

# SURVEY OF THE BIBLE



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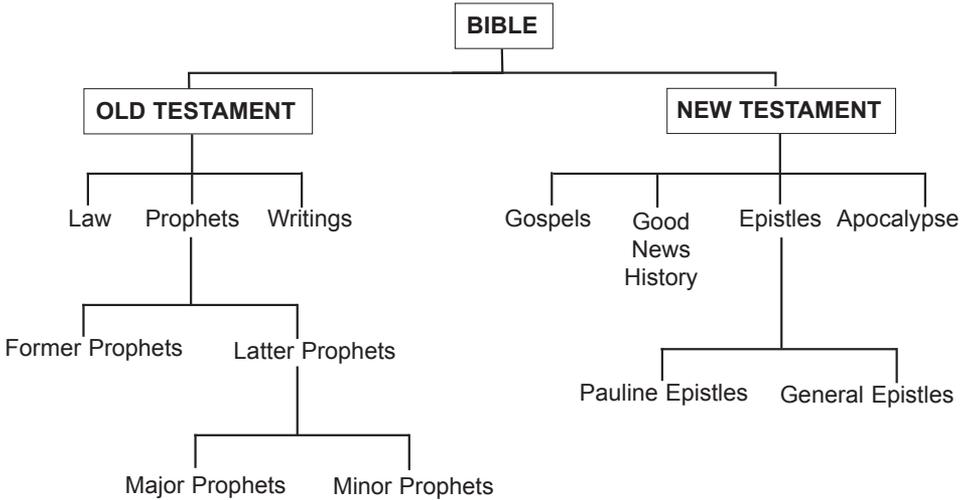
## LESSON 1

The Drama of Redemption



CROSSROADS

# An Organized Look at the Bible



## OLD TESTAMENT

**LAW:** *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*

### PROPHETS:

Former Prophets— *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*

### Latter Prophets—

- Major Prophets: *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*
- Minor Prophets: *Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*

**WRITINGS:** *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*

## NEW TESTAMENT

**GOSPELS:** *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*

**GOOD NEWS HISTORY:** *Acts*

### EPISTLES:

Pauline Epistles— *Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*

General Epistles— *Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude*

**APOCALYPSE:** *Revelation*

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# SURVEY OF THE BIBLE

## *The Story of the Unfolding Relationship Between God and His People*

### Introduction

Although the Bible is made up of many books, it is still *one* book with *one* theme and *one* Author. We often read it in little chunks, one verse or chapter at a time. It's important, however, for us to remember that these small pieces are part of a larger story. The story is a drama of how God saves and restores His people through Jesus Christ and brings them back into a loving relationship with Himself. This course will help us recognize and understand this great drama by explaining how the beautiful relationship between God and His people slowly unfolds in history. It is exciting for us to remember, as we read this story, that it is *our* story. Since God has called us to be His people, we do not simply watch this drama from the bleachers—we are *in* the drama!

### About the Course

1. This course will help you see the Bible as one book with one main story.
2. Throughout this course, you will learn several important tools for interpreting Scripture properly. These tools will help you to better understand and apply Scripture to your own life.
3. This course is a *survey* of the Bible. This means that we will be doing an overview of the themes and stories in the Bible. We don't have time to look at *every* book in depth, but the tools you will learn will help you read *all* the books of the Bible.
4. Sometimes we will review the things that we have learned in earlier lessons. It will help if you keep all your lessons so you can look up anything you don't remember exactly.
5. The Bible passages used in this course were taken from the New International Version of the Bible (NIV). It will be easier if you use an NIV for this course, especially for answering the fill-in-the-blank questions. Your introductory packet explains how to get your own copy.

God wants us to know Him and to honor Him as God. Before going any further, take a moment to ask God to help you as you study His Word.

The Bible is a big book, but it's divided into smaller pieces. This makes it easier for us to look at. Open your Bible and look at the Table of Contents at the front. It is divided into the *Old Testament* and the *New Testament*. The Old Testament is the beginning of a great drama. It tells us the story of how God created the world and how humans fell into sin. The drama continues when God promises to send a deliverer who would save humans from sin and death. Bit by bit, the story unfolds as God reveals this promise to His chosen people, the Israelites. The Old Testament always points forward to

#### MORE DETAIL

To **fulfill** means to *bring to completion*. God's unfolding promises in the Old Testament were fulfilled, or brought to completion, by Jesus Christ.

the **fulfillment** of God's promise. The drama continues into the New Testament, which contains what the Old Testament points forward to—the life, death and resurrection of this Deliverer. Each of these two **testaments** is further divided into *books*, which were written by many people over many years. The Old Testament books can be grouped according to the law, the prophets and the writings. The New Testament has gospels, letters and a vision, or apocalypse. (For a further look at this, see the flowchart on the first page of this lesson). Remember, even though there are many books in the Bible, the Bible tells just one story.

