

Summary of the Bible

Executive Summary

God **creates everything** for His pleasure. Humans **sin** and are placed under a curse. God initiates a **Plan of Salvation** to ultimately remove the curse. Humanity resumes sinning and is disciplined by God many times. God creates a nation called **Israel** to be divinely ruled by Him. Israel rebels often and experiences many trials before inhabiting Canaan, a land of promise. The Hebrew people, the Israelites over many centuries, go through periods of revival and renewal and, more often, rebellion and discipline by God. They try rule by **judges**, then by **kings**, never quite shaking their infidelity to God's purposes. Even long periods of **exile** do not stem their evil against God who wants to be the center of their lives.

God raises up **prophets** and makes known that a **Messiah**, an anointed **Savior**, will come. Those prophecies are fulfilled when **Jesus** is born, grows up, proclaims the **Kingdom of God**, and performs miraculous wonders. His message is rejected by most Jews and many others. The Jewish leaders, threatened by Jesus' claims to be the Son of God, facilitate His betrayal and watch as He is crucified. Jesus dies and is buried. The third day He rises from the dead and ministers on the earth for 40 days. He ascends to heaven, promising to come again to receive all who are **born again**, so they may rule and reign with Him forever. Those not His followers will spend eternity outside of God's presence in misery and torment.

Chronology

Biblical Narrative

Biblical Texts

 Eternity before the biblical record 	Our eternal God always existed.	
 Dates known by God prior to humanity recording them	Our sovereign God creates the heavens and the earth (the universe) for His pleasure. He creates the human family to be His children and have a personal relationship with Him in Paradise on earth.	Genesis 1-2
	Adam and Eve, God's first humans, sin against God by disobeying what they had been instructed to do. They and all who would follow would live under a curse pronounced by God. At the same time, our all-knowing God initiated a plan that would ultimately remove the curse and restore creation to His original intent. This crucial design is God's Plan of Salvation .	Genesis 3
	Adam and Eve's family begins to multiply and populate the earth. The expanded population, living under the curse, continues to sin and rebel against God.	Genesis 4-5
	As part of God's Plan of Salvation, Noah responds to a call from God, constructs an ark, and God sends a flood to destroy sinfulness on the earth, saving only Noah's family and animals to repopulate the earth. God vows not to do it again.	Genesis 6-9
	After time and extended repopulation, sin and rebellion rear up again and God institutes many languages to replace one, after the people of Babel try to exalt themselves to the level of God through a lofty tower.	Genesis 10-11
1800 BC through 1680 BC	God's next step in the Plan would be calling Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (known as Patriarchs) to form the nation of Israel from 12 tribes named for the 12 sons of Jacob whose name was changed to ISRAEL, a name meaning 'he retains God,' or 'God strives,' a continual reality between God and the Israelites.	Genesis 12-36 Job

Chronology

1680 BC
through
1290 BC

1290
through
1250 BC

1250
through
538 BC

538
through
4 BC

Biblical Narrative

After Israel grew mightily yet displeased God in many ways, a famine would draw all of Israel to Egypt where, in time, they would become slaves to Pharaoh. After 430 years, God raises up **Moses** who leads the Israelites out of Egypt into freedom toward a **Promised Land** (foreshadowing the future restored Paradise).

The Israelites roamed in the wilderness for 40 years. Along the way, God gave them **10 Commandments** and 700+ other regulations to follow, all of which is called **The Law** - law that they failed to keep. He also instructed them to build a **tabernacle** or abiding place for His presence among them in their journey, a tabernacle that would be serviced by priests of the tribe of Levi. The tabernacle was a temporary model of the temple that would be built later in Jerusalem. After 40 years of sin and rebellion by the Israelites, almost all of those who left Egypt were dead. A new generation comes to the border of the Promised Land.

The Israelites enter **Canaan** and subdue the kings and the people living there. **Judges** rule the tribes of Israel during a period of victories when obedient and defeats when disobedient. The Israelites then demanded that **kings** rule over them. The first would be Saul, followed by David and many others, some good and others doing evil in God's sight. While some of the kings ruled well, it was never God's intention to have humans rule His Kingdom. During the reign of kings, a **temple** was built in Jerusalem, a more permanent version of the tabernacle in the wilderness that would prefigure the abiding place of the Spirit of God in the lives of faithful believers later under the New Covenant. As a result of their own folly, the 12 tribes ultimately split into one northern group of ten tribes and one southern group of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. Due to their constant rebellion, the 10 northern are defeated by Assyrian forces and vanish from history. The southern tribes are defeated by the Babylonians and are exiled in Babylon for 70 years. During captivity, the prophets of Israel speak of the sins of the Israelites, chastise their waywardness, and begin to announce the coming of a future Messiah.

