



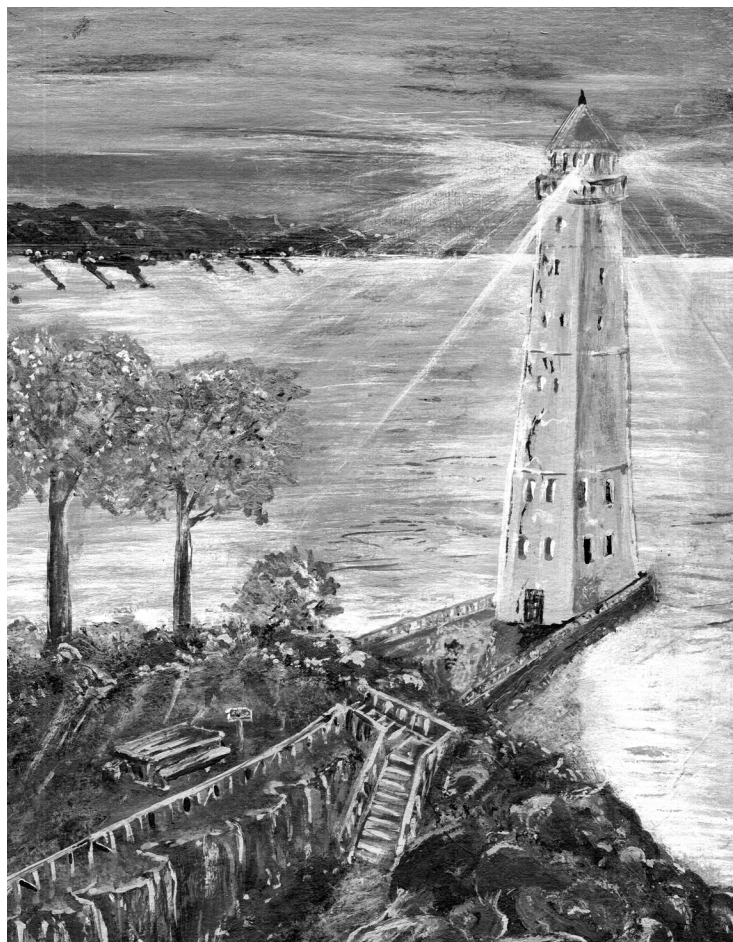
GOD'S STORY OF REDEMPTION

LESSON 1: The Drama of Redemption

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!

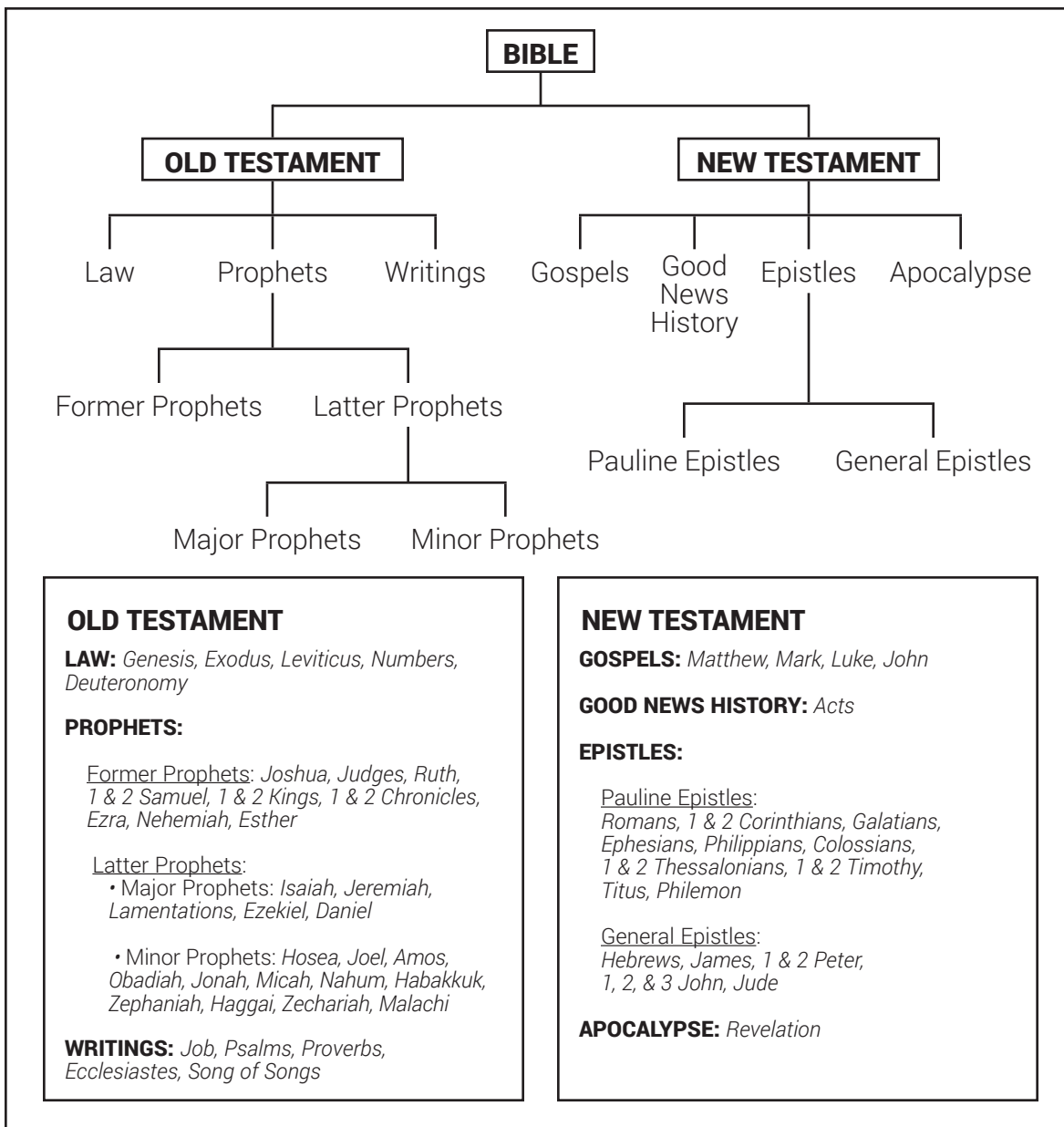


Artwork by Gregory S., Crossroads student

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 provides an overview of the Bible. This means that you will take a look at the general themes and stories in the Bible. We won't be able to cover *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. If you do not have a copy of the NIV, you can write to Crossroads and request one.

AN ORGANIZED LOOK AT THE BIBLE



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 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

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 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.

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 page 2 of this lesson.) Remember, even though there are many books in the Bible, the Bible tells just one story.

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.

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

MORE DETAIL

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

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.

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.

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.

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 Psalm 25:10, which directly addresses these promises.

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. | C. He lets His people do whatever they want. |
| B. He strikes down great kings. | 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.

Use this space for **prayer requests, questions for your mentor, or comments.**
You can also use this space to **write a poem or draw.**

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