

The Big Picture of the Bible: God's Story of Redemption

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The English word *Bible* comes from the Latin word *bibliotheca*, which means “library.” The Bible is a “library” of 66 books, but they’re unlike any other book in history because the authors who wrote them were inspired by the Holy Spirit. These 66 books of the Bible—written by dozens of authors over a thousand years—tell one cohesive, overarching story. It’s God’s story of how He orchestrated time and events to redeem His people. So, before we dive into a certain book or a particular passage, it helps to understand how every part of the Bible comes together to tell God’s story of redemption.

The main character in the Bible is God, who exists eternally in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Before God created the heavens and the earth, He already had a plan in place. In fact, He already had you and I in mind.

For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him (Eph 1:4).

Creation (Genesis 1-2)

God literally spoke the universe into existence. By His very words, He creates and gives life.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light (Gn 1:1,3).

He also created us so that we might have fellowship together, and the very first man and woman—Adam and Eve—enjoyed His presence in the garden of Eden.

Separation (Genesis 3)

A relationship, though, isn’t a real relationship unless both parties willingly choose to be together, so God gave humanity a free will. He risked rejection by His own creation so that we might know Him. In the garden of Eden, God gave Adam and Eve everything they needed, with one command—not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gn 2:16-17). They could eat anything else in the garden, but not the fruit of this one tree. In this, God required obedience, but it was still humanity’s choice. When Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, sin entered the world, separating sinful people from a holy God.

So the LORD God sent [Adam] away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove the man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life (Gn 3:23-24).

Now, as a result of sin, all people are born into brokenness. We live our lives seeking to be whole again, but wholeness and restoration can only be found in our Creator.

Expectation (Genesis 4 – Malachi)

Nothing, however, is a surprise to God. Before Adam and Eve drew their first breath, God knew that sin would separate humanity from His holy presence, so He set into motion a way that would reconcile His people back to Himself. This way of reconciliation would be secured through His Son, Jesus. The people waited with expectant hope for a Savior to come. The rest of the Old Testament is filled with stories and prophecies and so much more, with all of it pointing to Jesus as the coming Redeemer (Jn 5:39).

For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever (Is 9:6-7).

Salvation (Matthew – John)

The four gospel accounts offer four testimonies of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. With His own body, Jesus paid the price for all sin.

For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life (Jn 3:16).

Through God's ministry of reconciliation, those who accept His gift of grace now have access, once again, to God's presence and will live for eternity with Him.

Transformation (Acts – Jude)

Christ will come again one day, but while we wait for His return, we're to grow and become more like Him.

We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit (2Co 3:18).

Through God's Word, we learn more about who God is, and His Spirit—indwelling all believers—empowers us to be transformed into His likeness (Jn 16:13).

Consummation (Revelation)

While the book of Revelation is apocalyptic in nature, it describes a second coming. When Jesus returns, He'll come as the King of all kings, and a magnificent wedding banquet will one day

take place. Throughout Scripture, Christ is depicted as the bridegroom and the church His bride. In this metaphor, we see the picture of marriage. We are His beloved—His betrothed.

Then I heard something like the voice of a vast multitude, like the sound of cascading waters, and like the rumbling of loud thunder, saying: 'Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty, reigns! Let us be glad, rejoice, and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself (Rv 19:6-7).

Friend, you are His beloved. He treasures you, so much so, that He gave His life for you. There is no sin—no secret, no past, no shame—that He cannot forgive and redeem. God's story of redemption isn't a fanciful tale; it's truth. And it's an invitation. The God of the universe fashioned you in His image, and He longs to take your brokenness and create something whole and beautiful. All you have to do is say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come."

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rm 10:13).

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