



# PREFACE

**T**he argument could be made that one's first steps in serious Bible study should be a book-by-book survey of the Bible. That was the path that was laid out for me as a Freshman in the curriculum of Cincinnati Bible Seminary (now Cincinnati Christian University). Certainly there is a place for such surveys. I have felt over the years, however, that even that study should be preceded by one that charts the flow of biblical history. The books of the Bible are not arranged in chronological order. Beginning students are often baffled when jumping back and forth to different historical contexts. This problem is particularly acute in the Major and Minor Prophets.

The purpose of this book is to depict the flow of biblical history from the creation in Genesis to the new creation in Revelation. I have identified seventeen periods of biblical history. The same basic outline has been followed for the Old Testament periods. The sources of information and duration of each period are discussed. A theme Scripture that summarizes the action in the period is suggested. Key players, major events, and great miracles of each period are identified. For each period the special emphasis in God's message is presented. The section called *Christian Application* gives at least one illustration of how events of a given period are used by the New Testament writers to

encourage or instruct Christians. Each period concludes with identification of the watershed event that brought the period to an end followed by a summary chart depicting in the most concise way the information concerning the period.

The New Testament periods follow the same outline with minor changes. *Christian Application* becomes *Old Testament Anticipation*. Here I cite some prophetic passage that anticipates the events of the New Testament period.

For the maximum benefit of this book you will need the *New International Version* (NIV) of the Bible. A Bible atlas or good set of maps at the back of your Bible will be helpful.

I am pleased to give credit to the Sunday Evening Bible Fellowship of First Christian Church of Winter Park, Florida, for helping give a title to this book. Of the many fine suggestions I chose to use that of the youngest member of our Fellowship, Miss Veronika Nyberg, who at the time was in the eighth grade at Geneva Christian School.

The title promises to make Bible history simple. I have eliminated citations of Greek or Hebrew words. There is little documentation, except for biblical references. I do not write to impress any reader with my scholarship such as it is. I try in this book to write as I have taught freshman-level classes for forty years.

*Simple* is a relative term. What is simple for one is painfully difficult for another. I have tried to reduce biblical history to the most basic terms. Beginning students often find biblical names intimidating. For this reason I have supplied a phonetic spelling of names at the first usage. I have adapted, with some modifications, the system employed by the Holman Bible Dictionary.

For dates of kings during the Sister Kingdom, Assyrian, and Babylonian periods I have used the most recent study of Rodger Young, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (June 2005): 225-248.