened to bring about the disaster of the people and the Kingdom of Judah, its royalty, and even the land by “God’s tool” Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

**The Book of the Twelve (the Minor Prophets).** While not strictly Bible pairs, the books of the twelve Minor Prophets are interconnected with each other. For example, the ending of the first book, Hosea, is connected through words, phrases, and topics to the early verses of Joel. The last verses of Joel are “tied” to the next Book of Amos, and so on, one after the other through all twelve books. This weaves all twelve together into one. This is the major reason the Book of the Twelve is considered a single literary unit on a single scroll in ancient Hebrew canon.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The best source that demonstrates this interrelationship between each of the books (the first to the second, second to third, and so on) is a highly regarded two-book set by James Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Hosea–Jonah*, and *The Book of the Twelve: Micah–Malachi*. Both are part of the Smith and Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA, 2011). See pages 2–4 of his “Introduction to the Book of the Twelve.”

All of the books of the Twelve Minor Prophets are not only in chronological order, but all are connected together through markers of language and phrases that listeners of this anthology being read aloud would easily recognize.<sup>5</sup> Professor Nogalski identifies four recurring themes running through all the individual “books” in the Book of the Twelve:

- (1) the theme of **“the Day of YHWH,”** which phrase occurs more frequently in the Twelve than anywhere else in Scripture;
- (2) the theme of fertility of the land, whether fertility withheld or promised in abundance depending on the faithfulness of the people of Israel;
- (3) the theme of the fate of God’s people in light of their sins, relating to life and death of the nation; and
- (4) the theme of theodicy, how God’s attributes are exemplified in His judgment and compassion, and His punishment and mercy.<sup>6</sup>

So the Book of the Twelve as a unit does not interact with any one book, but each of the twelve small books is linked intertextually to the one ahead or behind, woven to be read in sequence.

There are other Bible Pairs in the Old Testament but lack of space prevents me from detailing them.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Bible Pairs in the New Testament***

**The Synoptic Gospels.** The most easily recognized pairings are between each of the first three Gospels — Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They are called *synoptic* Gospels because each presents to the reader a summary of what the author thought was important to his readers/listeners. Each had similar or common views of events in the life and ministry of Jesus, also giving some unique perspectives on the most important events, especially the crucifixion and death of Jesus.

The order of the Synoptic Gospels was Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Matthew, one of the twelve apostles, wrote his own eyewitness account, probably originally in Hebrew, later translated to Greek. Mark was Peter’s secretary who wrote his Gospel from Peter’s eyewitness information and experiences.

Luke, a Gentile who is **not** an original disciple of Jesus, presents the Gospel and events in the life of Jesus from eyewitness accounts of those who were present. Luke’s Gospel was “Paul’s Gospel” even though Paul was not an eyewitness to the events surrounding the life and ministry of Jesus, as far as we know.<sup>8</sup>

Luke introduced his Gospel by stating his methodology:

**“Since, in fact, even many take in hand to compose a narrative concerning the matters of which we are fully assured among ourselves, according as those who, from the beginning coming to be eyewitnesses and deputies [ministers] of the word, give them over to us,**

**it seems good to me also, having fully followed all accurately from the very first, to write to you consecutively [in chronological order], most mighty Theophilus, that you may be recognizing the certainty of the words concerning which you were instructed.”**

• **Luke 1:1–4**

Luke worked from information compiled from eyewitnesses who were still alive at the time Luke put his pen to paper. He may have had access to Matthew’s account because some of the phrasing is identical. In Dr. Martin’s understanding, Mark was not the first Gospel written (as many scholars hold to today), but it was an

<sup>5</sup> See Dr. Martin’s article, [“The Minor Prophets for Today.”](#)

<sup>6</sup> Nogalski, *The Book of the Twelve: Hosea–Jonah*, pp. 11–13.

<sup>7</sup> Ezekiel and Jeremiah (all of his writings) were contemporaries; Jeremiah was decades older than Ezekiel. I suspect if their prophecies could be analyzed side-by-side there would be information that might open up entire sections of each book to new prophetic understandings.