#### **MORE DETAIL**

The word **testament** means a *witness*, a *covenant* or an *agreement*. The Old Testament and the New Testament tell us about the different times and different ways that God has revealed (shown) Himself to His people.

1. Looking at the Table of Contents in your Bible, how many books (total) are there in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many books are in the Old Testament? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many books are in the New Testament? \_\_\_\_\_
4. The Bible contains many books, but tells just \_\_\_\_\_ story.

God used human authors to write what He said. All of these different writings (books) put together is what we call the Bible. Let's take a look at how God used humans to write down the words He instructed them to.

5. Exodus 24:4 says, "Moses then \_\_\_\_\_ down everything the \_\_\_\_\_ had \_\_\_\_\_."
6. 2 Peter 1:21 says, "For prophecy never had its origin in the human \_\_\_\_\_, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the \_\_\_\_\_."
7. After reading these verses, who is the author of the Bible? Explain your answer.

Even though many people had a hand in writing the books of the Bible, God stood behind each of them, directing (inspiring) them by His Holy Spirit. Because it is God's book, we can be confident that the Bible is completely true and dependable. It is our highest authority for faith and life.

8. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that “\_\_\_\_\_ Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ -  
breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, \_\_\_\_\_ and  
training in \_\_\_\_\_, so that the servant of God may  
be thoroughly equipped for every \_\_\_\_\_.”
9. What does Psalm 12:6 say about the words of the LORD? Please read  
the verse and respond in your own words below.

Reading the Bible is different than reading other books because the Bible is God’s Word. As the Holy Spirit directed men to write what God said, the Holy Spirit also helps us understand those words. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand—both in our heads and in our hearts—the things that He wrote in the Bible.

10. Read John 14:26. According to this passage, who or what helps us understand what God says to us? Circle one answer below.
- A. Our own hard work
  - B. The Holy Spirit of God
  - C. The stars and astrology
  - D. Our friends and family

Optional verses for **IN-DEPTH** study: 2 Samuel 23:2, Psalm 119:130, Isaiah 53:12, Luke 4:21, John 7:38 and John 7:42.

## KEY IDEA 01

**God’s Word, the Bible, is one book recording one story of God’s mighty acts as well as the explanation of those mighty acts.**

God acts and records those acts with words. His Word, the Bible, is God’s own explanation of His mighty acts. God acts and records His acts! And even though there are many smaller books in the Bible, the Bible is one big book that tells just one story, or drama. The drama that draws all of the Bible’s many books together is **\*redemption**. It is important to remember that God’s plan of redemption is shown to us only a small bit at a time throughout history. God shows more of His plan as time slowly moves on. As Old Testament history moved forward, so did God’s plan of redemption.

\* An asterisk (\*) indicates a **Word to Remember**.

Let's begin by figuring out exactly what redemption means.

11. Read Psalm 106:10 and fill in the blanks below.

He \_\_\_\_\_ them from the hand of the foe; from the hand of the \_\_\_\_\_ he \_\_\_\_\_ them.

12. Read Deuteronomy 7:8 and fill in the blanks below.

But it was because the LORD \_\_\_\_\_ you and kept the \_\_\_\_\_ he swore to your ancestors that he brought you \_\_\_\_\_ with a mighty hand and \_\_\_\_\_ you from the land of \_\_\_\_\_, from the power of Pharaoh \_\_\_\_\_ of Egypt.

13. Read John 8:34-36 and then fill in the blanks below.

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ . . . So if the \_\_\_\_\_ sets you \_\_\_\_\_, you will be \_\_\_\_\_ indeed."

14. Read Titus 2:13-14 and then fill in the blanks below.

Jesus Christ . . . gave himself for us to \_\_\_\_\_ us from all \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

15. Who alone can redeem us? Circle **one** answer below.

- A. Our family can redeem us.
- B. We can redeem ourselves by doing good things.
- C. Jesus Christ can redeem us.
- D. Pharaoh can redeem us.

16. How are you redeemed, or saved? (Hint: see Ephesians 2:8-9)

. . . by \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

17. Based on the previous verses, circle the **one** correct answer from the following list:

- A. I can be redeemed only by grace, through true faith in Jesus.
- B. I can be redeemed by believing that God exists.
- C. I can be redeemed by doing good works.
- D. I can be redeemed by trying my best to be a good person.

