

# Walk Through the Bible

## The Old Testament

(Genesis 1-11) In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. God made everything in existence including the sun, moon, stars, oceans, plants and animals. He then created a man (Adam) and a woman (Eve) in His own image and placed them in a garden to take care of it. While in the garden, the devil, also known as Satan, disguised himself as a serpent and tempted Eve with fruit from a tree of which God had commanded them not to eat. Both she and Adam ate the fruit. Then they became aware of their sin of disobedience, and tried to hide from God. God cursed them with a spiritual death, or separation from Him, and sentenced them to a physical death as a result of their sin. The very first two people who ever lived then realized that they needed something or someone to save them from their sins, and put them back in right standing with the perfect God who created them. God knew this too, and promised them a savior. This savior would be one of their descendants and would win the victory over Satan and this death that they brought on themselves and all future generations.

Adam and Eve then had children, one of which became the ancestor of a man named Noah. By Noah's time, the land was filled with corrupt people who only desired to do evil. God searched throughout the land, and Noah was the only person He found that was living a righteous life. God was sorry He created man because of his evil ways. He told Noah to build an ark and take two of every animal with him because He was going to flood the land and wipe out all mankind. Only Noah, his wife, and their three sons and daughters-in-law escaped the flood and survived.

After the flood, God told Noah and his three sons (Shem, Ham, and Japheth) and their wives to spread out and multiply across the earth. A few generations later, one of Ham's descendants tried to build a tower at a place called Babel that would reach up to heaven. God then came down and threw them into confusion by giving them all different languages. That is how the various languages we have today originated. People then dispersed and continued to repopulate the earth.

(Job) A few centuries later a man named Job lived. He was a wealthy man who lived right in God's eyes. Satan was convinced that Job was living right only because God had blessed him, so God allowed Satan to take everything Job had except his life. Job did not understand why God allowed this to happen but he realized he had a redeemer in the Lord. He knew God was still sovereign and in control. He refused to curse God, and for his faith, God blessed him twice as much as He did before.

(Genesis 12-50) About this same time, around 2100 BC, a descendant of Shem named Abraham was living in the land of Ur in present-day Iraq. God called him out of his homeland and told him to go to the land of Canaan (where Israel is located today). This was a new land, but Abraham acted on faith and obeyed God. God told him that someday his descendants would occupy this land, and they would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. Abraham believed God, and God called him righteous because of his faith. God also told him that every nation on earth would be blessed by one of his descendants.

God gave Abraham a son in his old age to carry out the hope of this promise. His wife gave birth to a boy named Isaac. Isaac grew up and married his cousin Rebekah. She then gave birth to twins named Esau and Jacob. Jacob tricked his older brother Esau out of his birthright and his father's blessing. As a result, Esau became very angry, and Jacob had to flee to his grandfather Laban. There he married Leah and Rachel. Through his two wives, and their two maids, he became the father of 12 sons. After leaving Laban, Jacob had an encounter with God, and God changed Jacob's name to Israel. Through Jacob's sons come the 12 tribes of Israel (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Naphtali, Dan, Joseph and Benjamin)

Jacob favored his son Joseph. Because of this, Joseph's older brothers despised him and sold him off to gypsies who took him to Egypt. There in Egypt, God blessed Joseph, and he eventually became second in the land only to Pharaoh. Seven years later, a terrible drought came to all the land, and Joseph's brothers went from Canaan to Egypt to buy food. Joseph recognized them and later sent them back for his father Jacob and his family. So in roughly 1900 BC, all of Jacob's family (Israel) moved to Egypt.

(Exodus) As Israel lived in Egypt, God blessed them and their population grew. Eventually, the Egyptians began to feel threatened by the growing number of Israelites, so they made them their slaves. God heard their cries, and one day in the spring of 1446 BC, after 430 years of bondage, God told an Israelite named Moses to go and lead His people out of Egypt. Pharaoh resisted, so God worked many miraculous wonders through Moses and his brother Aaron. Pharaoh resisted so many times that God decided to kill all of the first born sons in the land of Egypt. God told the Israelites to sprinkle the blood of a lamb on all sides

of their doorposts, and God's angel would pass over that house and not kill the firstborn son that lived there. This is where the tradition of the Passover comes from. When Pharaoh saw that even his own son had died, he was more than ready to let Israel go.

The people of Israel then left Egypt and came to the Red Sea. Pharaoh's heart hardened once again, and he decided to go after Israel with all of his warriors. When they caught up with Israel at the Red Sea, God sent a mighty wind to part the waters. Israel was then able to cross over the Red Sea on dry ground. Pharaoh's warriors started after them, but when all of the Israelites had crossed over, God released the waters, and they came crashing down on the Egyptians so that they all drowned.

A few months later, when they came to Mt. Sinai, God came down on the mountain and delivered His law to Moses. This law included lessons on right living as well as instructions for building a portable tabernacle and its accessories. When the construction was finished and inspected, God came down and His glory filled the tabernacle. God was now living among His chosen people. This was exactly one year after they had left Egypt.

(Leviticus) Over the next month, God would give the Israelites further instructions on right living and on how to offer their sacrifices to Him. The punishment for any sin has always been death ever since the time of Adam's first sin. Only a 'perfect' animal with no blemishes or defects could be used as a sacrifice, because God is holy, or perfect, and can only accept perfection from His people. God accepted this 'perfect' sacrifice as a substitute for the sins of the people. The animal died in the place of the person, and their sins were forgiven. The high priest, Aaron, was in charge of performing all of the sacrifices from the time that he was ordained. God declared that the high priest would always come from one of Aaron's descendants.

(Numbers) Then, a year and a month after the Exodus, God told Moses and Aaron to conduct a census of the people of Israel. Including the woman and children, the number could have been over two million. After a few last minute instructions, the Israelites set forth on their way back to Canaan, the land that God promised to give the descendants of Abraham.

A few months later, Moses sent out 12 spies to scout out the Promised Land and report back to the people. One member of each tribe was selected. Among them were Joshua from the tribe of Judah and Caleb from the Tribe of Ephraim. They were gone 40 days. Joshua and Caleb came back and reported that the land was good and that they should go up and take control of it with the Lord's help. The other 10 spies told Moses that the inhabitants were giants and that they would surely be defeated if they tried to go up there. For their lack of faith, God sentenced Israel to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, one year for each day that the spies were gone. God also said that every Israelite counted in the first census (over the age of 20) except Joshua and Caleb would not get to enter the Promised Land. So the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for the next 38 years. During this time, every Israelite who was over the age of 20 during the Exodus had died including Aaron the high priest. At one point, Moses disobeyed God in a fit of pride and anger towards the people. As a result, he would not be allowed to enter the land either. Finally, in 1406 BC, they came to an area just east of the Jordan River opposite the land God promised to give them as an inheritance.