<sup>8</sup> See *Restoring*, Chapter 21, [“The New Testament Pentateuch.”](#) My May 2019 Commentary, [“Paul’s Baptism”](#) gives background as to whether or not Paul knew or saw Jesus personally.

edited or cut-down version of Peter's experiences gleaned that sometimes referenced the accounts of Matthew and Luke.

**The Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John.** The Gospel of John follows Luke, separating Luke from Acts. It was written after the revelation of the Mystery to Paul. The Gospel of John is a Gospel of the Mystery. John's gospel presents a radically different but most spiritually complete narrative of all. He tells his audience why Jesus did what He did. John shows us Jesus from a point of view of the most mature understanding of God's plan of the eons, written several decades after the events, but confirmed by John, along with associate eyewitnesses who were still living when John wrote his Gospel. John puts a capstone on the Gospel message of the plan of God.

John first rejected and then accepted the revelation of the Mystery first given to Paul. John himself was rejected by many Christians because he eventually accepted the Mystery teaching that every person will be glorified as Christ is at present (1 John 3:2, "**we shall be like him**"), an understanding recognized in John's gospel "**that the world through him might be saved**" (John 3:17).<sup>9</sup>

**The Gospel of Luke and Acts.** Luke and Acts can be read as one account. Acts begins where Luke ends, at Christ's resurrection. Luke introduces his writing to Theophilus as he did in Luke 1:1–4. Acts has a surprise ending and readers might wonder why it ends abruptly. One theory is that Luke ended his story when he does because strife within the *ekklesia* was so widespread the divisions were best not told.

For example, there were thousands of Christians in the Jerusalem *ekklesia* when Paul was first taken prisoner and "rescued" by the Romans and sent to Rome. There is no mention in Luke's account of Acts of any Christian believer coming to Paul's defense. Only a family member of Paul's, his nephew, warned him about the desire to murder Paul in Acts 23:12–22.

During Paul's subsequent incarceration and trials, there is no mention of anyone from the *ekklesia* in Jerusalem assisting Paul in any way: not through provisions, not through a defense of Paul before his accusers, not defending Paul in the Temple. There is no mention of prayers to God on his behalf. Luke is completely silent on this matter, and his silence on this matter speaks loudly.

The bottom line is: we learn from Paul's writings (and Paul through Luke's book of Acts) even believers in the resurrection of Jesus are subject to human foibles, complete with prejudices of their cultures, likes and dislikes, weaknesses, and even hatred toward those with whom they disagree. It is sad but true.

**Romans and Hebrews.** The reasons for pairing these two Bible writings might not be apparent at first. The epistle to the Romans was written to an *ekklesia* that Paul had not yet visited, though he hoped to do so in the near future. When Paul wrote Romans (from Corinth) he did not know he would go to Rome as a prisoner. Even though it was written 25 years after Paul's conversion the epistle to the Romans was given the first position of Paul's writings because it deals with the "first principles" of Christian faith and teaching. Faith in Christ is primary in both books. Without being dogmatic, Dr. Martin makes a strong argument that the recipients of Hebrews were not Jewish believers but were a majority of Gentile believers, just like the recipients of the Epistle to the Romans.<sup>10</sup> The text of Hebrews indicates the recipients:

1. were converted very early (were long-time Christians),
2. were taught by Paul,
3. were very concerned about Jewish matters, and
4. were associated with Timothy as well.

The Book of Hebrews was not an epistle. It likely was a written sermon dictated by Paul to a secretary, probably Luke. Paul then wanted that sermon to be spread around accompanied by a short letter:

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<sup>9</sup> Details of the differences between John's gospel with the Synoptic gospels are presented in Dr. Martin's 1979 article, "[The Apostle John, The Lamb, and the Spirit](#)" and his 1992 article, "[The History of the Revelation of the Mystery](#)."

<sup>10</sup> Read Dr. Martin's specific analyses of "[The Principal Theology of the Book of Romans](#)" and "[The Book of Hebrews](#)."

**“And I beseech you, brethren, suffer [allow] the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter [epistle in Greek] unto you in few words [a short letter]. Know you that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.”**

• **Hebrews 13:22–24**

It seems the letter referred to in verse 22 was sent from Rome, or Paul had been in Rome recently.

Paul talks about the need for his readers/listeners to be reminded of the “first principles” of Christian doctrine though they long believed in Christ and His resurrection. Paul corrected the mistaken beliefs some *ekklesias* had taught for too long.

