

The  
**BIBLE**



Introduction  
and  
Main Points

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**The Bible** is the Word of God that was written as men were “carried” or “moved” by the Holy Spirit of God. It was written by many authors over a period of about 1500 years. The overall layout is as follows:

- **Old Testament.** This contains the writings prior to the time of Jesus and are arranged in the following order. Note that aside from the historical books, they are not necessarily arranged in chronological order.
  - Historical Books
    - The five books of Moses (Pentateuch) which cover everything from the creation of the universe to the time period of about 1400 BC when the Israelites are ready to go into the promised land.
    - The book of Joshua, which mainly covers the conquest of the land.
    - The books of Judges, Ruth and Samuel which cover the time period up to the time of David the King.
    - The books of Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther which cover the time period to the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.
  - Poetic and Wisdom Books
    - The book of Job
    - The book of Psalms
    - The book of Proverbs
    - The book of Ecclesiastes
    - The Son of Solomon
  - Major and Minor Prophets
    - The major prophets would include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel.
    - The minor prophets would include Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.
- **New Testament.** This contains the writings from the time of Jesus to about the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.
  - Historical Books
    - 4 Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John)
    - The book of Acts (account of the early church to about 65 AD)
  - Paul’s Writings which would include Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus and Philemon
  - The book of Hebrews
  - The writings of other authors which include James, Peter, John and Jude
  - The prophetic book of Revelation

The Bible provides a history from the creation of the world to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. While it does not cover every event in history, it provides an explanation for our universe and all that is in it as well as the main events and people leading up to Jesus Christ, who came to reconcile us to God.

- We have an explanation of how all living things came to be
- We have the origin of evil, death and sickness
- We have the record of the origin and consequence of sin
- We have several accounts of people becoming so evil and violent that God had to step in.
  - The flood at the time of Noah when the earth was filled with violence and mankind was totally bent on evil and corruption
  - The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah had become very evil and were destroyed by fire and brimstone
- We have the accounts of several people who really loved God and cared for other people. Some examples are Enoch, Noah, Job, Abraham, Samuel, Jeremiah and Daniel
- Jesus summarized the purpose of the Scriptures by saying that
  - Firstly, we need to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul and mind
  - Secondly, we need to love our neighbour as we love ourselves
- The accounts that are recorded in the Scriptures provide historical accounts of the lives of people and their interactions with one another and God.
- The writings of the Old Testament prophets and New Testament authors generally respond to actions or beliefs that are not in accord with God's will and they confront those issues in order to bring people back to God. As we read these accounts, we can then apply them to our lives as we seek to obey God and do His will.
- The Bible is God's revelation of His love for people by explaining how He has provided Jesus Christ, His own sinless Son to redeem people from the consequence of their sin and rebellion against Himself.
- The Bible ends with the book of Revelation where we read of the final judgement of God where those who love God and obey Him obtain eternal life and those who rebel and disobey God go to eternal damnation and punishment.

**Where to start:**

Generally, it is best to start with a book like the Gospel of Mark to get an introduction to Jesus and the message of salvation. Next, the book of Acts gives an overview of the working and expansion of the early church. This provides the background information for the letters that follow. It may be good then to skip over Romans for a bit and read the other letters and then go back to Romans, as it is quite theological. The other Gospels could be read any time as well. The book of Revelation should be the last one to read.

## Main Events

*Creation*



*Sin,  
The Fall  
and Death*



*The  
judgement  
by the Flood*



*Law Given  
at Mount  
Sinai*



*Jesus died  
on the Cross  
for us*



*Jesus rose from  
the dead and  
provides the  
free gift of  
God for all  
who believe*

*Eternal Life  
for Believers  
Eternal  
Punishment  
for Unbelievers*

## Creation

God created our universe, all that is in it and all life by the power of His Word. Nothing aside from God existed apart from Him creating it. God made man in His own image and made a woman as a helpmate for him. Man was to rule over the earth and he was allowed to eat of any fruit except for the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The consequence of disobedience was death. God called everything “very good” when He had finished creation.

