An aerial photograph of a vast agricultural landscape, showing a patchwork of fields in various colors (yellow, green, brown) under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. In the foreground, a large, dark brown field is superimposed with a large, open book. The book's pages are visible, showing text, and it appears to be resting on the ground. The overall scene suggests a connection between nature/agriculture and the Bible.

# BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE BIBLE

DAVID W. CLOUD

*Bird's-eye View of the Bible*  
Copyright 2021 by David W. Cloud  
ISBN 978-1-58318-299-4



Published by Way of Life Literature  
PO Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061  
866-295-4143 (toll free) - fbns@wayoflife.org  
[www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org)

Canada:  
Bethel Baptist Church  
4212 Campbell St. N., London Ont. N6P 1A6  
519-652-2619 (voice) - 519-652-0056 (fax)  
[info@bethelbaptist.ca](mailto:info@bethelbaptist.ca)

Printed in Canada by  
Bethel Baptist Print Ministry

# Contents

Contents	3
Introduction	4
Some Fundamental Facts and the Bible's Purpose	9
The Major Events of Old Testament History	18
The Book of Beginnings	21
The Exodus	55
The Conquering of Canaan (Joshua)	84
The Judges	90
Israel's Kingdom (Samuel - Chronicles)	96
The Prophets	109
The Poetical Books	134
The Babylonian Captivity and the Return	148
The Silent Years	154
Conclusion to Old Testament	159
The New Testament	161
Christ's First Coming (the Gospels)	162
The Book of Acts	175
The New Testament Epistles	198
Revelation	227
Final Word to the Students	235

# Introduction

This is an introductory course to the Bible that can be used by individuals, homes, and churches.

The course is a product of 48 years of serious Bible study and teaching. The author has a passion to help all of God's people become effectual Bible students, beginning at the youngest age possible. The church and the home are to work in harmony toward this objective.

## Contents

The Bible's Purpose

Major Events of Bible History (Bible Timeline)

Genesis: The book of beginnings

The Exodus

The Levitical priesthood and offerings

The conquering of Canaan and the era of the Judges (Joshua, Judges)

Israel's kingdom (1 Samuel - 2 Chronicles)

The Poetical Books (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes)

The Return of Israel after the Babylonian Captivity (Ezra, Nehemiah)

The Old Testament prophets (Isaiah - Malachi)

The Silent Years

The first coming of Christ (the Four Gospels)

The book of Acts

Paul's Epistles

The General Epistles

Revelation

**Goals of this course**

- First, the goal is to give an overview of the Bible, which is the starting point for understanding it. The Bible is one Book that was planned by God in eternity before it was given to the holy prophets, and understanding the big picture is necessary to rightly understand the parts. This is why a whole Bible annual reading plan is essential. This is why the student should take Bible surveys from time to time.
- Second, the goal is to make the student familiar with the major people and events of the Bible, to introduce the student to principles of Bible interpretation, Bible typology, Bible prophecy, Bible geography, and Bible archaeology, and to teach the fundamentals of the law of Moses, the Gospel, Israel, and the Church.
- Third, the goal is to establish a foundation on which the student can build for the rest of his life in pursuing the objective of becoming the skillful Bible student (“ye ought to be teachers ... skillful in the word of righteousness ... who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil,” Heb. 5:12-14).
- Fourth, the goal is to encourage churches and families to take Bible study much more seriously. THE 2 MOST FUNDAMENTAL THINGS TO STRENGTHEN THE CHURCHES: (1) Salvation (regenerate church membership). (2) Bible study. The Bible has everything God’s people need (2 Ti. 3:16-17). The church must be immersed in God’s Word. It must be a Bible Institute, training every member (Mt. 28:19-20; Col. 1:28; Heb. 5:12-14); training families (fathers Eph. 6:4; mothers 1 Ti. 5:14; Tit. 2:3-5) training the children (2 Ti. 3:15); training youth (Ec. 12:1; Tit. 2:6-7; 1 Jo. 2:13); training preachers, pastors, missionaries (2 Ti. 2:2; Tit. 1:9).

- Fifth, the goal is to whet the student's appetite by showing some of the infinite riches of God's Word. I want to highlight parts of the Bible that are neglected. The Bible is the most valuable thing on earth. The Bible is a whole **university**. There is more wisdom in the Bible than all the universities of the world. It contains the best theology (this is its first purpose), the best history (the key), the best philosophy (Ecclesiastes, Job), the best anthropology, the best natural philosophy (study of nature), the best social science, the best apologetics, the best prophecy. The Bible is a **paradise**. Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania is 1077 acres or 1.6 sq. miles. It has indoor and outdoor flowers, ponds, a five acre fountain garden with 1700 fountain jets, an Italian water garden. It has colors, smells, and wildlife. It is delightful, but the Bible is a *much more* delightful paradise. The Bible is a **treasure mine** filled with silver and gold and jewels. Yea, it is "better than thousands of gold and silver" (Ps. 119:72). The Bible is a **feast** for the mind and soul. Shady Maple in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, has 200 feet of buffet tables, with cheese bar, soups, all sorts of meats (beef, pork, chicken, salmon), flavored breads, southern style vegetables, cooked-to-order breakfast, Amish style cakes and pies. But the Bible is a much greater feast! It is spiritual milk and honey, bread and meat. God Himself is the greatest treasure, and He is the theme of Scripture. To know Him is the greatest delight; to feed on Him is the greatest feast; the knowledge of Him is the greatest wisdom.