For example, the first two chapters of Hebrews corrects mistaken ideas about the Son of God compared to angels. Paul then says he cannot teach them the sophisticated information he intended regarding **“the principles of the doctrine of Christ”** (Hebrews 6:1). They were not ready:

**“For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”**

• **Hebrews 5:12**

So Paul goes through the rest of Hebrews taking them back to basics about the information about who Christ was, His resurrection, caution about apostasy, faith in persecution — things they should have known already. But the writing of Hebrews was useful and was included by Paul, it being the pinnacle of Christian New Covenant teaching, written by him shortly before God revealed the Mystery to him. See *Restoring* Chapter 23, [“The Epistles of Paul.”](#)

**First and Second Corinthians.** These two epistles<sup>11</sup> are intimately connected as expected. Paul gives the members of the Corinthian *ekklesia* a severe rebuke in First Corinthians. He rejoices in Second Corinthians when he heard they heeded his harsh correction, repented, and changed their ways and their attitude (2 Corinthians 7:6, 13–16). There were a few recalcitrant members and Paul wondered if he needed to return to the Greek city of Corinth to deal with the few who would not receive Paul’s correction. Read the article, [“The Corinthian Experience.”](#)

In 1 Corinthians 16:1–4 Paul tells the *ekklesia* that he is taking up a collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem. In 2 Corinthians 8:1–9:5 (particularly verses 8:10 and 9:2), Paul rejoices in their generosity with which the Corinthians contributed to the collection he requested of them (which corresponded with a Sabbatical year, see Dr. Martin’s article, [“The Chronology of New Testament Times.”](#)) This information coordinated with sabbatical years allows a close dating of events in Paul’s ministry.

**First and Second Thessalonians.** Both epistles were written the same year, probably 54 AD, making them the earliest Pauline epistles in the New Testament. The basic subjects are the faithfulness of the people of the Thessalonian *ekklesia* and correcting details regarding Christ’s return. The purpose of First Thessalonians was to confirm to the readers/listeners that Christ would return,<sup>12</sup> caution them on how to behave during difficult times, and to commend them for their steadfast faith in Christ during persecution.

Second Thessalonians was to correct errors about Christ’s speedy return to enact judgment, and to predict the great apostasy. The epistle was written to follow up and correct mistakes caused by a false teacher telling lies about Christ’s Second Coming in Paul’s name, even forging a letter. False ideas and teachings can spread quickly and need to be countered just as quickly. We know exactly what the false teaching was:

**“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering**

<sup>11</sup> In the New Testament, an *epistle* is a form of correspondence or letter written in a 1<sup>st</sup> century AD format. **“Twenty-one of the 27 New Testament books are strictly epistles. Three more are so in form: Luke, Acts [both addressed to Theophilus], and Revelation addressed to the seven churches”** (See the article [“Epistle,”](#) in the *Fausett’s Bible Dictionary*, 1878).

<sup>12</sup> At that time Paul, the other apostles, and every other believer, thought Christ would return soon, probably in a few decades.

together unto him, That you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, [1] except there come a falling away first, and [2] that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ...”

• *2 Thessalonians 2:1–3*

That deception has not yet been fulfilled. It is still for the future.

**Ephesians and Colossians.** The two epistles of Ephesians and Colossians were written after Paul received the revelation of the mystery. Dr. Martin believed Ephesians was actually sent to the *ekklesia* in Laodicea:

“Paul certainly was well acquainted with many of the Ephesian citizens. This is evidence that the so-called letter of Paul to the ‘Ephesians’ which we presently find in our New Testament was not intended to go to the people of Ephesus alone (though it is probable that the letter finally wound up at Ephesus at a later time). Actually, the ‘Ephesian’ letter is the one which Paul called ‘to the Laodiceans’ (Colossians 4:16). And, there is ancient testimony that suggests this. Prof. Alan McNeile points out that ‘the most important authorities [among them the Sinaiticus manuscript and ancient codices known to Origen] omit “at Ephesus.”’ Marcion (and, according to Tertulian, other heretics) styled the epistle “to the Laodiceans.” This ancient appraisal was no doubt correct ... Paul wrote these two epistles while he was in prison (Ephesians 4:1; 6:20; Colossians 4:3, 10, 18).”