(Deuteronomy) (Psalm 90) Standing in view of the Promised Land, Moses gives God's Law to the next generation of Israelites. Their parents died in the wilderness for their lack of faith, so Moses reiterates the Law and stresses the importance of applying God's perfect statutes in each aspect of their daily lives and passing them down to their children.

Now, 40 years after the Exodus, Moses was 120 years old and about to die. God told him to go to the top of Mt. Nebo and look over the entire area that Israel was to take over as their land. Since Moses could not enter the Promised Land because of his disobedience, he asked God to appoint a leader to bring the people in. God chose Joshua. After Joshua was commissioned, Moses died on Mt Nebo, and God buried him. To this day, nobody knows where.

(Joshua) After Moses died, God told Joshua to be strong and courageous and lead Israel across the Jordan River and into the Promised Land. Starting with Jericho, Israel defeated the inhabitants of the land over the next seven years. Joshua divided up the land and gave portions to the 12 tribes as God directed him (substituting Ephraim and Manasseh for their father Joseph and for Levi, who was set apart by God). Then Joshua died and the elders of the land continued to lead the people.

(Judges) After all of these elders died a few years later, Israel went into a state of rebellion. They were defeated by their enemies and subject to slavery and affliction. When they cried out to God, He sent a judge to rescue them, and then there was peace until they began to rebel again. This cycle of disobedience and repentance continued seven times over the next 300 years. Some famous judges include Gideon, Samson, Deborah, and Jephthah. The Book of Judges closes by saying that in those days Israel had no king;

everyone did what was right in their own eyes. *That* was their problem.

([Ruth](#)) In the midst of the dark times of the judges, there was a sign that God had not abandoned his rebellious children. That sign was a woman from Moab named Ruth. She had married an Israelite, who after some time had died. She elected to stay with her mother-in-law Naomi and return to the land of Judah in Israel even though Naomi had no more sons for Ruth to marry. Ruth chose loyalty over a chance to go back home and start a new life. According to Jewish law, she could be redeemed by her late husband's nearest relative. When that man refused, the next nearest kinsman, a man named Boaz, stepped up and redeemed the land and married Ruth. They later had a child named Obed who would be part of a very special lineage.

([1 Samuel](#)) ([1 Chronicles 1-10](#)) ([Psalms 18, 34, 54, 56-57, 59, 63](#)) The period of the judges came to a close around the year 1100 BC. About this time a man named Samuel was born. He is considered the last of the judges and the first of the prophets. God had now stopped speaking *to* people, and started speaking *through* people.

After the people of Israel had complained about not having a king, God told Samuel to appoint Saul from the tribe of Benjamin to rule over Israel. Saul had a desire to follow God, but still did what he thought was right, and didn't follow the Lord's commands exactly. God then sought a man after His own heart. He directed Samuel to Jesse, son of Obed and grandson of Boaz and Ruth from the tribe of Judah. God had chosen a boy named David, the youngest and least likely of Jesse's seven sons, to be the next king. From then on, Saul was overcome with jealousy of David and his popularity, and tried to kill him several times. As David fled from Saul, he wrote several psalms that showed how much he trusted in God during those hard times.

([2 Samuel](#)) ([1 Chronicles 11-28](#)) ([Psalms 1-17, 19-33, 35-53, 55, 58, 60-62, 64-71, 73-89, 91-126, 128-150](#)) After Saul's death, David was crowned king in Judah and later, over all of Israel. During his reign, Israel became one of the strongest nations in the world. He built a powerful army that was more than a match for any of Israel's neighbors. His reign was stained though by an act of murder and adultery with a woman named Bathsheba. David then repented of his sins, married Bathsheba, and she later gave birth to a son named Solomon.

David loved the Lord. He had a desire to build Him a house, or temple, to replace the temporary tabernacle that Moses constructed in the wilderness some 400 years earlier. God told him that it would be Solomon who would build it, but God instead promised to build David a house; a permanent kingdom. David understood the significance of this promise. He knew that one of his descendants would be an everlasting king; an Anointed One, or Messiah, whom David would call his Lord. During David's reign, many events moved him and some members of his staff to write psalms of praise and adoration to God who proved to be ever faithful and loving in times of their distress.

([1 Kings 1-11](#)) ([1 Chronicles 29](#)) ([2 Chronicles 1-9](#)) ([Psalms 72, 127](#)) ([Proverbs](#)) ([Ecclesiastes](#)) ([Song of Solomon](#)) Solomon took over the throne after his father David had died. His reign was one of peace and prosperity. God granted him extraordinary wisdom to rule His people. Solomon was also a skilled writer and composer. He wrote two psalms and the Song of Solomon, which are poetic compositions on topics such as love, marriage, children and relationships. He also wrote the Books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, which are thorough representations of the wisdom that God gave him on topics that apply to all aspects of life.

During his reign, he built a magnificent temple to God in Jerusalem and a palace for himself. Despite his vast wisdom, he married many foreign women who eventually persuaded him to sacrifice to their gods and turn away from the one true God. Because of this God vowed to split the kingdom of Israel and give most of it to another king. But for the sake of God's promise to David, Israel would always be ruled by one of his descendants.

([1 Kings 12-22](#)) ([2 Chronicles 10-20](#)) When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king over Israel, but God's promise to divide the kingdom was fulfilled quickly. Rehoboam ignored the wise advice of the elders, listened to the foolish advice of his close friends, and the people of Israel rebelled against him. The ten northern tribes defected, and only the two southern tribes of Benjamin and Judah remained loyal to Rehoboam. This happened in 931 BC. The northern tribes became known collectively as Israel, and declared Jeroboam from the tribe of Ephraim their king. The southern kingdom came to be known as Judah.

Over the next 80 years, Israel was ruled by 8 kings. All of them were evil in the sight of the Lord. Judah was ruled by 4 kings (2 good kings, and 2 evil kings). God sent the prophet Elijah to the northern kingdom to warn them of God's judgment on them for worshipping a false god named Baal. God used Elijah to display great wonders and miracles to help rid Israel of this sin.