### **Spiritual Requirements (1 Co. 2:12 - 3:3)**

- There are three types of people described here, and only one of them can be an effectual Bible student.
- The context is the Word of God (1 Co. 2:12-13), and the three types of people have three types of relationship with the Word of God.

- There is the natural man who cannot understand the Word of God (1 Co. 2:14). He has no spiritual discernment. This is every man's condition without salvation. He is dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1). He does not have the Spirit of God.
- There is the carnal man who can only take the milk of God's Word (1 Co. 3:1-2). He is born again and has the Spirit of God ("brethren"), but he is walking in the flesh, not the Spirit. He is walking as men (1 Co. 3:3). He still has one foot in the world. If you persist in walking in the flesh and loving the world, you can forget being a serious Bible student.
- There is the spiritual man who can take the meat of God's Word (1 Co. 2:15-16). He is in tune with the Spirit of God and has spiritual discernment. We see him in Romans 12:1-2. He has surrendered himself to Christ; he is pursuing God's perfect will; he is not being conformed to the world; he is being transformed by the renewing of the mind.

### **A word to the students**

- Anyone who is saved and old enough to read well can get something from this course. I know eight-year-old children who can understand many of these things at a basic level. We need to seriously educate and challenge our children and not just pamper and entertain them.
- You will get out of the course what you put into it. If you sit there and just listen, you will get very little. To get the most you must do the following: (1) Have the book. (2) Pay keen attention. (3) Keep yourself awake and focused (4) Try to understand *everything*. (5) Write notes. We added a wide margin for this purpose. (6) Write questions. (7) Go back through the notes and review everything with an eye to being tested on the material. (8) Try to answer the

review questions without looking at your notes. This will give you an idea of how well you know the material. We have tried to design the review questions to cover the most important things rather than inconsequential details. (9) Then look at your notes to find the answers to the questions you missed.

- You need to learn the Bible well enough to teach others (Heb. 5:12-14) (family, children, other men and women, Bible classes, nursing homes).

### **A word about the study environment**

- We need to maintain a good learning environment. Please don't disturb (talking, playing with something noisy, going in and out).

- Let's honor God and His Word. I am going to speak as an oracle of God (1 Pe. 4:11). You need to listen with the same respect as you would give to God.



# Some Fundamental Facts and the Bible's Purpose

## The Bible's Meaning

The word “bible” is from the Greek *biblios*, which means a book. Though there are 66 individual books in the Bible, each with its particular message, the Bible is one Book with a unified message.

## The Bible's Authorship

The Bible was written by about 40 human authors over a period of about 1,600 years, yet they wrote with one voice. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible reveals the same God and points to the same Christ. The prophecies of Christ begin in Genesis 3:15 with Christ as the seed of the woman who will bruise Satan's head, and from there the portrait of Christ gradually unfolds as the Scripture is delivered by prophet after prophet. It is a *great* miracle.

The Bible was written by prophets who were chosen by God; they wrote the words that God gave them (“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost,” 2 Pe. 1:21).

The Bible was settled in heaven in God's mind before it was given to men (“For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven,” Ps. 119:89).

## The Bible's Division

The Bible is divided into two major sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament has 39 books and the New Testament has 27.

The Old Testament prepares the way for the New.

- The Old Testament prepares the way for Jesus Christ. *Christ* means God's anointed one, God's chosen one. The Hebrew *Messiah* means the same thing. Christ is God's man who will rule God's kingdom.
- The Old Testament prepares the way for Christ by tracing His genealogy from Adam, by the creation of the nation Israel, by the giving of the law, by types, and by prophecy.
- The Messianic prophecies cover two major events: the suffering of Christ and the glory of Christ. "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pe. 1:10-11).

The New Testament is the fulfillment of the things written in the Old Testament. It describes the coming of Christ, His life, sacrificial death, resurrection, the church, Christ's Great Commission, and prophecies of the future.

### **The Bible's Theme**

There are various ways of describing the Bible's overall theme. It is man's history from the first creation to the new creation. It is God's plan of salvation; it is the gospel of Jesus Christ; it is law and grace; it is the conflict of the ages; it is creation, fall, and restoration, etc.

We want to isolate the following three main themes:

The main theme is **God** (Ge. 1:1).

- The Bible is a revelation of God; it is God's Word to mankind; we cannot know God without a revelation, and the Bible is that revelation. God is the Creator and Center of life. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever" (Ro. 11:36).

The main theme of the Bible is **Jesus Christ**.

- He is the full revelation of God. See Lu. 24:44-45. See also Joh. 5:39 (“the scriptures ... testify of me”); 1 Pe. 1:10 (the Spirit of Christ in the prophets testified of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow); Re. 19:10 (“the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”). “Christ is the key to Scripture. ... The different books are but God’s chapters in which He arranges and illustrates some one or more aspects of Christ” (Andrew Jukes, *The Law of the Offerings*, 1847).

- In a nutshell, the Bible can be outlined as follows: The Old Testament—Christ will come. The Gospels—Christ is here. The Book of Acts—Christ has come. The Epistles—Christ came for these reasons. The Book of Revelation—Christ is coming again.