The Israelites remain in captivity in Babylon until released by Cyrus of Persia. Upon return to Jerusalem in Judah, the walls of the city, the city itself, and the temple would be rebuilt. Repentance by the Israelites leads to reform and a period of obedience to God's laws as well as prosperity. Obedience was short-lived; the prophets of Israel loudly sound the alarm of their wickedness and boldly declare the coming Messiah who would usher in a **covenant of grace**, rather than the covenant of Law. Leading up to this momentous event in history, the Roman Empire was conquering the known world, including the Promised Land now called Palestine. Roman rulers influence and hold sway over Jewish leaders.

Biblical Texts

Genesis 37
through
Exodus 15

Exodus 16-40
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 & 2 Samuel
1 & 2 Kings
1 & 2 Chronicles
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Lamentations
Esther
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Songs
Joel
Amos
Jonah
Micha
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zechariah

Ezra
Nehemiah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

Chronology

4 BC
through
30 AD

Biblical Narrative

The long-awaited Messiah is born to a virgin named Mary in Bethlehem. Jesus is the name given Him. Jesus is raised in Nazareth then carries out His ministry of proclaiming the Kingdom of God, teaching, and healing. Jesus is betrayed by **Judas**, one of His disciples, is arrested, tried, tortured, crucified, dies and is buried. Three days later, Jesus rises from the dead (the **Resurrection**), reveals Himself to the disciples, ministers in their midst for 40 days, tells them to wait for the Holy Spirit to empower them, then go into all the world to spread the Gospel message, baptizing all who believe and making them disciples.

Biblical Texts

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

31
through
70 AD

The Holy Spirit fills followers of Jesus with anointed power on the day of **Pentecost**. As empowered Christians begin spreading the Good News, they are met with much opposition from Jewish leaders and from Roman rulers, ruling and judging about accusations leveled against followers of Jesus by the Jewish leaders.

Jesus personally reveals Himself to **Saul** of Taurus on the road to Damascus. Saul had been persecuting Christians, but was chosen by God to preach the Gospel and begin churches throughout the region, as far away as Italy. Saul's name was changed to **Paul**; his ministry had a dramatic impact on Christianity in the first century and since. **Peter**, one of the original disciples of Jesus, was chosen by God to initiate the Gospel message to the Gentiles. This was a signal from God that Gentiles were being adopted into the household of faith once comprised only of Jews. Gentiles and Jews were to become ONE, children of God through a new covenant of grace in Jesus Christ, rather than the old covenant of Law keeping. God now considers His family to be those who believe Jesus was raised from the dead and confess Jesus as Lord of their lives. When they do so, their names are written in the Book of Life maintained in the heavenly realm.

Acts
Romans
1 & 2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 & 2 Thessalonians
1 & 2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 & 2 Peter
1,2,3 John
Jude
Revelation

The Roman Empire, in its conquest of the world, eventually comes down hard on all inhabitants of Palestine - Jews and Christians, killing millions, leveling the city of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and causing many Christians to disperse to other regions, having been warned to do so decades before by Jesus and, more recently, through John's vision that became recorded as the book of Revelation. The Church continues to grow as new believers come into the fold throughout the known world through the first century.

Beyond the
biblical
narrative;
2nd century
to the
present

The Church spreads further into places that are now Europe and Africa. The believing Body of Christ finds its way to the New World and, ultimately, every nation of the earth. Along the way, the Catholic Church expands but is challenged by the Reformation of 16th century Europe, when many followers of Jesus Christ desire a return to the principles of the early Church and the teachings of Jesus. Reformers (protesters) become part of a larger movement now mostly known as Protestantism. Unfortunately, Catholics, Protestants, and other believing bodies experience endless divisions and splits over differences of interpretation of doctrine and theology, to where we now have, literally, hundreds of separate denominations and spiritual groups, some who boldly embrace all of the Gospel and others selectively choosing what they want to believe. Despite all this volatility in the institutional church, the true Church that Jesus made possible, the Body of Christ, those who are born again of God's Spirit, continues to flourish in a world with increasing challenges.

Looking to the Future

The final chapter of **God's Plan of Salvaton** is still unfolding. We move closer each day to the **Second Coming of Jesus** when all things will be consummated. Jesus will appear and the bodies of every individual will be raised. Those who are in Jesus Christ, whose names are written in the **Book of Life**, will receive new heavenly bodies and live in God's presence in God's Paradise **forever**. Those who are not in Jesus Christ, who rejected the Gospel message, will be cast into outer darkness and away from the presence and glory of God forever. This is what is known as **Hell**, a real place of torment and agony over what could have been.

A choice remains for residents of the earth - eternity in the darkness of hell . . . or eternity in heaven in the light and glory of God's presence.