([2 Kings 1-13](#)) ([2 Chronicles 21-24](#)) When the time of Elijah's ministry had come to an end, God

sent down a chariot of fire to take him up into heaven. Elijah's assistant Elisha then took over his ministry and continued to perform many miracles to help Israel turn from their sins. During this time, Israel had a glimmer of hope again in King Jehu, who completely rid the nation of Baal worship. Despite this, he would not turn away from other forms of idolatry that his predecessors had also committed. God, therefore, had begun to reduce the size of Israel by causing their enemies to come and attack them.

([Obadiah](#)) About this time, God spoke through the prophet Obadiah concerning the destruction of Edom, Judah's neighboring nation to the south. Edom is another name for Esau, who was Jacob's (Israel's) brother. Edom had sinned by sitting back and watching their brother's enemies attack without coming to their aid. Also for their pride, God sentenced them to complete destruction and said that the Israelites would someday return and occupy the land of Edom.

([Joel](#)) Warning that a day of captivity was drawing near for Israel, God told the prophet Joel to liken the enemy invasion to a recent plague of swarming locusts. They would come and leave nothing behind. Joel then prophesied of a day in the future when the Spirit of God would be poured out on His people, and God would restore them.

([Jonah](#)) Around this time, in the reign of King Jeroboam II in Israel, God told a prophet named Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh, which was located in present-day Iraq. Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire, which had become the dominant world power. He was to warn them that God would punish them for their wickedness if they do not turn from their ways. Jonah feared this assignment and fled by boat in the opposite direction. God punished him for his disobedience by causing a large fish to swallow him up. While he was in the fish's stomach, he prayed to God for forgiveness. After three days the fish spit him onto the shore. God gave him a second chance and he immediately went to Nineveh. The Assyrians took his warnings to heart, and a great revival took place as the whole nation turned from their evil ways and obeyed the true God of heaven.

([Amos](#)) Also during the reign of Jeroboam II, God called a shepherd named Amos to prophesy against Israel and its neighboring countries. God used various illustrations to show that Israel's destruction was imminent and very near. Yet the Lord's love for Israel would dominate for He again promised to restore the nation.

([Hosea](#)) God also called Hosea to prophesy against Israel. He told Hosea to marry a prostitute as a sign of God's relationship with Israel. Hosea and his prostitute wife had three children together. God gave the last two children figurative names which translate into English as "no more pity", and "not my people". Then his wife left and continued to prostitute herself with other men. Then God, as a picture of His love for the nation, told Hosea to go again and buy back his adulterous wife. This was a symbol of God's future forgiveness for Israel's spiritual adultery, which they committed by worshipping other gods. Then he was instructed to tell Israel that in the future God would again show pity on them because of their destruction, and they would again be called His people, and He would again be their God.

([2 Kings 14-17](#)) ([2 Chronicles 25-28](#)) But at the current time, Israel was heading in the wrong direction. Despite numerous warnings from God's prophets, they continued in their disobedience toward God. Finally, about 50 years after Jonah visited the city of Nineveh, God allowed the Assyrian army to come in and take Israel captive. In 722 BC, King Shalmeneser of Assyria led an attack on the capital city of Samaria and deported the Israelites back to the land of Assyria. Only a small remnant of priests was allowed to stay in the land of Israel. As punishment for their sin, God took them out of the Promised Land and caused them to go to a foreign land where they then chose to continue worshipping their false gods.

([2 Kings 18-20](#)) ([2 Chronicles 29-32](#)) The Assyrian captivity of Israel came during the reign of King Hezekiah in Judah. Hezekiah was a great king who trusted in the Lord and followed His commands very closely. Later, in the year 701 BC, King Sennacherib of Assyria turned towards Judah to take it captive. When they showed up, Hezekiah turned to the prophet Isaiah for God's help. Isaiah prophesied victory for Judah and the demise of King Sennacherib. Indeed, that very night, an angel of the Lord went into the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000 of their troops. Sennacherib went back home where he died some time later.

([Isaiah](#)) Early in Isaiah's ministry he had seen a vision of God sitting on His throne. The very sight of God's holiness drove Isaiah to confess and repent of his own sins. When he confessed this sin, God forgave him and he then had great boldness to accept God's commission. In addition to prophesying God's judgment on the nations, including Judah, he also prophesied of a deliverer for all Israel. He said that in the future a child would be born to a virgin, and the government would rest on his shoulders. He would be called Wonderful Counselor, the Prince of Peace, even Mighty God, and the Everlasting Father. There would be no end to his kingdom, just as God had also declared to David some 300 years before.



Isaiah then foretold of Judah's continued unwillingness to accept and follow the commands of God. They would have to be punished, but God would send His servant to save His people. This servant though would have no stately form. He would not look like a typical king or hero. He would be scoffed at by his own people. They would despise and reject him, and put him to death not realizing that he was their savior sent from God. Isaiah said that he would be wounded for our transgressions because we have all sinned and gone astray from God. For that very reason, despite seeing the anguish of His servant, God would be pleased with his death because he was to be an offering sacrificed for the sins of every person.

([Micah](#)) At about this same time, God presents His case against Judah through the prophet Micah. He compares man's plans with His plans and the people are found guilty. Judah is promised destruction, but not without deliverance. More clues are given as to the man who would rule Israel in the future. He would come from the lowly town of Bethlehem, and his origins would be from long ago.

([2 Kings 21](#)) ([2 Chronicles 33](#)) Judah had enjoyed good times during the reign of Hezekiah, but his son Manasseh would be considered one of the most evil kings in Judah's history. Though Manasseh later repented and God forgave him, there were still consequences for his sin. It was his wicked behavior that sealed the destruction of Judah. His son Amon followed in his footsteps and continued to do evil during his reign.

([Nahum](#)) Meanwhile in Assyria, the people had forgotten about their great revival during Jonah's time over 150 years earlier. They had extreme pride because of their accomplishments (including the capture of the northern kingdom of Israel). Through the prophet Nahum, God told Assyria that they would be destroyed because of their continued wickedness. This time God promised no deliverance or restoration for the Assyrians. So great was their destruction by the Babylonians in 612 BC that no trace of their existence would be found for over 2,000 years.