- God summarizes the theme of the Bible in three words in Col. 3:11, “**Christ is all.**” This is three words in Greek, *Xristos o pas*. These three simple words encompass all of the Bible’s teaching. “Christ is all” means that Christ is Creator, life, truth, light, salvation, wisdom, righteousness. He is Lord, King, Head. He is the “bread of life ... the light of the world ... the good shepherd ... the resurrection, and the life ... the way, the truth, and the life.”

The main theme is **God’s plan of the ages** (Eph. 1:7-12).

- God’s eternal plan is founded on “***the blood of Christ***” (Eph. 1:7). God can have no saving relationship with sinners apart from Christ’s blood. Christ is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Re. 13:8). Christ’s death and resurrection is the central event of human history.

- God’s eternal plan is an ***abounding of all wisdom and prudence*** (Eph. 1:8). This wisdom is found in the Bible. It is “abounding.” It is “all wisdom.” God’s one Book contains more wisdom and prudence than all of the other books

that have ever been written. It is infallible in character, infinite in depth. It produces “prudence,” which is good judgment, the ability to govern one’s own life wisely, practical wisdom. Wisdom is right thinking and prudence is right action. The wisdom of God’s eternal plan revealed in Ephesians 1-3 produces the prudent living of Ephesians 4-6.

- God’s eternal plan is the “***purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will***” (Eph. 1:11). God is sovereign over His creation and over human history. “... he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings” (Da. 2:21). “But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased” (Ps. 115:3). “For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul *it*? and his hand *is* stretched out, and who shall turn it back?” (Isa. 14:27). When God has determined something, there is no power in heaven or earth, now or ever, that can hinder it. God’s will can only be resisted when He allows, as when He gives men a will that can be exercised against Him within certain boundaries. But when God has willed or ordained that something be done, it will be done. All creatures operate within the boundaries of God’s will and they can do nothing beyond those boundaries. “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us” (Ac. 17:26-27). That man can reject God and resist God’s will within these boundaries is clear throughout Scripture. God has incorporated man’s will and man’s actions within His eternal plan and has ultimate control over all things so that His eternal plan will be fulfilled.

- God's eternal plan is "***that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him***" (Eph. 1:10). Everything will be "***one in Christ.***" He is the center of God's eternal plan. God intends to glorify Christ, His beloved Son. He will be the Head of all things. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell" (Col. 1:18-19). All things will bow to Jesus Christ as Lord (Php. 2:10-11). All things will be rooted out of Christ's kingdom that are not submitted to Him. The old creation is under God's judgment and will be destroyed. Everything "in Adam" will be judged. Only that which is "in Christ" will endure into the new heaven and new earth. Christ is the last Adam (1 Co. 15:45). He is the Man that God had His eye on when He made the first Adam, knowing the first Adam would sin. Christ is the perfect man, the man who loves God with all His being. After the Great White Throne judgment, the first creation will be destroyed as described in 2 Peter 3:12-13, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

- God's eternal plan encompasses "***all things ... both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.***" Presently, Christ is seated at the right hand of God in heaven, and His will is done there, but the earth is in rebellion to Christ's rule. Christ taught His people to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:10). For 2,000 years, the redeemed have prayed that prayer, and it *will* be answered in God's time. Nothing can stop it.

- God's eternal plan is fulfilled in "**dispensations.**" The fundamental principles of a dispensational understanding of God's plan of the ages are clearly taught in Scripture and were a part of the "faith once delivered unto the saints." "Dispensationalism" was not invented in modern times. We aren't referring to Darby dispensationalism or Scofield dispensationalism as a theological system, but to the teaching of the Bible about God's eternal plan worked out in dispensations. Some of the fundamentals of biblical dispensationalism are a literal interpretation of prophecy, the clear distinction between the church and Israel, the church as a mystery that was not revealed in the Old Testament, the literal fulfillment of Israel's covenants after the church age, a church age beginning at Pentecost and ending with the Rapture before Daniel's 70th week, the imminent Rapture, and a literal future Antichrist and Great Tribulation. "**DISPENSATION**" is *oikonomia*, meaning "manager of a household," referring to the divine government of the universe. It is God's administration of history. "**TIMES**" (Eph. 1:10) refers to a period of time during which God is working out His plan. The Bible also uses the word "**AGE**" to refer to dispensations. (1) There are "other ages," referring to ages past (Eph. 3:5). (2) There are "ages to come" (Eph. 2:7). The main Greek word translated "ages" is *aion*. The term "forever and forever" in Scripture is literally "into ages of ages," referring to an eternal succession of ages. Christ will reign forever and ever (*eis tous aionas ton aionon*) (Re. 11:15). The devil will be tormented forever and ever (*eis aionas aionon*) (Re. 20:10). The saints will serve God forever and ever (*eis tous aionas ton aionon*) (Re. 22:5).

- God's plan of the ages is the key to understanding the Bible. The ages are recorded in Scripture: the creation (Ge. 1-2), the fall (Ge. 3), man before the flood (Ge. 4-5), the global flood (Ge. 6-9), the tower of Babel and the spread of

the nations (Ge. 10-11), the call of Abraham (Ge. 12-24), the creation of Israel (Ge. 25-32), Israel in Egypt (Ex 1-2), Israel's exodus from Egypt (Ex. 3-18), the giving of the law (Ex. 19-40; Leviticus), Israel's 40 year wandering (Nu-De.), Israel in the Promised Land (Joshua), Israel under the Judges, Israel's kingdom (1 Samuel - 2 Chronicles), Israel's judgment by Assyria, Babylon, and Rome (the times of the Gentiles), Christ's first coming, the church age, the day of the Lord, the conversion of Israel, Christ's return, the millennial kingdom, the final revolt and judgment of the devil (Re. 20), the Great White Throne judgment (Re. 20), the new heaven and new earth (Re. 21-22) (the fulness of times).