**MORE DETAIL**

Knowledge + confidence + being sure = **true faith**

18. Read Job 19:25-27 and describe Job's hope in his (and our!) Redeemer.

Optional verses for **IN-DEPTH** study: Exodus 6:6, Psalm 19:14, Psalm 44:26, Psalm 49:15, Isaiah 41:14, Isaiah 44:24, Matthew 20:28 and 1 Timothy 2:5-6.

When we say that God **redeems** us, we mean that He rescues us from our guilt and bondage to sin, and frees us from its eternal consequences, making us willing and able to live for Him. When God redeems us, He sets us free.

**MORE DETAIL**

Because Jesus is the One who rescues us and who will someday take us into the joy and glory of heaven, we call him our **Redeemer**—the One who redeems us.

God's relationship with His people contains promises. God makes promises to His people, and His people make promises in return. These promises, taken together, are called a **\*covenant\***. A covenant is the partnership God establishes with His people to carry out His kind, gracious purposes. God is the leading partner—He must come to us before we can go to Him.

As Bible history moves forward, the drama unfolds, telling us more and more about the relationship between God and His people. This relationship is a covenant relationship, which we will look into more in later lessons. For now, here are some verses to help explain covenant.

19. Remember this definition: The *covenant* in the Bible is the \_\_\_\_\_ that God establishes with His \_\_\_\_\_ to carry out His gracious \_\_\_\_\_.

20. Read the statement below, and then circle whether it is **TRUE** or **FALSE**. If it is false, rewrite the sentence so that it is true.

According to Exodus 6:6-7, God promised that He would take Israel as His people and be their God.

21. According to Joshua 24:24, what did God's people, Israel, promise Him?

We will \_\_\_\_\_ the LORD our God and \_\_\_\_\_ him.

22. As we read the Bible, it is clear that only God is perfectly faithful to the covenant promise. Fill in the blanks to see how 2 Timothy 2:13 explains this.

**2 Timothy 2:13** *If we are faithless, \_\_\_\_\_ remains \_\_\_\_\_,  
for he \_\_\_\_\_ disown himself.*

23. Psalm 25 talks about the relationship between God and His people. Fill in the blanks of the verse from Psalm 25 below which directly addresses these promises.

**Psalm 25:10** *All the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_ toward those who \_\_\_\_\_ the  
demands of his \_\_\_\_\_.*

24. Read Psalm 25:8-9 and describe how reading and studying the Bible can help us stay focused on our covenant relationship with God.

25. God's covenant love lasts forever! Read Psalm 136, reflect on it for five minutes and check the box below when finished. If you're not sure what to think about, here are some questions to guide your thoughts:

- What does this psalm tell us about who God is and what He is like?
- How does God relate to His people?
- Does this affect your words and actions? How?

**Check here when you are finished.**

26. Circle the **three** answers below that are examples of God's love for His people, according to Psalm 136.

- A. He leads His people through the wilderness.
- B. He strikes down great kings.
- C. He lets His people do whatever they want.
- D. He frees His people from hostile enemies.

Optional verses for **IN-DEPTH** study: Genesis 6:18, Genesis 9:9, 1 Samuel 20:16, 2 Kings 17:35-38, Psalm 50:16, Psalm 105:9-10 and Hebrews 8:6-13.

27. God has proved that He can rescue His people from any situation. What situations or areas in your life remind you of your need of God's redemption? Explain below, and then ask God to continue His work of redemption in your life.

28. God is the faithful covenant, or promise, keeper. No matter what, He keeps His promises to His people. What does this mean for you when you are not faithful to God (see 2 Thessalonians 3:3)? Do God's promises to you fail when you fail?

# In This Lesson We Learned That . . .

- ▶ There are many books in the Bible, but it is still one book written by one ultimate Author—God!
- ▶ The main drama of the Bible is redemption. To be redeemed by Jesus means to be rescued from our guilt and sin, released from the slavery to sin and freed to live for God.
- ▶ God has established a relationship with His people. This relationship is based on promises. These promises make up a *covenant*, which is the partnership God establishes with His people to carry out His kind, gracious purposes.

## Words To Remember

- ▶ **\*Redemption:** being freed from the guilt and slavery, or bondage, of sin and made willing and able to live for God.
- ▶ **\*Covenant:** the partnership God establishes with His people to carry out His kind, gracious purposes.

## Key Idea from Lesson 1

1. God's Word, the Bible, is one book recording one story of God's mighty acts as well as the explanation of those mighty acts.



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