([2 Kings 22-23](#)) ([2 Chronicles 34-35](#)) ([Jeremiah 1-38](#)) After King Amon's death, his son Josiah ruled over Judah. Unlike his father, he would be known as one of the greatest kings because of his deeds to rid the nation of evil and restore Judah to the covenant they had with God. But after his reign, his sons continued in the evil ways of the previous kings. God then spoke through the prophet Jeremiah to warn Judah of the approaching Babylonian Empire, saying that they would undergo 70 years of captivity in the land of Babylon. Nevertheless, the wicked kings of Judah chose to believe false prophets with messages of peace rather than God's true prophet.

([Zephaniah](#)) God had had enough of Judah's rebellion. The prophet Zephaniah tells of the fall of Jerusalem, and warns the surrounding nations of their destruction as well. Once again, though, God does not end His story with gloom. He yet again promises the restoration of Judah from captivity.

([Habakkuk](#)) Habakkuk could all but hear the Babylonians approaching. He pleaded ignorance with God, saying that He doesn't understand how a loving God could allow this to happen to His children. God eventually tells him to be quiet, and that he wouldn't understand even if He told him. God had allowed Judah to continue in their sin for almost 500 years now. The time for judgment was upon them. God also told Habakkuk that the soul of the wicked person is not right within him, and that the righteous person would live by faith. Habakkuk was then comforted, and praised God for His deeds and His mercy.

([2 Kings 24-25](#)) ([2 Chronicles 36](#)) ([Jeremiah 39-52](#)) The year was now 605 BC. The Babylonians had taken over the Assyrian Empire as Nahum had prophesied, and were ruled by King Nebuchadnezzar. Under his lead, they began their invasion of Jerusalem and destroyed the temple of God built by Solomon. By the year 586 BC, three waves of captives had been taken away to Babylon. Only a small remnant was left in the land of Judah.

([Lamentations](#)) After witnessing the destruction of Jerusalem and watching his people being taken captive, Jeremiah lamented over the nation of Israel. They were once the strongest nation in the world by God's own choosing. But for their choosing to live in sin rather than obey God's commands, they were reduced to a small remnant of people, and their towns were reduced to rubble. But even while crying out to God, Jeremiah is reminded of God's enduring faithfulness to restore the people of Israel.

([Ezekiel](#)) But for now, Israel was in exile and felt deep remorse for their sin as they experienced a separation from God and His promises for them. In Babylon, God raised up a prophet named Ezekiel. He explained clearly why these things were happening through many figurative examples. He was used by God in such a unique way that his entire life was to be a symbol to the people of Israel. At the end of his ministry, Ezekiel was allowed to see and record a vision of God's future kingdom; a glimpse of life in a city called, "The Lord is There."

([Daniel](#)) Among the Israelites held in captivity was a man named Daniel. Through Daniel's wisdom and convictions, God caused him to be looked on with great favor in the eyes of King Nebuchadnezzar. God

enabled him to interpret the king's troubling dreams precisely. Among these dreams were prophecies of future world powers after the Babylonian Empire. These predictions were so detailed and proved to be so historically accurate that they could only have come from the true God who knows the future and holds it in His hands. Another prophecy of Daniel was the exact time that the Messiah (God's servant, and Israel's savior who was spoken of by so many other prophets) would die. Israel no longer had to wonder when God would save them once and for all. It would happen exactly 476 solar years after a declaration is signed for Israel to return from captivity and rebuild Jerusalem.

([Ezra 1-6](#)) ([Haggai](#)) Just as Daniel had prophesied, the Babylonian Empire was toppled by the Medes and Persians. This happened in 539 BC. In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, a decree was signed which allowed the people of Israel to go back into their own land. By this time, there was no longer any distinction between Israel and Judah. The combined Israel was led by a governor named Zerubbabel and a priest named Jeshua. In 536 BC they began the task of rebuilding the temple of God. The prophet Haggai was sent by God to encourage Zerubbabel and the rest of the people because they were now overwhelmed with rebuilding their Promised Land.

([Zechariah](#)) Zerubbabel and Jeshua were held in such high esteem by God that they were called his two olive branches, which were anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth. God told Haggai that Zerubbabel was His signet ring. Jeshua was a symbol of God's coming servant, here called the Branch. He was called the Branch because he would be planted here on earth and branch out and rebuild the temple of the Lord. He would then sit on his throne and rule as both a king and a priest. But this servant king would first have his life bought with the price of a slave in the marketplace. His body would then be pierced as part of God's plan, but the story of God's servant does not end here. He is shown to come back and stand on the earth, gather all the enemies of Jerusalem together and destroy them once and for all.

([Esther](#)) Meanwhile, the Medo-Persian Empire was growing, and King Xerxes was searching his whole territory for a queen to replace his banished ex-wife. He chose a young woman named Esther from the tribe of Benjamin who was living in the capital city of Susa. When Esther discovered a plot by an evil man named Haman to destroy all of the Jews living in Israel, she stepped up and foiled the plan. King Xerxes then gave Israel permission to destroy their enemies. They did just that and then lived in peace during his reign.

([Ezra 7-10](#)) ([Nehemiah](#)) During the reign of King Artaxerxes, it was called to the attention of Nehemiah (a Jew living in Susa), that the city of Jerusalem was in rubble and the people were in distress. Nehemiah got permission from Artaxerxes to return and rebuild the walls around Jerusalem in 446 BC. This started the countdown for the Messiah as foretold by Daniel 150 years earlier. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to govern the remnant of God's people, and Ezra served as priest and scribe. Ezra dictated God's law to the people, and they began to turn from their sins and follow the Lord. With God's help and great leadership Israel had overcome adversity, but it would not take long for them to again turn from God's commands and follow their own desires.

([Malachi](#)) Roughly 40 years later around 400 BC, God spoke through the prophet Malachi concerning the true meaning of sacrifice and worship. The people of Israel had been cheating God by not giving Him their very best sacrifices and offerings. In their arrogance, they gave up on serving God, calling it futile. God sharply accused the people, especially the leaders and priests. Yet because His love, He told them He would soon pave the way for the coming Lord who will purify the people so that they may again offer up a pleasing sacrifice to God.

The next 400 years are not recorded in the Bible, although many events happened that were predicted by God's prophets. They included Daniel's vision of Alexander the Great and the Greeks taking over the Persian Empire in 331 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes' desecration of the temple in 168 BC and later defeat by the Maccabees in 165 BC, and the rising of the Roman Empire in 63 BC. Alexander instated a common language, and the Romans built roads that would connect much of the known world. The time was now perfect for God to show His love for His people once and for all.