- God's plan of the ages is the key to understanding man's history. In history we can see what man is doing, but in the Bible we can see what God is doing.

- The **firstfruits of God's eternal plan is the church** (Eph. 1:11-12). When Christ was rejected by Israel, He revealed His intent to create the church (Mt. 16:18; Joh. 1:11-12). James says, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (Jas. 1:18). Church age believers have the firstfruits of the Spirit (Ro. 8:23) which will be poured out upon all flesh in the millennial kingdom (Joe. 2:28). The church is a body of believers composed of Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 3:6). They are taken out of the Gentiles to be "a people for his name" (Ac. 15:14). They are those who hear and believe the gospel (Mr. 16:15-16). The church's purpose is to manifest God's glory by showing the exceeding riches of his grace (Eph. 2:5-7). The church is a special display, exhibit of God's grace. It is composed of sinners who were dead in trespasses and sins, slaves of the devil, by nature the children of wrath, without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope,

and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:1-3, 12). What great grace God has shown to these people, that they might be freely forgiven, cleansed, regenerated, justified, sanctified, made a royal priesthood and joint-heirs with Christ! In future ages there will be no rebels and no need of salvation. The church will testify of God’s grace. Think of the testimony of a believer in dark Nepal, who can say, “I was a Hindu dwelling in complete spiritual darkness, dead in trespasses and sins, a slave of the devil. I knew nothing about God, the Bible, Jesus Christ, salvation. I worshipped foolish idols. But God loved me and sent the gospel to me and enlightened me by His Spirit and was patient with me and drew me to Christ. Now I am a son of God, a joint-heir of Jesus Christ and will rule and reign with Him forever!” What a testimony of God’s amazing grace! When we preach the gospel, we are preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:4-8).

- As the firstfruits of God’s plan that all things be one in Christ, the churches are to submit to the Headship of Christ. He must be the one and only Lord. His Word must be obeyed and not human tradition. His will must prevail and not the will of man. The church must have a regenerate membership, because only the redeemed can be one in Christ. This is a true New Testament church.

- God’s eternal plan encompasses redeemed, glorified Israel. God created Israel as a major part of His eternal plan. It is through Israel that God gave the law, the Scriptures, and Christ. Israel is presently under God’s judgment and the modern state of Israel is spiritually blind, but God’s covenants with Israel are eternal. When God completes the building of the church by bringing in the fullness of the Gentiles from among the nations, He will fulfill His promises to Israel. “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For



this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (Ro. 11:25-27). Redeemed, converted, glorified Israel will dwell in the New Jerusalem. The names of the 12 tribes will be inscribed on the city gates (Re. 21:12).

- God’s eternal plan should be the passion of every redeemed saint. “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Ti. 1:9). God’s plan is being fulfilled today by Christ’s Great Commission to preach the gospel to every soul in every nation (Mr. 16:15; Ac. 1:8), to baptize believers and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has taught us (Mt. 28:19-20). This is the job of every believer. Every one is an ambassador of Christ in this great, eternal business (2 Co. 5:20). Every one is to have on his gospel shoes (“your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,” Eph. 6:13).

- You can be a part of God’s plan of the ages by trusting Jesus Christ! (Eph. 1:12-14).

# The Major Events of Old Testament History

*See the Old Testament Graphical Timeline.*

All of the history of the Old Testament is found in the 17 books of Genesis to Esther.

- Job was probably written during the Patriarchs (Genesis after the flood).
- The Psalms were written during the kingdom, mostly by David.
- Proverbs and Ecclesiastes were written by Solomon during the kingdom.
- The prophets (Isaiah to Habakuk) were written during the kingdom.
- The last three prophets (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) were written during the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Ezra and Nehemiah).

We suggest that each student do the following timeline project: You can get timelines that men have made and study them, and that is very educational and there is a place for that, but nothing is more beneficial than your own Bible study. You don't really learn at a fundamental level until you dig into the Word for yourself.

Making your own timeline consists of reading the books of the Bible that contain its history and writing down the major events.

For this project, keep your focus on the one main goal of finding the major events of Bible history and enumerating them into your own timeline. You need to read the books as quickly as you can with good understanding, without getting

bogged down into examining the details or trying to figure out difficulties.

There are 13 books of the Bible that contain the overall history. For the Old Testament, the history is contained in 11 books (Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah). (What about the other books? Leviticus isn't a history book, and Deuteronomy goes back over the history that is found in Exodus and Numbers. 1 and 2 Chronicles cover the same basic history as 1 and 2 Kings, so Chronicles isn't necessary for this particular project. The book of Job occurred during the time of Genesis. Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes were written during the time of David and Solomon, which is the history found in 2 Samuel - 1 Kings. And the Prophets were written during the time of 2 Kings, Ezra, and Nehemiah.)