• *Ernest Martin, Restoring the Original Bible*<sup>13</sup>

Three points: (1) both epistles were written after God’s revelation of the Mystery to Paul, (2) both were written while Paul was in prison, (3) the epistle to the Ephesians was probably originally intended for Laodicea:

“And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.”

• *Colossians 4:16*

Other scholars have similar conclusions but for other reasons:

“Ephesians and Colossians bear remarkable similarities: 34 percent of the [Greek] words in Colossians appear in Ephesians, and 26 percent of the words in Ephesians appear in Colossians. The verses about Tychicus contain an exact match of 29 consecutive words (Eph 6:21–22 and Col 4:7–8). Moreover, both letters contain long sentences and similar grammatical constructions, such as the prevalent use of phrases beginning with “in” (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, xlvi).”

A comparison by O’Brien demonstrates significant thematic overlap between the two letters (O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 10):

• prologue:	Col 1:1–2	and	Eph 1:1–2;
• from alienation to reconciliation:	Col 1:1–23	and	Eph 2:11–22;
• Paul’s suffering and his ministry of the “mystery”:	Col 1:24–2:3	and	Eph 3:1–6;
• head-body imagery:	Col 2:19	and	Eph 4:15–16;
• the old and new humanity:	Col 3:5–17	and	Eph 4:17–5:20;
• household codes:	Col 3:18	and	Eph 5:22–6:9;
• prayer and proclamation of the “mystery”:	Col 4:2–4	and	Eph 6:18–20;
• <u>commendation of Tychicus</u> :	Col 4:7–9	and	Eph 6:21–22;
• benediction:	Col 4:18	and	Eph 6:23–24.

... O’Brien suggests that the similarities are present because Paul wrote both letters within a short period of time (probably Colossians first, and then Ephesians; O’Brien, *Letter to the Ephesians*, 14–21).”

• *Jason Kuo, article “Ephesians, Letter to the,” Lexham Bible Dictionary*<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 15, “[The Book of Acts and New Testament History](#).”

<sup>14</sup> Edited by John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

Below are the texts Kuo refers to regarding Tychicus, a man ministering with Paul. Here is the translation from the *Concordant Literal Version* New Testament of two verses in Colossians and Ephesians. Remember, Colossians was written first and Ephesians comments on the Colossian passage:

Colossians 4:7–8 (CLV)	Ephesians 6:21–22 (CLV)
<p><sup>7</sup> <u>All my affairs shall be made known to you by Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in the Lord,</u></p> <p><sup>8</sup> <u>whom I send to you for this same thing, that you may know that which concerns you and he should be consoling your hearts.</u></p>	<p><sup>21</sup> <u>Now that you also may be acquainted with my affairs, and what is engaging me, all will be made known to you by Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord,</u></p> <p><sup>22</sup> <u>whom I send to you for this same thing, that you may know our concerns, and he should be consoling your hearts.</u></p>

As Kuo noted, 29 Greek words occur in both passages. Still other relationships exist between the two epistles:

	<b>Colossians 1:1–2 (CLV)</b>	<b>Ephesians 1:1–2 (CLV)</b>
7 words in Greek	<u>Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,”</u>	<u>Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are [at Ephesus], and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”</u>
	<b>Colossians 1:25 (CLV)</b>	<b>Ephesians 3:2 (CLV)</b>
7 words in Greek	<u>of which I became a dispenser, in accord with the administration of God, which is granted to me for you, to complete the word of God—</u>	<u>since you surely hear of the administration of the grace of God that is given to me for you, [then come 6 verses of teaching in Ephesians, but not in Colossians]</u>
	<b>Colossians 1:26 (CLV)</b>	<b>Ephesians 3:9 (CLV)</b>
7 words in Greek	<u>the secret which has been concealed from the eons and from the generations, yet now was made manifest to His saints,</u>	<u>to enlighten all as to what is the administration of the secret, which has been concealed from the eons in God, Who creates all,</u>
	<b>Colossians 1:14 (CLV)</b>	<b>Ephesians 1:7 (CLV)</b>
5 words in Greek	<u>in Whom we are having the deliverance, the pardon of sins,</u>	<u>in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace,</u>
	<b>Colossians 2:19 (CLV)</b>	<b>Ephesians 4:16 (CLV)</b>
5 words in Greek	<u>and not holding the Head, out of Whom the entire body, being supplied and united through the assimilation and ligaments, is growing in the growth of God.</u>	<u>out of Whom the entire body, being articulated together and united through every assimilation of the supply, in accord with the operation in measure of each one's part, is making for the growth of the body, for the upbuilding of itself in love.</u>