### **The New Testament**

([Matthew 1-3](#)) ([Mark 1](#)) ([Luke 1-3](#)) ([John 1](#)) The few Jews who had actually paid attention to God's messages through His prophets understood that the time was near for their savior, the Messiah to come. The picture of this Messiah was clearly painted over the millennia that preceded. Israel was ready for a king to free them from Roman rule and restore the nation. God had other plans. In about 6 BC, God sent an angel to a priest named Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth. The angel said that they would conceive a son and they should name him John. God told John's parents that the boy would grow up to be great in the sight of the Lord. He would lead many people back to God.

Six months later in Nazareth, Elizabeth's young niece Mary, a virgin, was visited by one of God's angels. She was told that she would miraculously conceive a child by the Holy Spirit of God. No man would come near her. Mary was instructed to name her baby boy Jesus, and that it would be he who would save people from their sins. This happened exactly as the prophet Isaiah said over 700 years before. In due time, Elizabeth gave birth to John and he grew up and lived in the wilderness until the proper time for his ministry.

Six months after John's birth, Mary gave birth to Jesus in the little town of Bethlehem. People then remembered the words of the prophet Micah over 700 years before that their promised savior would come from Bethlehem. Jesus then began to grow in wisdom and found favor with God and man.

([Matthew 4-26](#)) ([Mark 2-13](#)) ([Luke 4-21](#)) ([John 2-17](#)) Around the year AD 27, Jesus went down to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. John had been baptizing people and telling them to repent, or turn away from their evil ways and follow the way of the Lord. As Jesus was baptized, a voice came down from heaven that said, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." This began the earthly ministry of Jesus, the Son of Man (because he was born to a woman and lived on earth fully as a man), and the Son of God (because he was the only begotten of God Himself).

Over the next three and a half years, Jesus performed many miracles, such as healing people from diseases and disabilities, making the blind see, cleansing the lepers, and even raising people from the dead. Even the wind and the rain obeyed his command. On one occasion he walked on water in the middle of a storm as a symbol of strength and comfort to his disciples who were afraid for their lives. He also miraculously fed thousands of hungry people who had traveled a great distance to hear him talk with just a few loaves of bread and a few fish.

Many people would travel from all over the area to hear Jesus teach. He often told stories of the kingdom of heaven and about the nature of God and how much He loved each one of them. He would even tell stories of what people needed to do to get into heaven. His stories were consistent with what people knew from long ago, that right standing with God could only come about through faith. He said that there is only one way to get into heaven and that was through himself. Jesus alone had the key to heaven and he gave it out to anyone who asked for it, free of charge. He said that God loved the world so much that He gave His only son that whoever would just believe in him would be saved from their sins and enjoy eternal life with God. Through his miracles and teachings, Jesus attracted many thousands of people who came to him seeking this life that he alone had to give. Jesus' message was simple and is summed up in the following commands: love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbor as yourself.

His ministry was in direct contrast to the religious leaders of that day known as the Pharisees. They would seek out honor for themselves and make a show of their knowledge and position. Jesus made it clear that he was here to serve, and to seek out people who were hungry for spiritual truths and thirsty for the living water of eternal fellowship with God. Jesus caused great turmoil among the Pharisees and other officials because he was going around telling people their sins were forgiven. The Pharisees would say that only God in heaven has the authority to forgive sins. Jesus would then perform a miracle proving that he was not just all talk. He actually did have the authority here on earth to forgive people's sins. By doing this, he was proving he was actually God on earth just as Isaiah foretold. Such authority has never been given to any other man, because man is sinful by nature and needs a redeemer and savior. Jesus, who never sinned, was just that.

The Pharisees and other religious leaders were not satisfied. They rejected Jesus as their Messiah. They rejected Jesus' offer to be their rightful king. When Jesus claimed to be God in the flesh, they called him a blasphemer and repeatedly sought opportunities to kill him.

([Matthew 27-28](#)) ([Mark 14-16](#)) ([Luke 22-24](#)) ([John 18-21](#)) As Jesus' ministry was coming to an end in the spring of about AD 30, Jesus was celebrating the Passover meal with his 12 disciples. At the meal, he stated that one of them would betray him, and hand him over to the authorities who were waiting to arrest him. He said that they would put him to death, but that would not be the end of him for he would be raised from the dead three days later. After the meal, one of his disciples named Judas Iscariot went to the priests and elders of the people. They offered him 30 pieces of silver, the price of a slave, to lead them to Jesus just as the prophet Zechariah had said over 400 years earlier.

Judas led the people to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus and his other disciples were praying. Jesus was well aware of what was going on for he had been praying that God would deliver him, but only if that was *His* desire. If it was not, then Jesus was willing and ready to die. They arrested him in the garden and took him to trial. The priests accused him of blasphemy when Jesus said that he would soon be with God, sitting at His right hand in power. They then handed him over to the governor Pontius Pilate. After

that trial, Pilate handed Jesus over to be beaten, scourged and crucified on a cross even though he knew he was innocent and did not deserve it. He did this as a political move.

On Good Friday morning AD 30, Jesus was nailed to a cross and hung between two common thieves. Despite the agony he had felt in his hands and feet from the nails, and the blood that he felt dripping down his face from the crown of thorns that was placed on his head, he still cried out to God to forgive them. They didn't know that they were killing God's faithful servant, His messenger of peace, His prophet, His deliverer, His son.

As noon approached, the skies became dark as night. Jesus in great anguish cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" God had turned His back on His only son for a brief moment. He could not watch as His perfect, unblemished, sinless son had become drenched with the sin of all mankind. Isaiah, though, had prophesied that God would be pleased to do this. Why? The only reason was that God loved His people, His children, so much that He was willing to offer His son as a sacrifice for their sin. He allowed Jesus to take our sins with him on the cross, so we could be found without sin and enter into fellowship with Him.

Jesus knew this would please his Father, so as his death drew near a few hours later, he claimed victory by saying, "It is finished!" And then he died. He was taken down from the cross and prepared for burial in a tomb. The tomb was then sealed by a huge boulder and heavily guarded by soldiers. That day, many people lost hope. This man promised to save them, but there he lay.