For the New Testament, the history is found in the Gospel of Matthew and the book of Acts. (The Epistles were written during the time of Acts; and Revelation isn't a history book, it is prophecy of the future.)

There are 352 chapters in these 13 books. So the project can be done in one month by reading and outlining 12 chapters a day, or two months by reading and outlining 6 chapters a day.

In each study session, first read your chapters for the day (however many you choose, depending on how fast you read and how much time you devote to the project per day). As you are reading, pay close attention to the main events. Then go back and write them out. Thus you must divide your reading/study period into (1) reading and (2) working on your timeline. This will help develop a habit whereby you not only read the Bible, but you also study it.

When you have completed the reading of the 13 books and have made a timeline, then go back through the timeline and pick out the main events and list them separately. That will

help you to further refine your understanding of Bible history. The main events are ones like creation, man's fall, Abraham's call, Israel in Egypt, and Israel's exodus from Egypt.

This project will help strengthen the foundation of your Bible knowledge by putting the whole Bible timeline in your mind. It is like standing back and looking at a forest before you walk in to examine individual trees and other details. Further Bible reading and study will build on this foundation.

This is not just for new Bible students. I designed this project after seeing that people can read the Bible for years and still not have a good overall picture.

An alternative would be to read the whole Bible through as quickly as possible. One pastor wrote, "I read the Bible through twice in a year for several years. While I didn't write out the timeline, it very much helped in establishing one. I can't explain all that did for me, other than, as you say, being able to look at the forest before the trees. That study helped me more than anything else in establishing the Bible in my mind, not as a volume of books, but as one Book, with one Author, and being able to discern from the pages of scripture the beautiful tapestry God has woven through history. It really helped with seeing the Bible from a dispensational perspective. The discipline of reading the Bible through twice in a year didn't allow me to stop and spend a lot of time in one passage, so I didn't get bogged down with too many details. I wouldn't necessarily recommend that regimen forever, since it is critical to examine 'every word of God,' but in establishing the 'big picture,' I found it incredibly helpful in my understanding of God's word, and in my walk with Him."

It takes about 70 hours to read the whole Bible at a moderate pace. That is 4,200 minutes. The entire Bible can be read in six months by reading about 30 minutes a day and in three months by reading about an hour a day.

# The Book of Beginnings

We will spend more time in Genesis than other parts.

Genesis to Deuteronomy are called the “Pentateuch” (five books) in English (taken from the Greek *pente*, five, and *teuchos*, book and *Torah* in Hebrew (meaning instruction). They were written by Moses under the hand of God. In the Hebrew canon they are called “the law of Moses” (Lu. 24:44). The Lord Jesus Christ quoted from every part of the Pentateuch and attributed it to Moses: Genesis (Mt. 19:4-6; 24:37-39 citing Ge. 2:23-24; 6:5-8); Exodus (Mr. 12:26 citing Ex. 3:6); Leviticus (Mt. 8:4 citing Le. 14:1-32); Numbers (Joh. 3:14-15 citing Nu. 21:8, 9 and Joh. 6:31-32 citing Nu. 11:6-9); Deuteronomy (Mr. 10:4-5 citing De. 24:1).

“Genesis” means beginning, origins. The first word in Hebrew is *bereshith*, “in the beginning.” Genesis is the only accurate book of origins in existence. It describes the beginning of the world, man, law, marriage, sin, judgment, religion, salvation, Messianic genealogy, Messianic prophecy, Messianic typology, the world system, idolatry, the division of languages, the nations, Israel, slavery, war, polygamy.

Genesis is the key to understanding the world that we live in. It answers the big questions of life. Is there a God? Who or what is He? How did the universe come to be? How did life originate? What is man? What are animals and why do they differ from man? What is the purpose of the sun, moon, and stars? How many sexes are there? What is man’s purpose? What is marriage? What is wrong with man? Why is life filled with pain and trouble? What is death and why does man die? Why is the earth covered with fossils? Why is it difficult to live godly in this world?

Genesis is the foundation for the rest of the Bible. It is impossible to understand the Bible apart from Genesis. It is

the first book of the Bible, and it introduces the Bible's theme, foundational events, and main characters.

Genesis prepares the way for understanding the gospel. For people who are not familiar with the teaching of Genesis, it is necessary to begin here in order to explain the gospel.

- *First, Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by revealing God.* It is impossible to understand the gospel unless you understand that there is a Creator God who owns man and has the right to rule him, that God is the holy lawgiver who judges sin, and that He is compassionate and desires to save sinners. We learn these foundational truths about God in Genesis.

- *Second, Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by describing man's fall* and thus explaining why man needs to be saved (Ge. 3).

- *Third, Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by giving the first prophecies about the Messiah,* who is the Saviour. Genesis contains the first prophecies about the Messiah and traces the beginning of His genealogy, beginning with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mt. 1:1-17).

- *Fourth, Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by giving the first revelation about the blood atonement and Christ as the Lamb of God.* This starts with God's clothing of Adam and Eve in coats of skins and continues with Abel's sacrifice and the other sacrifices in Genesis.

- *Fifth, Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by describing the origin of the nation Israel,* through which the gospel came. Jesus said salvation is of the Jews (Joh. 4:22). Through Israel, God gave the world the Scriptures (Ro. 3:1-2) and the Saviour (Ro. 9:4-5).

Genesis is true history.