There is another reason to consider Ephesians and Colossians as a pair to be read and studied together. Professor George Wesley Buchanan noted in his *Introduction to Intertextuality* Colossians was written before Ephesians and but in one section of “Ephesians” there is a commentary on the text of Colossians.

Colossians 3:18–19 (KJV)	Ephesians 5:21–33 (KJV)
<p>18 <b>Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.</b></p> <p>[ Commentary in Ephesians → ]</p> <p>19 <b>Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter</b> [“irritating” (Buchanan’s translation)] <b>against them.</b></p> <p>[ Commentary in Ephesians → ]</p>	<p>21 <b>Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.</b></p> <p>22 <b>Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.</b></p> <p>23 <b>For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body.</b></p> <p>24 <b>Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.</b></p> <p>25 <b>Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;</b> 26 <b>That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,</b> 27 <b>That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.</b></p> <p>28 <b>So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself.</b></p> <p>29 <b>For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church:</b> 30 <b>For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.</b></p> <p>31 <b>For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.</b></p> <p>32 <b>This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.</b> 33 <b>Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.</b></p>

Prof. Buchanan explains what each text tells us<sup>15</sup>:

“In these two texts it seems clear that the author of Ephesians used the text of Colossians and expanded it by composing a homily to meet his own needs.

- He used the terms ‘wives,’ ‘husbands,’ ‘love,’ ‘be subject,’ and ‘the Lord,’ but he was not satisfied simply to quote the words.
- He explained the meaning of these terms further, justifying the commandments by comparing the relationship between husbands and wives to that between Christ and his church and the body of Christ to the body of the husband.
- He interpreted ‘being subject’ to mean ‘fearing,’ and he took ‘irritating’ to mean ‘hating.’
- He was also more emphatic in identifying the wives involved as being the husbands’ own wives and not the wives of someone else.
- He also interpreted ‘the Lord’ to be synonymous with ‘Christ.’

These are normal interpretative expansions that authors make when exegeting texts. Composition of midrash was a religious task, performed for the benefit of a contemporary congregation and should not be confused with plagiarism or forgery.”

- *Buchanan, Intertextuality, 9*

Even in the realm of singing and music in the congregations of believers in the Gentile *ekklēsias*, Dr. Martin noted the relationship of Colossians and Ephesians with very similar messages in his article “[Psalms, Music and Prophecy](#)”:

<sup>15</sup> George Buchanan, *Introduction to Intertextuality* (Lewiston, NY; Queenston, ON; Lampeter: Mellen Biblical Press, 1994), 95. (Bullets are mine for added clarity. DWS)

Colossians 3:16–17	Ephesians 5:15, 18–20
<p>“Let the <u>word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom</u>;</p> <p>teaching and admonishing one another <u>in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs</u>,</p> <p>singing with grace <u>in your hearts to the Lord</u>.</p> <p>And <u>whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him</u>.</p>	<p><sup>15</sup> “<i>See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, ...</i></p> <p><sup>18</sup> <i>but be filled with the Spirit ...</i></p> <p><sup>19</sup> <i>Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,</i></p> <p>singing and making melody [music] <u>in your heart to the Lord</u>;</p> <p><sup>20</sup> <i>Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”</i></p>

All of these similarities and correspondending phrasing show an undeniable relationship between the epistles of Colossians and Ephesians.

**Philippians.** This epistle is not paired up with another writing but its position after Ephesians and before Colossians may be to hold a place for the orderly and progressive presentation of the Mystery. The text and topics in Philippians do not interact with Ephesians and Colossians directly, but they give us a heavenly perspective about the Son of God emptying Himself of His prior glory to achieve a greater glory. We will all share His greater glory.