Early Easter Sunday morning, some of Jesus' followers went down to visit his tomb. When they got there, they saw an angel of God. He was sitting on the stone that had sealed Jesus' tomb. But the stone was no longer in front of the tomb because the angel had rolled it away. As they looked around, they saw all of the soldiers lying faint on the ground. Seeing the look of fear on their faces, the angel asked them what they were looking for. He said that Jesus was no longer here, he had risen from the dead just like he said he was going to do. After looking in the tomb and not seeing the body, they ran back to tell the disciples that Jesus was not in the tomb. Along the way, Jesus himself appeared to them and comforted them greatly. The disciples then ran to check it out for themselves. Eventually, Jesus had appeared to all of his disciples and many others, and many were again filled with great hope and joy. Jesus instructed all of his disciples to go and tell the world the good news that he had died for their sins, and then rose from the dead as a sign that all who believe in him, would be forgiven and spend eternity with God in heaven!

(Acts 1-15) Over the course of 40 days after his resurrection, Jesus had appeared to over 500 people. Then, as his disciples looked on, he was taken up into heaven in the clouds, but not before he had promised to leave them a helper who would guide them through life while he was absent. As they stared up in the sky, an angel appeared and told them that just as he ascended into heaven, some day he would return to earth.

A short while later the helper whom Jesus spoke of appeared. It was the Holy Spirit of God. The Spirit began to fill each one of Jesus' followers and caused them to perform miracles and gave them great power. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, one of Jesus' disciples named Peter began to preach to a crowd that had gathered of how Jesus had died for them and was then raised from the dead. About 3,000 people believed in Jesus that day, and they were then filled with the Holy Spirit as well. This was the beginning of what is called the church.

God blessed the church and people were being saved from their sins on a daily basis. The church was not without opposition though. The Pharisees and the priests were still accusing these believers, now called Christians because of their allegiance to Christ, the Messiah, Jesus. Some Christians were even put to death by the Pharisees for their faith. One of the most notorious of these Pharisees was a man named Saul.

One day, as Saul was traveling to the town of Damascus, Jesus appeared to him in a bright light, and asked why he was persecuting his followers. Trembling, Saul said, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" In an instant, his heart had changed. Jesus told him to go to the city of Damascus, and he will be shown what to do. Saul, who then became known as Paul, was about to embark on one of the greatest journeys through life of any man in the last 2000 years.

Paul began to mature in the Christian faith. He would preach in the local synagogues every week, and people were begging for more. There was such a hunger for the good news of the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. But the world was full of people that had never heard this good news, so in about the year AD 48, Paul set off to tell the known world.

This was his first missionary journey. It lasted about a year as he sailed to the island of Cyprus, and then traveled through present-day Turkey including the region of Galatia. Paul focused his attention on the Gentiles. The Gentiles were anyone who was not a Jew by birth. The Jews were God's chosen people, but as God told Abraham over 2000 years before, the whole world would be blessed by his seed. This seed of



Abraham was Jesus. The good news of eternal life with God through faith in Jesus was for the whole world, not just Israel. Through Paul's preaching, many Gentiles became Christians, and these Christians shared a heritage with Jews who believed in Jesus, and all were considered children of God.

Paul then returned to Jerusalem and told the disciples that many Gentiles had received the message of Jesus. After some debate it was clear that it was not the law that was given to the Jews that saved a person, but their faith. God purified the hearts of, and sent His Holy Spirit to the Gentiles the same way He did to Jewish Christians.

(James) Jesus' earthly parents, Mary and stepfather Joseph, had other children together after he was born. One of them was named James. He was skeptical of Jesus' true identity and ministry while he was alive on earth, but then came to believe in him after his death and resurrection. He went on to instruct the Jewish believers in areas of good Christian behavior. True, it was faith that saved a person, but anyone that had this faith should also have the good works to go along with it, or else his faith is useless in God's kingdom here on earth. James spoke very bluntly to the people. Many of his teachings are hard to swallow because of the pride that dwells in every person. He therefore instructed them to humble themselves in the sight of God, and He would lift them up.

(Acts 16-18) Meanwhile, Paul was about to set off on his second missionary journey. This trip lasted over two years from about AD 51 to 53. After traveling through Turkey as he did before, he ventured out further through Greece. Some of the cities he visited were Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth and Ephesus. In each of these cities, many people were coming to a saving faith in the Lord Jesus. During his journey, Paul encountered a young man named Timothy who was a well respected Christian man living in Turkey. Paul took Timothy under his wing and he became his disciple as he traveled with him throughout the region.

(Galatians) The people of Galatia in present-day Turkey had accepted Paul's message when he visited them previously, but had now deserted God and began to chase a false message. Some people had spied out their liberty in Christ (their freedom from the bondage of the old law of Moses) in order to bring them back into bondage. Paul reiterated to them that it was and always has been the faith of a person that saved them, and not by any works or deeds that they may do, quoting from the prophet Habakkuk. He stated that if the old law could save someone, then Christ died needlessly. The law was merely given to show that it is impossible to live up to God's perfect standards. It revealed our sin to us and showed us that we need a savior.

(1 Thessalonians) As Paul traveled on to Corinth, Greece, the people of Thessalonica weighed heavy on his mind, so he wrote them a letter. In it he said how grateful he was for their good deeds brought about from their faith, their labors of love, and the perseverance of their hope in Jesus. He also included instructions on various subjects of Christian behavior, and even instructed them on the subject of death. He says that all Christians who die will again be raised to be with Jesus because God had raised him from the dead. This was to be their hope. Those who died without Jesus did not have this hope. And if any Christians were alive when Christ returned, they would be caught up to be with him, or raptured.

(2 Thessalonians) Some time later, Paul wrote the Thessalonians another letter to comfort them because they had been persecuted greatly for their faith. To encourage them this time, he states what will happen to someone who doesn't believe in Jesus before they die. They were to suffer the penalty of eternal destruction and separation from the God who created them. He also clarifies that the end times would not come about until the church, or all Christians, had been raptured. Then and only then, the way for the man of sin would be paved. So evil would this man be that, with the help of Satan, he would even go and sit on the throne of God in the temple, claiming to be God himself. His reign will be cut short though when Jesus comes back to earth and destroys him with a mere breath. Paul addresses this subject so they will not be deceived by anyone who tells them these events had already happened.

(Acts 19-20) Having just come back from his second trip, Paul set out on his third and final missionary journey. This trip lasted over three years from about AD 54 to 57. He followed almost the same path he took on his second trip, through Turkey and then through Greece.