- The accounts in Genesis are not mythical like those of pagan religions.
- The people and events of Genesis are spoken of in the NT as historical. Genesis is quoted about 60 times in the New Testament. Adam is mentioned 9 times. Jesus Himself mentions Adam and Eve (Mt. 19:4-6), Abel (Mt. 23:35; Lu. 11:50-51), Noah, Lot, Lot's wife (Lu. 17:26-32), Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Mt. 8:11), Elijah (Lu. 4:27), Naaman (Lu. 4:27), Jonah (Mt. 12:39), Isaiah (Mt. 13:14), and Daniel (Mt. 24:15).
- Jesus' genealogy is traced back to Adam (Lu. 3:36).

### **The Creation** (Genesis 1-2)

To fulfill His eternal plan, God made the first creation.

What existed before creation?

- The Triune God existed (Ps. 90:2). The Son was with the Father (Joh. 1:1). The Son dwelt in the bosom of the Father (Joh. 1:18). The Son dwelt in glory with the Father (Joh. 17:5). The Son was going forth forever (Mic. 5:2). The Holy Spirit was present with the Father and Son ("eternal Spirit," Heb. 9:14).
- Angels existed ("Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? ... When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," Job 38:4-7).
- The Scripture was settled in heaven ("For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven," Ps. 119:89).
- The New Testament revelation was known by God ("the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began," Ro. 16:25-26).

- Satan rebelled (Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:11-17). He was Lucifer the anointed cherub who became proud and led a rebellion against God.
- God's eternal plan existed (Eph. 1:9-11).
- God knew the elect by His foreknowledge ("according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," 2 Ti. 1:9; "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," 1 Pe. 1:2).
- The sacrifice of Christ was planned ("Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world," 1 Pe. 1:19-20).

The creation happened about 6,000 years ago, 4000 BC. It is impossible to reconcile evolution and the Bible. One or the other is completely wrong.

In Genesis 1-2, we learn of God, which is the main thing we must learn from every part of Scripture: omnipotent and omniscient Creator (Ge. 1); eternal (Ge. 1:1); a Person (seeing, speaking, Ge. 1:27-28); Trinity (Ge. 1:26 God - *elohim* - is a plural noun with a singular verb "said"); man's owner and lawgiver (Ge. 2:16-17); ruler over His creation; He did not make the world and abandon it; holy and punishes sin; Judge (Ge. 2:16-17).

God made everything in six 24-hour days ("evening and morning")

- Day One: God made the light and divided it from the darkness (Ge. 1:3-5)
- Day Two: God made the sky (Ge. 1:6-8)
- Day Three: God made the plant life (Ge. 1:9-13)
- Day Four: God made the sun, moon, and stars (Ge. 1:14-19)
- Day Five: God made the fish and birds (Ge. 1:20-23)
- Day Six: God made the animals and man (Ge. 1:24-31)



God made the worlds by His Word (Ge. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20). “Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:8-9).

God made the heavenly bodies for signs, seasons, and light (Ge. 1:14-15); the stars are evidence of His eternal power (Ps. 19:1; Ro. 1:19-20).

God made plant and animal life to reproduce “after his kind” (found ten times in Genesis chapter one -- verses 11, 12, 21, 24, 25). This is evidence for creation and evidence against evolution.

God made man in His own image (Ge. 1:26-27).

- Man is not an animal.
- God made man in His image that man might be able to know Him and walk with Him and associate with Him intimately forever. This is ultimately fulfilled in the second Adam, Jesus Christ, and in all of those who are saved in Christ.
- The image of God refers to man’s intelligence; man’s creativity; man’s speech; man’s moral nature (Eph. 4:24); man’s authority (Ge. 1:26).
- Man is not God and man will never be God. Though man is made in God’s image in certain ways, Jesus Christ is the only man that is said to be the “EXPRESS image” of God (Heb. 1:3). That man is not God is evident by the fact that he is forbidden to accept worship (Mt. 4:10; Ex. 34:14; Isa. 42:8; Acts 14:11-15), and when man worships himself he is condemned as an idolater (Ro. 1).
- God made man male and female (Ge. 1:27). There are only two sexes and every individual’s sex is written in the living cell from conception. The woman is equal with the male in that both are made in God’s image. The woman is

not a different kind of, or lesser kind of, creation than the man.

- God named the first man **Adam**. It is used 18 times in Genesis (Ge. 2:19, 20, 21, 23; 3:8, 9, 17, 20, 21; 4:1; 5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5), four times in the rest of the Old Testament (De. 32:8; Jos. 3:16; 1 Ch. 1:1; Job 31:33), and nine times in the New Testament (Lu. 3:38; Ro. 5:14; 1 Co. 15:22, 45; 1 Ti. 2:13; Jude 1:14). "Adam" means "red or ruddy," probably referring to his appearance. Adam is the forerunner of Christ, the last Adam (1 Co. 15:45). When God made Adam, He was planning for the last Adam.

The two accounts of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 are not contradictory but complementary.

- They give two different views of the creation. Genesis 1 looks at the entire six days of creation, whereas Genesis 2 looks only at the sixth day. Genesis 1 looks at the big picture and describes all of the things that were made during the days of creation. Genesis 2 looks only at the creation of man. Genesis 1 tells us that God made man male and female, and Genesis 2 tells us exactly how this was done.