Positioned after Ephesians and before Colossians, Philippians is a core book for teaching the Mystery. All three are linked together by the Mystery. Laodicea (the original destination of the epistle to the Ephesians) and Colosse are in Asia Minor, which is western Turkey today. Philippi is in Greece, separated by space but not separated by teaching of the important doctrine of the Mystery.

**First and Second Timothy.** These epistles are written toward the end of Paul’s life. Both were written after the revelation of the Mystery. Paul had more urgency when he wrote Second Timothy, yet he is secure in his faith, anticipating Christ’s return and his own resurrection to immortality. Nevertheless Paul still has time and asks Timothy to bring him “**the books, but especially the parchments**” (1 Timothy 4:13). This statement is important to the canonization of the New Testament.<sup>16</sup> Paul warned Timothy about evil perverting the Gospel (1 Timothy 1:3–11, 18–20, 4:1–4, 6:2–10; 2 Timothy 1:15, 2:14–18, 3:1–13). Paul’s advice in both epistles is useful to teachers of the Gospel today. Paul wrote to his student:

“But **you have fully known my doctrine** [teaching], **manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience. Persecutions, afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra;** [you know] **what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.”**

• **2 Timothy 3:10–11**

**1 Peter and 2 Peter.** These two epistles are very different in subject matter, in urgency, and are only paired together because they have the same author

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: **Who [Christ] verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,**”

• **1 Peter 1:19–20**

<sup>16</sup> *Restoring*, Chapter 24, “[The Canonization of Paul's Epistles](#).”

**2 Peter and Jude.** These epistles share the same subject, the same period, and many of the same phrases. Dr. Martin analyzes their relationship in "[Chapter 16: The Jewish/Roman War and Canonization](#)." Basically, Second Peter predicts a great apostasy. Jude later described that apostasy as occurring around him. Compare 2 Peter chapter 2 with Jude, especially

2 Peter 2:1 with Jude 4.      2 Peter 2:4 with Jude 6.  
2 Peter 2:6 with Jude 7.      2 Peter 2:10–11 with Jude 8–9.

### *Prophetic Bible Pairs*

**Daniel and Revelation.** The Book of Daniel mentions that he read Jeremiah's prophecy (Daniel 9:2) and likely all of Jeremiah's writings. Ezekiel (one of the last exiles to Babylon) mentions Daniel (one of the first exiles seized and taken to Babylon). Babylon was the center of the educated world at the time, and Daniel was in charge of all that collected knowledge.

Daniel cannot be understood without a "commentary," provided by additional information. Daniel's interconnection with the Book of Revelation provides some of that added information. Likewise, the Book of Revelation is difficult to understand without the background understanding of Daniel and parts of the writings of other prophets.

**Jeremiah and Ezekiel.** The prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel were written contemporaneously, although Ezekiel was much younger than Jeremiah and he wrote from exile in Babylon. Jeremiah endured many trials from his own countrymen from Judah. (Nebuchadnezzar treated Jeremiah better than the King and leaders of Judah.) It is not known if they communicated, although Jeremiah sent letters to the exiles in Babylon, so Ezekiel likely read Jeremiah's writings as did Daniel. There are probably intertextual connections between the writings of these two prophets.

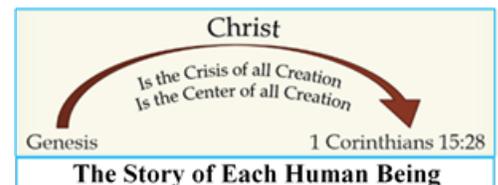
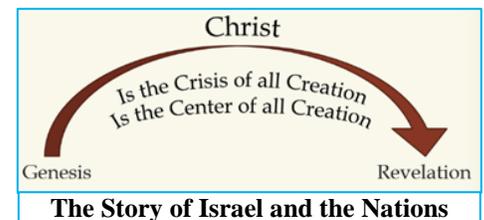
**Genesis and Revelation.** The first book in the Bible is Genesis and the last is the Book of Revelation. They are the beginning and ending books of all the Scripture. The phrase "**the alpha and omega**" (Revelation 1:8, 11, 21:6, 22:13) is personified in one person, Christ Jesus. The Book of Genesis was compiled by Moses from the records of the earlier patriarchs since Adam, for the benefit of the people of Israel to the end of the eons. The Book of Revelation is also a Jewish book, dealing with the people of Israel, a people and nation chosen by God to be the focus of His attention, through which the Messiah of Israel, the Savior of the world, would come in the flesh (Philippians 2:10–11). Israel represents the best and worst of mankind under the Law.