(1 Corinthians) When Paul came to the town of Ephesus in Turkey, he sat down to write a letter to the people in Corinth, Greece. There was much division in the church of Corinth over minor issues. Paul urged them to stop the division and be of one mind. There is only one major issue, to know Jesus Christ, and that he was crucified for their sins. Paul also addresses issues of sexual purity, warns against pride, teaches about the end times, and instructs them on spiritual gifts, which are given to each believer to use to further God's work here on earth. Not all people have the same knowledge of these biblical truths, so he says that all things should be done towards one another in love. Even if we had everything, and knew everything, without

love, we would actually have nothing. Three things will remain until the very end; faith, hope, and love. The greatest of these is love.

**(Romans)** Shortly after this, Paul had a desire to go to Rome. He wasn't able at the time so he wrote them a handbook on the Christian life. In it, Paul addresses such questions as, why do I need to be saved? How do I get saved? And, now that I am saved how should I live? First, Paul says that there are no truly good people in the world. Everyone has sinned and fallen short of God's perfect standard even if they only ever did one thing wrong their whole life, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant. The reward they get for this sin is death. To answer the question of how to be saved, Paul states that Jesus Christ can save them from this penalty of death, and it costs nothing. The only thing you need to do is believe in your heart that Jesus died for your sins and was raised from the dead. Once you make that decision your position with God is sealed, and nothing can ever separate you from Him.

Paul also addresses Christian conduct towards others. He states that the whole entire law given to Israel can be summed up in one sentence: "Love your neighbor as yourself." He also clearly explains God's position on doubtful things, or gray areas of Christian behavior, such as eating certain things, drinking, and following certain other customs of the people. His advice is that all things are indeed clean in and of themselves, but don't ever do anything that would cause a person to stumble in their Christian life. Let love be the guiding principle.

**(2 Corinthians)** As Paul came to the land of Macedonia in Greece in the winter of AD 56, he again needed to write the church of Corinth. He needed to comfort them as they were going through many trials. He reminded them that they were persecuted but not forsaken by God; struck down, but not destroyed. Therefore they should be strong when the world accuses them of being weak, because God's grace is sufficient for them. His power and strength is made known through our weaknesses and imperfections.

**(Acts 21-28)** Paul returned to Jerusalem the following year. Shortly afterwards, he was arrested for allegedly telling the Gentiles to forsake the law of Moses and not to walk in the customs of the people. In court he gave his testimony of his conversion and his mission given to him by Jesus. When it was stated that Paul was a Roman citizen he went to trial before Governor Felix. After two years of imprisonment, Paul stood before Felix's replacement Governor Festus. Festus decided to hand Paul back over to Jews in a political move, but Paul appealed the sentence all the way up to Caesar. Paul would get his wish. He would finally go to Rome.

After a shipwreck on the small island of Malta, south of Italy, Paul eventually made it to Rome in about AD 60. He made his case before Caesar and was sentenced to two years of house arrest in Rome.

**(Ephesians)** While under house arrest, Paul decided to write a letter to the people in the church of Ephesus in Turkey. He reminded them that they were saved only by the grace of God through their faith. There was nothing they could do to earn a ticket into heaven. That being said, they should now walk in the good deeds that God created them to do in the first place. Paul then proceeded to instruct them on daily Christian behavior and declared to them proper conduct within a marriage. The man is to love his wife unconditionally as Christ loves his church, even giving up his life for her. The woman is to lovingly submit to her husband as head of the household in the same way the church is to submit to its head, Jesus Christ. Paul says that by putting on the full armor of God to protect them, they could always ward off Satan who is continually trying to tempt them to sin.

**(Philemon)** While imprisoned, Paul became a spiritual mentor to a man named Onesimus. Onesimus had run away from his master Philemon who lived in the Greek town of Colossae. Now Paul was encouraging his master, Philemon, to take him back. Onesimus was useless to him before as a slave, but now he was a Christian brother who would be very useful to him and to Paul.

**(Colossians)** Philemon did accept him back, and Onesimus was now part of the church in Colossae. Paul then wrote a letter to the church instructing them on exactly who Jesus is and why they should follow him and not the ways of the world. Paul says clearly that Jesus Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. When you see him, you see God. In Jesus, all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form. Jesus is more than just the son of God, he *is* God. Therefore they should not listen to what the world teaches is right or wrong, but rather to God for it is the Lord Christ whom they serve.

**(Philippians)** About this time, Paul also felt the desire to deliver a similar message to the church at Philippi in Greece. He tells them of Jesus' deity and instructs them in many areas of Christian living. Putting others first is a theme in these instructions. They should be content in whatever situation they are in and rejoice in the Lord always. He says a way to do this is to continually focus our thoughts on things that are good and true and pure. If they would do this, God's peace which is so great it passes all understanding will guard their hearts and minds.

(1 Timothy) After Paul's house arrest was over, he sat down to write a letter to his young disciple Timothy in Ephesus. Paul instructed Timothy on the conduct and the structure of the church. The church was to be governed by elders and deacons, and Paul clearly states the role of each. In a church service, the Scripture was to be read publicly and taught to the congregation. And Timothy, as a man of God, was instructed to flee from worldly lusts and false doctrine in order to do his part as a leader in his church.

(Titus) Likewise, Paul instructs a young man named Titus on the island of Crete, south of Greece on the anatomy and ordinances of the church. He goes a step further now and instructs all groups of people how they should conduct their lives; older men, older women, young men, young women, workers and employers. All of these people should be eager to do good deeds, knowing that it's not the good deeds that saved them, but God's grace, which was given for the salvation of all men and women.

(2 Timothy) A few years later, Paul knew he was at the end of his life. He wrote another letter to Timothy to encourage him and strengthen him in his faith. He very strongly encouraged him to preach the word. He was referring to the Scriptures. It is called the word of God because all Scripture is inspired by the very breath of God Himself. Therefore it could be absolutely trusted all of the time, and it was suitable for teaching, counseling and training one to live in righteousness.

(Hebrews) Possibly around this time, the author of the Book of Hebrews was inspired by God to instruct the Jews as to the significance of Christ with respect to the laws and customs of Old Testament times. Quoting from many ancient writers such as David, Moses, Jeremiah, and Isaiah, this unknown author makes the case for Jesus as the subject of their writings. Jesus is both the high priest and the king. He is the messenger of the new covenant between God and man in which God's law is written in the hearts of men rather than on tablets of stone. Jesus is the perfect sacrifice, whose blood was shed for the forgiveness of all of our sins. Jesus is the object of our faith, and it is by faith that mankind is justified before God. It has always been that way because Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.