- In Matthew 19:4-5, Jesus quoted from both of the first chapters of Genesis (1:27 and 2:24) as divine Scripture.

### **The First Commandment** (Ge. 2:16-17)

- Man's language did not evolve. God gave man the power of language for the purpose of communicating with Him. It is sufficient to communicate "the deep things of God" (1 Co. 2:10). No other creature has the power of language.

- Man was placed under God's government from the beginning. It is God who determines the law, not man. Morality is not relative. It is based on God's absolute law. Man belongs to God by right of creation, and man is

obligated to obey God and will give account of himself to God.

- In their original created state, Adam and Eve did not know evil. They had no experience of it, and there was none of it in their hearts. Evil thoughts came when they sinned (Mr. 7:21-22).

- God's commandment was accompanied by God's warning of death for disobedience. God revealed Himself to Adam as holy and just, a Judge as well as a Saviour.

- It is necessary for God to punish sin. If God's law was not accompanied by punishment, it would have no effect and the universe would be chaos and anarchy.

- This is the first mention of death in the Bible. This is the reason for death. This is why man will never conquer death.

- From the beginning, God's dealings with man were good and perfectly just. He gave Adam and Eve everything they needed and provided for the fulfillment of every legitimate desire. He withheld no good thing from them. There was no excuse for their sin against God. God cannot be blamed for man's sin or for the trouble that has come because of sin. God knew that man would sin, but He did not want man to sin and He is not the author of sin.

### **The First Marriage** (Ge. 2:18-25)

- Jesus taught that Genesis 2 contains God's perfect plan for marriage and that this divine law is in effect today (Mt. 19:4-6, 8).

- Marriage is a divine institution, and man has no right to change it.

- Marriage according to God's plan is one man and one woman united in holy matrimony for life.

- The purpose of marriage is three-fold: companionship (“not good that the man should be alone,” Ge. 2:18), help (a help meet for him,” Ge. 2:18), children (“be fruitful,” Ge. 1:28).
- The wife is the husband’s “helpmeet” (Ge. 2:18). This means a “suitable helper.” The woman was divinely prepared to be the man’s assistant. Adam was not given to Eve; Eve was given to Adam to assist him in the business that God had for him in this world. Man is the head.
- Marriage is the foundation for God’s law of sexual morality. Marriage sanctifies and legitimizes the sexual relationship between the man and woman (Heb. 13:4). Outside of holy marriage, sexual relationships and activities are called fornication and adultery. Every attack on biblical marriage is an attack upon morality itself and rebellion to God.

### **The Beginning of Sin: Man’s Fall** (Genesis 3)

#### ***The tempter***

- He is the old serpent, the great dragon, Satan, the devil (Re. 12:9), the god of this world (2 Co. 4:4), the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2). He was Lucifer the anointed cherub, as we have seen (Isa. 14; Eze. 28).
- The serpent originally was a creature that walked uprightly, was very beautiful, perhaps the most intelligent of creatures.

#### ***Satan’s tactics***

- Satan targets the weak and careless and unprotected (Ge. 3:1). See 1 Peter 5:8, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

- Satan attacks God's Word (Ge. 3:1). He seeks to create doubt in God's Word (v. 1). He denies God's Word (v. 4). He substitutes his words for God's Word (v. 5).
- Satan encourages people to forget God's blessings and to think more about what they do not have than what they do have. He tries to get them to think about what God has forbidden more than what God has allowed.
- Satan lies (Ge. 3:4). Satan is the father of lies (Joh. 8:44). His teachers lie. See Mt. 7:15; Ro. 16:17-18; 2 Co. 11:13-15; Eph. 4:14.
- Satan makes false promises and tries to make sin look appealing (Ge. 3:5).
- Satan slanders God's character (Ge. 3:5).

### *Eve's errors*

- She usurped her husband's authority.
- She dialogued with the devil and entertained his statements.
- She was careless in handling God's Word. (1) She **omitted from** God's Word. In verse 2, she omitted the words "every" and "freely." (2) She **added to** God's Word (Ge. 3:3). She added "neither shall ye touch it," (3) She **substituted her words for** God's Words (Ge. 3:3). Instead of plainly naming the tree as God had done, she referred to it as "the tree which is in the midst of the garden." This was the first paraphrase. (4) She **weakened and softened** God's Word (Ge. 3:3). Eve's "lest ye die" was much softer and less dogmatic than "thou shall surely die" (Ge. 2:17). And by omitting "in the day that thou eatest thereof" she softened the finality and immediacy of God's judgment (Ge. 2:17).
- She made the decision based on her own thinking rather than by God's Word (Ge. 3:6). She didn't consult with God

and His Word. Compare Proverbs 3:5-6. We must be Bereans (Ac. 17:11).

### ***Adam's role in the fall***

- He was there but he did not get involved. She gave to her husband "with her" (Ge. 3:6).
- He was not deceived by the devil's lies, but he sinned anyway (1 Ti. 2:14).
- Though he did not sin first, he was held responsible because he was the head. "by one man sin entered into the world" (Ro. 5:12).