Jesus Christ fulfilled that Law so all humanity will participate in the righteousness of Christ Jesus and at the end of the eons participate in His glory.

**Genesis and First Corinthians chapter 15.** These two literary works give a different perspective on the beginning and ultimate end of mankind in God through Christ. "**In the beginning God created ...**" everything and in First Corinthians 15:28 God completes His plan of creation begun in Genesis. The result is:

**"Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.**

**But every man in his own order: [1] Christ the firstfruits; [2] afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. [3] Then comes the end [resurrection], when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For**



he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

For he has put all things under his feet. But when he says all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

• 1 Corinthians 15:20–28

That is the goal of all creation, “... that God may [and will] be all in all.” What does that mean for God to be “all in all”? We do not know and we cannot know because we are incapable of knowing, but understand what Paul tells us of our future when we all are immortal:

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?”

• 1 Corinthians 15:54–55

Then will we know and begin to understand what it means for God our Father to be “all in all.” That is the big picture of the mosaic of God’s Holy Scriptures and His plan conceived by God and Christ before the foundation of the world. As Paul wrote to Timothy:

“Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: [1] God was manifest in the flesh, [2] justified in the Spirit, [3] seen of angels, [4] preached unto the Gentiles, [5] believed on in the world, [6] received up into glory.”

1 Timothy 3:16

## Significance and Conclusions

Biblical pairings are not unusual as we have seen. There are different types of pairings, different criteria. You may agree with my assessments or you may disagree. After all, one of the glories of humans is their ability to see patterns, whether it be images or likenesses of pictures in clouds or patterns in Scripture.

I hope I gave you additional insight into the complex and wondrous mosaic of the Holy Scriptures. The image we see in that mosaic depends on how close we are to the individual tiles. The Scriptures together are the story of God creating. It is a story of many parts — one part reserved for each child of Adam.

God creates. That is what He does. Dr. Martin said to me one time, “God is not in the salvation business; He is in the creation business.” How true that statement is. “**In the beginning God created**” (Genesis 1:1).

God is **not** desperately trying to save some believers. God’s creative purpose has been in the process of fulfillment from the beginning, through the present, and it will proceed to its conclusion. Once God has given us the means to discover His secrets (and the Mystery is God’s ultimate revelation to mankind) our job is to discover the significance of it all. God tells us, “**It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter**” (Proverbs 25:2). With the revelation of the Mystery, God has opened the door through Scripture for us to “**search out the deep things of God**” (1 Corinthians 2:10).

When you examine the entire Bible you find it has a purpose. The purpose of Scripture is to give you insight into the mind of God, as it says:

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, [Why?] that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive you one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

• Romans 15:4–7

This is God’s will, for us to be like-minded with each other and glorify Him:

“... the Spirit searches all things, yea, **the deep things of God**. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God.

Now **we have received**, not the spirit of the world, but **the spirit which is of God**; [Why has God done this?] **that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God**. ...

**But** he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?

**But we have the mind of Christ.**”

• *1 Corinthians 2:10–12, 14–16*

Multitudes of stories are woven throughout the Bible. Your story is just as important as those written in Scripture. You have a part to play in the story of creation, the story of God’s plan for the children of Adam, in which all will become God’s mature children. Right now several “audiences” within God’s creation are viewing what is going on in the lives of individuals, peoples, and nations on earth.<sup>17</sup> They will watch your present and future role in God’s creation plan being worked out on earth through you and everyone else. Your unique story is as fascinating as everyone else’s story. Only God and Christ know what we will be like.

You are special beyond belief. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God as you are now (Genesis 1:26). God our Father will transform you through Christ, from your physical image and likeness to a spiritual image and likeness composed of God’s own Holy Spirit. This is your future as a child of God.

David Sielaff, July 2019

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<sup>17</sup> Read or reread my April 2014 Commentary “[It’s a Mystery](#).” I discuss the audiences viewing your present and future part in the salvation plan of God being worked out on earth through you.