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**WHAT**

* **First gospel written**
* **Shortest gospel**
* **Author, possible John, Mark (disciple of Peter, cousin of Barnabas) or an unknown Hellenistic Jewish Christian from Syria.**
* **Vivid details, breathless pace**
* **Dramatic narrative**
* **Written for Gentiles in Rome after persecutions of Nero, about 64 C.E.**
* **Martyred Christians, written to encourage those whose faith is abandoned out of fear of persecution**
* **Compelling style, message: Jesus is the Son of God, whom God sent to save humanity**
* **Salvation achieved by Jesus serving God in building up the kingdom and consequently giving up his life for others.**

**WHY**

* **Challenge against evil**
* **Good news, Jesus challenged powers of the world**
* **Spirit/body connection, glimpse of what could be, positive image kingdom**

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**WHAT**

* **Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiates, Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Sirach**
* **Type of literature common in the ancient world Egypt and Mesopotamia**
* **Characteristic, how to lead a good and prosperous life.**
* **Essentail to have a relationship with God based on “Fear of the Lord”**
* **Pithy sayings**
* **Song Prayers, used in liturgical prayer settings dating back to 1000 B.C.**

**WHY**

* **Helps us gain perspective on the good of life and the pain and suffering of life.**
* **Speaks to our emotions, still**
* **Life instructions**

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**WHAT**

* **Last gospel written**
* **Developed between 90-100 C.E.**
* **Addressed all Christians world-wide**
* **Maybe written by beloved apostle John’s disciples**
* **Differs from other gospels, more literary, more theological reflection**
* **Emphasizes Jesus’ relationship with his Father**
* **No parables or sayings**
* **Few morals, mandates, except “love one another”**
* **Focuses on divine origins (Word make Flesh)**
* **Teaches salvation comes from faith in Jesus Christ, mutual love and unity in the Church reflects the love of God.**

**WHY**

* **Signs point to “more” than meets the eye, look for deeper levels of meaning**
* **Metaphors to inspire faith, (“I am the Light of the World”)**
* **Role of service in Christian life**
* **Assurance for the future, pledges to send an Advocate**
* **Intimate invitation (“You are my friends”)**

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**WHAT**

* **The only organized account of the origins of the Church**
* **Centers on Peter, first part,: Paul,: second part, and a little about James (Church of Jerusalem)**
* **Sequel to Luke, same author**
* **Covers 30 years after Jesus’ death**
* **Writings to individual churches, written before the gospels (20-30 C.E.)**
* **The earliest Christian writings**
* **Four great writings, Galatians, Romans 1 and 2 Corinthians**

**WHY**

* **Contributes to our understanding of continuity from Jesus to today**
* **Insight into how to live in community, speaking in a uniquely personal way**
* **Help to know how we should act as Christians**

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**WHAT**

* **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Malachi, Micah, Jonah, Lamentations**
* **Does not fortell the future**
* **Communication with God involving dreams, visions, mystical experiences**

**WHY**

* **Interprets the mind and will of God to the people**
* **Reminder of the Covenant God made through Moses and peoples’ call to be faithful to that covenant**
* **Cultural values versus the mind and heart of God**

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**WHAT**

* **Fragments of historical events to form the people of ancient Israel**
* **Joshya, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings Chronicles, Ezra, Judith Maccabees**
* **Joshua-Kings: Israelites existence in the promised land Joshua to the exile**
* **Events from exile to 100 B.C.**
* **Ends with Maccabees rebellion**

**WHY**

* **Moral message (Ruth, Judith)**
* **Not political or social history**
* **Describes Hebrew people’s relationahip to God**
* **Reinforces the rewards of fidelity to following God’s law**
* **Belief in God’s saving presence**

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**WHAT**

* **Only gentile gospel author**
* **Probably disciple of Paul**
* **Written for Greek community**
* **Written between 70-90 C.E.**
* **Historical, in the sense of an orderly account of Jesus’ ministry**
* **Jesus presented like a great prophet (like Elijah)**
* **Encourages reader to build faith around person of Jesus**
* **Highlights Jesus humanity and prophetic profile**
* **Jesus identified with lowly, poor, those in need of hope.**
* **Mary held in high esteem, the first disciple**

**WHY**

* **Salvation is a wonderful surpise offered to all people**
* **Teaches us about prayer, be people of prayer**
* **Jesus’ expectations and values: empower the lowly, live according to religious values, hallmark of greatness, service, use wealth for good of community.**

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**WHAT**

* **Written 70 C.E.**
* **Written by Jewish Christian with training as rabbi**
* **Written in Greek, for Jewish Christians – tensions at that time**
* **Goal: keep connecting Jesus back to Jewish law and tradition**
* **Connect Jesus to long awaited Messiah, son of David, fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies**
* **Source – first gospel and Q source, collection of sayings and parables of Jesus**
* **Jesus mission , healing, compassion, reaching out to destitute**

**WHY**

* **Jesus came for all people, (Magi story, incorporates gentiles)**
* **Beatitudes – transformed way to live life and act in life**
* **Love enemies – what is expected of followers of Jesus**

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**WHAT**

* **Torah = Instruction**
* **Various Literary Forms**
* **Theme: God’s Relationship with Israel**
* **Tells the promises of the patriarchs, liberation out of Egypt, revelation of the law on Sinai, God’s guidance into the Promised Land**

**WHY**

* **Covenant of promise God made with the people to be with them in the future**
* **Willful nature of the people and divine redemption**
* **Beginning of Judeo Christian tradition**

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**WHAT**

* **Last book of the New Testament, very difficult to read, historically misinterpreted**
* **Object of obsessive prediction of doom, “end-time” theme**
* **In literary genre of “apocalyptic literature”, popular in the Middle East about 200 B.C. - 200 C.E.**
* **Literature included visions, animals, numbers, cosmic catastrophes, presented in poetic and symbolic descriptions**
* **Book written to seven churches, addressing their problems, needs, and affirm their strengths. Gives a vision of God’s greatness**
* **Probably written around 90 C.E.**

**WHY**

* **May inspire trust that even in oppression, faithfulness in God, is rewarded by salvation ultimately (Christ will win)**
* **Written not to create fear but to reassure faithful believer, God is in control**