



# What Is The Bible All About?

DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD BIBLE STUDY SERIES

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What is the Bible all about? There are many people who have never or rarely read the Bible who wonder whether they should even bother to read what it says. Perhaps they have only heard a little bit of what the Bible says. But, some are just not sure that they should devote their time and effort to reading the Bible. And, there are those who have read through the Bible for themselves, but still struggle to know exactly how all of the pieces fit together. Therefore, we should spend a few moments considering the big picture of what the Bible says and why it is such an important book for each and every person who lives on this earth.

## **God's Majesty**

The Bible contains a message from God. It is not like every other book that has been written in the history of the world. It is unique in that it is a collection of books that God has inspired men to write. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

As the book that contains God's message to mankind, it teaches us about who God is. Although we can learn that God really does exist just by observing what He has created (Romans 1:19-21), the Bible helps us to learn about His characteristics and many things about His nature. For instance, the Bible helps us to learn that God is eternal (Psalm 90:2), that He is manifested in three Persons (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, see Matthew 28:19), that He is all-powerful (Romans 1:20), that He is all-seeing (Proverbs 15:3), that He is ever-present (Psalm 139), that He is all-knowing (Isaiah 46:9-10), that He is holy (Revelation 4:6-8), that He is loving (1 John 4:7), that He is severe (Romans 11:22), that He is unchanging (Malachi 3:6), etc.

Now, it is important to recognize each and every one of these characteristics of God that are identified throughout the pages of the Bible because this God is worthy of our complete adoration, praise, worship, and service. In fact, this is what God expects from each and every one of us. You see, the Bible tells us that God created mankind in a very special way. Genesis 1:26-27 tells us that when God created mankind, He created man and woman "in His own image." This means that mankind is different from all of the other elements of God's creation in that he has a

soul (a spiritual existence that continues after physical death). And, the reason that God created man at all and created him in this very special way is for His glory (see Isaiah 43:7).

The goal of the Bible is to give us all of the information that we need to know in order to bring about the result of all people devoting their earthly lives to the glory of God (go back and read 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Romans 12:1 says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

## **The Problem Of Sin**

The problem is that mankind does not always choose to live in a way that pleases and glorifies this great and awesome God who created all things. Romans 3:23 says, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

When God created the first man and woman and placed them in the Garden of Eden, He gave them a law to live by. Genesis 2:16-17 says, "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'"

Satan (who is the enemy of God and mankind) enters the Bible story in Genesis chapter 3 by taking the form of a serpent and tempting the woman (Eve) to violate God's law. He told her that they would not die and that if they ate of the tree their eyes would be opened and they would be like God, knowing good and evil. After this temptation, Eve looked at the tree in a favorable kind of way and ate from it. Then, she gave it to her husband, who also ate.

This was the first sin. And, there were consequences for this sin. There were physical consequences that included the man and woman being removed from the Garden of Eden, pain, suffering, and death.

But, the most severe consequence of this sin was spiritual in nature. Remember that God had promised them they would die "in the day" they ate of the forbidden fruit. However, they did *not* die physically that day. Yet, they did die *spiritually*. Spiritual death is a separation from God. And, as you read the Genesis record, it becomes apparent that the nature of Adam and Eve's relationship with the almighty God changed the day they committed sin.

Although we do not inherit sin from Adam and Eve, all people who live on this earth do continue to make the same kind of error that they made. As we saw from Romans 3:23, all people continue to "sin" and fall short of glorifying God in their lives. To commit "sin" is to violate God's laws. It is to live to please our own desires or the desires of others, as if God had not given us any law to follow (1 John 3:4).

Today, God has given us His law in the pages of the New Testament (Matthew through Revelation). So, whenever we do what this law commands us not to do, we commit sin and fail to glorify God. And, whenever we do not do what this law commands us to do, we commit sin and fail to glorify God.