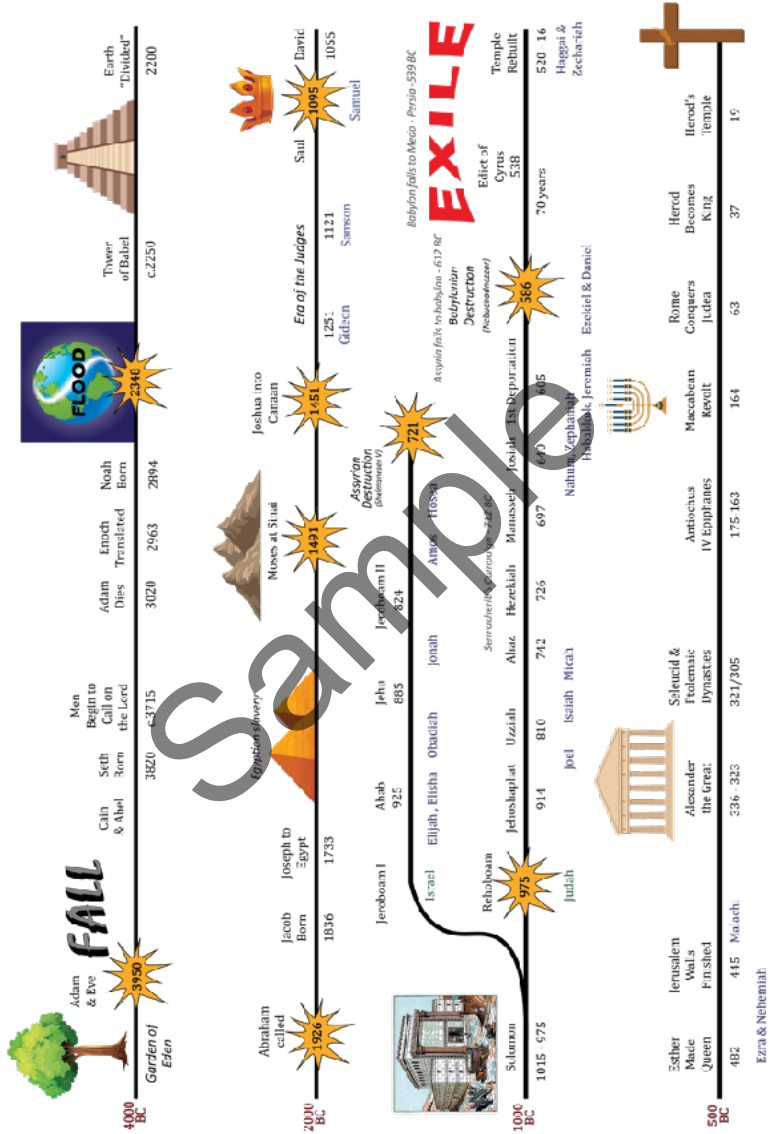
### ***The consequences of the fall***

- The first consequence of the fall was death, which is the wages of sin (Ge. 2:17; Ro. 6:23). Death is not annihilation; it is separation. There are three deaths: *Spiritual death*. This is separation of the spirit or soul from God ("dead in trespasses and sins," Eph. 2:1). *Physical death*. This is the separation of the spirit from the body. See Jas. 2:26; Ec. 12:7. *Eternal death*. This is the final separation of the sinner from God in the lake of fire (Re. 20:14-15).
- The heart became corrupted (Ge. 3:7). When they ate of the tree of the knowledge of evil, they became evil. See Jer. 17:9; Mr. 7:21-22; Eph. 2:3. The corrupt nature is called the "old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22). This is what is wrong with man. He cannot be perfected by any means, not by education, not by psychology, not by economic prosperity, not by science, not by democracy, not by good laws, not by libertarianism, not by communism, not by environmentalism.
- They attempted to cover their sin with garments of their own device (Ge. 3:7). This is the beginning of man-made religion.
- They were afraid and tried to hide from God (Ge. 3:8).



Israel in Jesus' Time and Earlier

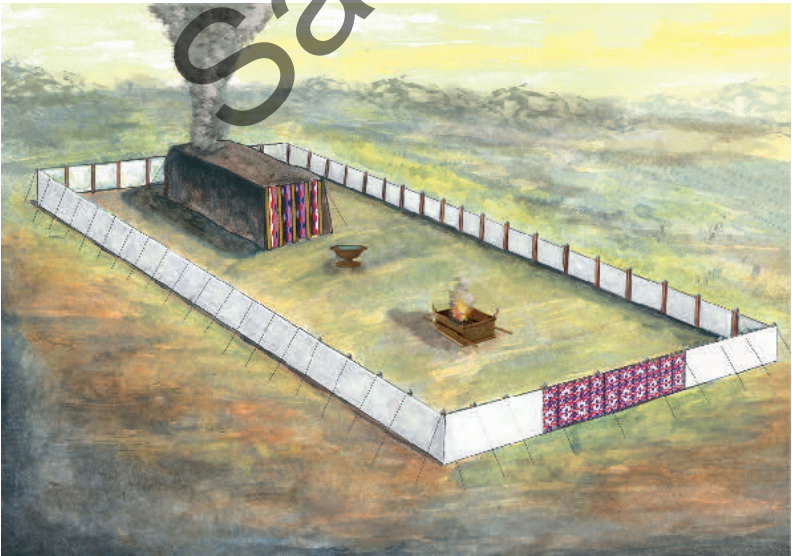
# OLD TESTAMENT PICTORIAL TIMELINE



Old Testament Pictorial Timeline



The High Priest



The Tabernacle



The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies



The Alter of Sacrifice