(1 Peter) While Paul was called to preach to the Gentiles, Peter was led to instruct the Jews who were scattered throughout the Roman Empire. Peter calls them to godly living and encourages them to persevere through their trials. He assures them that faith in Christ is not disappointing because the outcome of this faith is the salvation of their souls. When persecuted by unbelievers, they should always be ready to defend their faith. They would be blessed in their suffering, and their accusers will have to give an account of their actions to Jesus when they meet him at their judgment.

(2 Peter) Later, Peter wrote a letter to all believers as the time of his death was approaching. He gives them specific examples of Christian behavior that will keep them from stumbling in life. He also comforts them with the truth that Jesus will again come back. Time is irrelevant to God. We may think He has forgotten about us, or that He will not come back, but He delays His coming because He doesn't want anyone to die without trusting in Him for their salvation. He greatly desires that everyone turn from their sins and lean on Him. But He will come back; when we may least expect it.

(Jude) Jude was another brother of Jesus who was skeptical of his message. Like James, he was convinced after Jesus had died and risen from the grave. Jude then proceeded to write a letter to Christians everywhere warning them to be on the lookout for messengers of false doctrine and beliefs. They could be very tough to identify, too, sometimes creeping in unnoticed. There will doubtless be people who will try to cause division in the church, but we must stand firm in Jesus Christ and He will keep us from stumbling.

(1 John) Towards the end of the first century AD, Jesus' disciple John (not the same John who baptized Jesus in the Jordan River) sat down to write a series of letters to the church. In his first letter, he wanted to show Christians how they could know beyond the shadow of a doubt whether they were in close fellowship with Jesus or if they have strayed and needed to come back. Very simply, if we love others, we are close with God because God is love. If we habitually practice sin in our lives, we are not. We must confess this sin, and Jesus will be faithful to forgive that sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(2 John) In his second letter to the church, John praises some Christians for their faith, and reminds them to love others. He also warns of people who come bringing false teaching. He advises not to even let them into your house.

(3 John) In his third letter, John praises a man named Gaius for continually walking in the truth. He also sternly warns against the practices of a man named Diotrephes, who always needed to be first, and even kicked people out of the church who didn't agree with him.

(Revelation 1-3) As the first century came to a close, John settled down for one last letter to the church. He was now in exile on the small island of Patmos just west of Turkey. In this letter he sees a vision of Jesus and is told to record it and send it to seven churches in the region. In the short messages to each of the churches, Jesus praises some of their behavior, and sharply criticizes others for their sinful behavior,

warning them of what will come if they do not turn from their ways. These churches faced issues that our local churches still face some 2,000 years later. The reward is still there for those who overcome.

(Today) Our walk through the Bible has been a long one. Dozens of authors penned the pages of this text over a period of 1,500 years. Its compass spans three continents. It contains 66 Books, 1,189 chapters, and 31,102 verses. In spite of its sheer magnitude, the Bible is unique in that it contains no contradictions. Science and archeology have proven its content over and over again. Many of the historical stories depicted in the Bible are well documented in secular writings. More fascinating is the fact that the Bible foretold events pertaining to world governments and central figures hundreds of years in advance, and they all have come true and are historical facts. All of this points to one conclusion...the real author of the Bible could only be the true God who holds the past, present and future of the world in His hands.

The Bible's message is consistent and every bit as relevant today as it was when it was written. That message is that we have all sinned and fallen short of our Creator's perfect standard for our lives. The penalty for that sin is death and separation from Him. There is nothing we can do ourselves to obtain right standing with God. There is and always has been one remedy for that problem; faith and faith alone in Jesus Christ. God sent His Son to be a perfect, unblemished sacrifice for our sins in our place. All we can do is simply believe in our hearts that God has forgiven us through Jesus' death, and trust in Him alone for our salvation. It is a free gift; God's amazing grace.

God desires a close personal relationship with every person, yet He loves us too much to force us to turn to Him. It is a choice we all have. We can freely choose to accept His gift or reject it. If you feel you need more time or information to make this decision, read on. The story is not over.

(Revelation 4-22) John continues his letter recording his vision. The remaining chapters in the Bible record events that have not happened yet. One day, Jesus will call every Christian up to be with Him. This will leave a world full of people who have not chosen Him as their savior. Then, God's countdown towards the end will begin. The people that remain will have seven years, if they can make it that far. A ruler spoken of by Daniel and Paul will step up and proclaim peace throughout the earth, even though much of the earth will lie in ruin from wars and great natural disasters. Over one quarter of the earth's remaining population will be killed in some fashion before the first three and a half years are up. In a world without Christians, God needs to proclaim His message somehow, so He sends two witnesses who will perform great miracles and hopefully many people will then accept God's forgiveness through Christ. These witnesses will then be killed half way through the seven years.

The second half of the seven year period, called the great tribulation period, will be worse than the first half. Satan himself will possess the world ruler, also called the Antichrist, because he knows his days are numbered. He will attempt to put to death every person who does not accept his mark of loyalty. The horrors of people who live during this period of time will be so great that they will try to kill themselves to escape.

When the seven years are over, Jesus will come back to earth, just as he said he would and destroy the wicked world that then is, bind Satan in prison, and set up a kingdom of his own. His will be a kingdom of true peace. All who have ever professed allegiance to him will be raised from the dead to live and to reign with him. This kingdom will last for 1,000 years.

After 1,000 years, Satan will be released for one final fury. He will gather every last person who has not accepted Christ and go to battle with him. With a mere breath, Jesus will defeat them and cast Satan into a place of eternal separation from God called hell. Jesus will then sit on his throne and judge every person who has ever lived that had not believed in him for their salvation. They will present their case, but as mentioned before, they will all have at least one blemish on their record. With that blemish attached to their record, Jesus cannot let them into heaven. Instead they will go to hell, and spend eternity alone, isolated from the God who created them, and loved them, and pleaded with them to simply call on His name.

Every person who has accepted God's free gift of Jesus Christ will then watch as the heavens and the earth are destroyed by God. He will make a new heaven and a new earth, and the people will live with Him there forever. In this new creation, God will lift His curse brought on by Adam and Eve's sin, and there will be no more pain, no more fear, no more death. God will comfort His children and wipe away every tear from their eyes. No word can describe the joy His people will share as they live continually in the presence of God.

John finishes by saying Jesus' return is imminent and it could happen at any time. Are you ready?

**Dan Leiphart, 2003**