Then, whenever we have all reached the point in our lives that we know right from wrong and are morally accountable for our own actions, we all commit sin. The problem of this sin is identified in Romans 6:23. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Just like Adam and Eve experienced spiritual death whenever they sinned in the Garden of Eden, we experience spiritual death whenever we sin. Once again, this is a separation from God. This is how we can be dead while we are alive – dead spiritually while alive physically (1 Timothy 5:6). And, the Bible warns us that there is a Day coming when God will judge everyone who has lived on this earth by Jesus Christ (see Acts 17:31 and 2 Corinthians 5:10). Those whose physical lives ended while they were in their sins will then experience what the Bible calls the “second death” in the fires of Hell. Revelation 21:8 says, “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The reality is that every person who has ever lived on this earth and reached the age of personal accountability has committed sin. Therefore, every person has deserved to experience this kind of punishment. And, once a person has sinned, there is nothing that he/she can do (by himself/herself) to be saved from the consequences of sin. This is the single greatest problem that mankind has ever faced or will ever face.

### **God’s Eternal Plan For Saving Mankind**

Thanks be to God that this is not the end of what the Bible tells us. If it was, we would all be hopelessly lost and doomed for an eternal punishment in Hell fire. But, Romans 6:23 does *not* just tell us that the wages of sin is spiritual death. It also tells us that “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”!

So, God has an answer to the problem of sin. And, the Bible tells us exactly what that answer is. The answer is Jesus Christ, God’s only begotten Son. In fact, the Bible tells us that God had a plan in His mind from all eternity. This “eternal purpose” was “accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:11).

From the very first sin that was committed on this earth, the Bible points us to the hope of a Savior. Whenever God was telling the serpent (who Satan had used to tempt Eve) of the punishments due him, He said, “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15). This Seed would be Jesus Christ – and He would destroy the work of the devil.

Throughout the Old Testament (Genesis through Malachi), there are many prophecies and promises about a future Savior who would come to this earth to provide the answer for the problem of sin. For instance, God promised a man named Abraham that in him “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:3). The Old Testament tells the story of how God preserved this line of Abraham’s descendants (the Jewish people) in order to fulfill this promise.

Ultimately, the promise was fulfilled whenever Jesus Christ left Heaven and was born into this world, coming through the physical ancestry of Abraham. The Bible tells us that Jesus was the one who was sent into the world by God to save lost sinners from their sin. He was the Lamb of

God, sent to be the perfect sacrifice to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). In fact, He was the only sacrifice that could possibly take away the sins of the world (see Hebrews 10:4). He made this sacrifice whenever He suffered through His earthly life and was put to death on the cross. However, after being buried, He was raised from the dead on the third day – and later ascended into Heaven!

Now, all people have the opportunity to be forgiven of their sin and have eternal life with God in Heaven after their earthly lives are over! However, Jesus taught that most people will still be lost because most people will not live for God (see Matthew 7:13-14). For, God has only promised to save those who believe and obey Him (Hebrews 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Therefore, the Bible tells us everything that God requires us to do in order to be saved through Jesus Christ. God's plan of salvation requires every person who has sinned against Him to hear His word (Romans 10:17), believe in Jesus Christ (John 8:24), repent of his/her sin (Acts 17:30), confess Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9-10), be immersed in water for the forgiveness of sin (Acts 2:38), and then remain faithful to God throughout their lives (Revelation 2:10). Those who are faithful and obedient to Him are added to Christ's one church, which is the collection of those who will be saved (see Acts 2:41, 47).

## **Conclusion**

The Bible contains this great story of salvation. God is worthy of all our service and worship. However, we have all failed to give God what He truly does deserve because we have all violated His law at some time during our earthly lives. Thanks be to God that He has provided the perfect sacrifice for sin through Jesus Christ. Now, if we will be obedient to Him, we can be saved from the consequences of sin and live eternally with Him in Heaven one day!

### **Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series**

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