## Sin

One of the most powerful spiritual creatures that God had created rebelled against God. He has several names that are given to him. The more common ones are Satan and devil. Some other spirits that rebelled along with him are generally called evil spirits or demons. Satan came in the form of a snake and deceived Eve into eating the fruit that she was not to eat. She also gave some to Adam, her husband who also ate the fruit. They were driven out of the garden of Eden and several curses were pronounced on them and the earth. Among these were discord between the man and the woman, the ground would require a lot more work and weeds would be a problem. The pain of childbirth would also be increased for the woman.

## Evil increases

One of the first stories that we come across after the fall is the account of one of the sons of Adam and Eve murdering his brother. As time progressed, evil and violence kept increasing until it was so bad that God commanded Noah, a righteous man, to build an ark (big boat) for his family, pairs of the land animals and the birds because He was going to wipe out all that lived on the face of the earth and the birds of the sky.

## Languages

After the flood, God commanded the people to disperse and fill the earth. While a few did, the majority congregated in what is now Iraq and built a tower at a place called Babel so that they would not be dispersed. God confused their language so that they could not understand each other any more, so the people dispersed in groups based on the language they had received.

## **Good People**

While it seems that most of the people were evil, there are several people that are mentioned as examples of godly and righteous people. Enoch, a man who lived about a thousand years after creation, is held up as a shining example of someone who walks with God. He so impressed God that He took him to be with Him without even experiencing death. The next one we come to is Noah, who was the only one righteous when he lived. Job is presented as another example of someone who did what was right and was totally devoted to God. About 2100 BC, God called Abraham out of his home area in Mesopotamia in order to make a nation who would follow Him. Abraham is called a “friend of God” and is often referred to as a man who was saved by faith in God.

## **Israel**

Abraham had a son named Isaac, who then had had a son named Jacob. Jacob’s name was changed to Israel, and it was from his sons that the twelve tribes of Israel came. Because of a famine, this family went to Egypt where one of the younger sons of Israel had become second in command to Pharaoh. This Joseph then took care of his father’s family. The Israelites were in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years and became a very numerous people. God then called Moses to take the Israelites out of Egypt and possess the land of Canaan. The people living in the land had become so evil that God judged them by giving their land to the people of Israel. The Israelites, however, were generally not upright and dedicated to God. This brought about various judgements from God as He sought to call them back to Himself. The books of judges, Samuel, Kings and Chronicles detail a lot of this time. Finally, the Israelites were exiled in 586 BC to Babylon because of their disobedience and rebellion. After seventy years, they were allowed to return, but never achieved the glory that they had during the time of King David and King Solomon. They continued to be ruled by the other nations around them. Initially this was the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, then the Greeks and finally the Romans.

## **Jesus**

It was during the Roman period that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary. He went about preaching repentance, healing people and driving out demons. He frequently confronted the religious leaders for their hypocrisy, legalism, lack of love and compassion and their love of money and attention. These religious leaders became so envious and angry at Jesus that they brought Him to the Roman Governor to have Him crucified. After three days, God raised Jesus from the dead who then appeared to many of His followers and gave them instructions. Jesus gave them what is called the “Great Commission”, which is to “make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that He had commanded them”. After Jesus was taken to heaven, the Holy Spirit came on the disciples to empower them on the day of Pentecost.

## **The Church**

The disciples then started to proclaim the good news that Jesus had paid the price for people's sins and all that was required was to accept this by faith and then put this faith into practice through action. The book of Acts chronicles the growth of the early church and the travels of Paul, the apostle. The letters address various issues that arose in the churches and seek to encourage and clarify the teaching of Jesus. The book of Romans, in particular seeks to lay out the truth in a very structured and clear way. The book of Revelation was written about 95 AD and was the last book of the Bible that was written. It includes some letters to various churches calling them to repentance and encouraging them to persevere, hold fast to the truth and to love and do the deeds that they did at first. The book goes on to describe events of the end times and then culminates in the final judgement when all people who have ever lived will either go to eternal life and be with God and Jesus, or they will be thrown into the lake of fire to face eternal punishment. It ends with the description of the new heaven and earth where there will be no more pain, suffering or tears but only a joyous eternal life with God.

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